

Executive Summary

This study was carried out to design the mid to long-term training programs for the governmental and non-governmental humanitarian workers in the Republic of Korea(hereinafter South Korea), with a purpose of enhancing their humanitarian competencies. It first sought to identify the current status of South Korea's humanitarian assistance by investigating the governance structure and current activities. In order to find out the educational/training needs of the humanitarian workers, the study also conducted a survey with the working level officials in the government and the non-governmental organizations(NGOs). As a final product, a comprehensive humanitarian training program was created and policy recommendations were proposed to implement these programs.

South Korea's current practices of humanitarian assistance, both governmental and non-governmental, revealed several shortcomings. Despite the creation of humanitarian bureaus within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs MOFA and Korea International Cooperation Agency(KOICA), it lacked legal and institutional backbone that could support its humanitarian action. The budget for humanitarian assistance within its official development assistance (ODA) was low according to the OECD/DAC standards. Humanitarian officials and workers seemed to acquire general understanding on humanitarian matters. However, the lack of accurate knowledge on the essentials caused many bottlenecks along the assistance process. This study recommended that the South Korean government clearly articulate its humanitarian policy, strategy and action framework based on its overall ODA scheme.

In order to find a benchmark case for South Korea, the research team visited the U.S. government, the Australian government and the NGOs in these countries to learn about their humanitarian competencies and training programs. By comparing the gaps between the current status of humanitarian action in

South Korea and the best practices, the team agreed on several areas for improvement. They included defining the concept of humanitarian assistance, designing concrete humanitarian policies and strategies, adopting the “whole-of-government” approach, carrying out organizational restructuring of related bureaus, and promoting cooperation between the government and the NGOs.

Humanitarian training aims at nurturing professionals who can respond to natural disasters and complex emergencies in a rapid and efficient manner. With such objective, training courses and sectors were designed not only for enhancing knowledge, skill and attitude of the humanitarian actors in the government(KOICA, Central 119 Rescue Team, the National Medical Center, the Korea Foundation for International Healthcare) but also for the humanitarian NGOs. The training courses were designed based on the necessary competencies identified from each humanitarian sector. “Common Essential Courses” were designed both for the government and for the non-governmental humanitarian workers. They included “Understanding of Humanitarian Basics,” “Safety and Security Training” and “Civil-Military Coordination Exercise.” “Functional Basics” and “Functional In-depth Courses” were designed according to the needs of the government and the NGO personnel. For the Korea Disaster Response Team(KDRT), functional courses were designed according to the needs of the Support Team, Search and Rescue Team and the Medical Team. In addition, courses on leadership, training of trainers(ToT), and special themes were suggested to complement the essential and functional courses.

To conclude, the study recommended action plans with which the suggested training programs could be implemented. The suggested programs eventually seeks to support the career development of humanitarian workers and strengthen the mid to long-term humanitarian response capacity of South Korea.