



EIU Best Practices Series **No. 16**

A Korean Agricultural School's Integration of ESD within a Regional Community

EIU Best Practices 2009



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

APCEIU

Asia-Pacific Centre of
Education for International Understanding
under the auspices of UNESCO

Foreword

As a regional centre mandated to promote Education for International Understanding (EIU) towards a Culture of Peace in Asia and the Pacific region, Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU) under the auspices of UNESCO has been engaged in various endeavors aimed at fulfilling its mandate since its inception. APCEIU launched the EIU Best Case Studies in 2006 as an Experiential Learning Programme (ELP) in cooperation with the Member States in the region to encourage local initiatives on EIU. In 2009, it was renamed EIU Best Practices.

EIU aims to promote, in particular, “Learning to Live Together”, among the four pillars of education set forth in the Delors report, through participatory learning and critical thinking. EIU Best Practices brings and explores various efforts in the region geared to foster “Learning to Live Together”.

Asia and the Pacific region, with some of the major flashpoints of the world, have long been plagued by a history of socio-political conflicts often intersected by challenging ethnic, cultural and religious issues. In the era of globalization, ensuring education towards a culture of peace and a sustainable future has become critical more than ever for a common prosperous future of all humanity. Launched against this background, EIU Best Practices is an outreach effort that seeks to encourage and further local initiatives on peace, human rights, intercultural understanding and sustainability in different social and cultural contexts.

This series No. 16 introduces an example of a school embedded in a community where the two are linked through Education for Sustainable Development. Poolmoo School turns the surrounding economy, ecology, culture, into educational learning materials and endeavors to create a school culture where the community is a vital source of a live educational experience. Especially, through teaching village students and providing an organic farming education shows how the community and schools set in a primarily agricultural environment can develop together. Through the exchange of Asia farmers, we may come to view the workings of a peace community through Poolmoo School.

I hope that through this endeavor, various EIU Best Practices can be shared among educators, scholars and activists who are committed to promoting a Culture of Peace in the region. I expect this project can provide a platform to share and exchange our experiences and perspectives.

I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to Korean National Commission for UNESCO and Poolmoo Agriculture Technical High School for their kind cooperation in sharing their experiences.

December 2009



LEE Seunghwan
Director

EIU Best Practices is...

APCEIU has been committed to the promotion of a Culture of Peace since its inception, in line with one of the pillars of education “Learning to Live Together.” A Culture of Peace has been a key principle at the core of UNESCO’s ethical mission. It involves a set of values, attitudes and behaviours that can be taught, developed and improved upon to enhance mutual understanding and conflict resolution. Attaining a Culture of Peace requires transformation of institutional practices, as well as individual values and behaviours in which education plays a crucial role in the process. As a major educational tool aimed at promoting a Culture of Peace, EIU addresses issues related to cultural diversity, globalization and social justice, human rights, peace and sustainable development. It focuses on increasing the capacity of learners to deal with issues of everyday life, to resolve community conflict and to enjoy human, political and civil rights to a greater extent.

APCEIU launched EIU Best Case Studies in 2006 in cooperation with the UNESCO Member States in the region to encourage educators, scholars and activists to implement and share local initiatives on EIU. It is an outreach programme that invites them to share their efforts in promoting education for a culture of peace in different social and cultural contexts. Now renamed as EIU Best Practices in order to further encourage the participation of practitioners in the field, the programme seeks to promote and collect innovative practices based on optimal classroom conditions and activities, school climate, community and social atmosphere, and disseminate them throughout the region.

The programme is conducted through the following steps: 1) Announcement: APCEIU sends announcement letters along with application forms and guidelines to the 47 National Commissions for UNESCO, UNESCO field offices, major National Institutes of Education in the region and MOU partners of APCEIU in the region; 2) Screening and Selection: Submitted applications are reviewed by the Screening Committee, composed of experts, who then select the best practices; 3) Field Visit: APCEIU staff undertake field visits to the programme sites of the selected case to confer the EIU Best Practices awards, conduct field observation and interviews, and provide the selected applicants with the guidelines for the final report; 4) Submission of the Final Reports: Selected applicants submit the final reports to APCEIU based on the guidelines; and 5) Publication and Dissemination: Final reports are published as a monograph series and disseminated throughout the Asia and the Pacific region.

Given the favorable and enthusiastic responses from the region and the support from the National Commissions for UNESCO, APCEIU wishes to expand on the positive momentum built thus far and further its efforts for the coming years.

APCEIU encourages educators, scholars and activists from Asia and the Pacific region to apply and share their experiences and perspectives. The centre expects that through the EIU Best Practices, diverse practices of EIU will be widely shared throughout the whole region, thus contributing towards achieving a Culture of Peace.




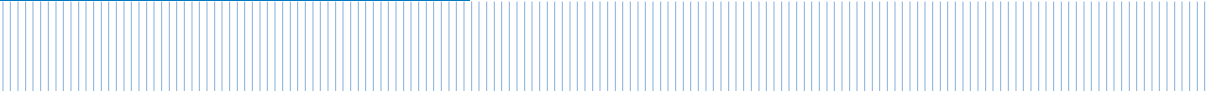
JUNG Seung-Kwan started as a teacher at Poolmoo School and became a principal of the school in March 2003. From 2008~2009, he was a commission member of the Office of Education, Department of Alternative Education in ChungChcheong0 Province, and currently, he is actively involved in Poolmoo Cooperatives as a representative. In 2008, he was recognized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and is working to promote education and regional community.

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A Korean Agricultural School's Integration of ESD within a Regional Community

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

The school strives to go beyond simply providing education for the students by also pursuing a secondary goal, which is to “connect the ever-changing local community with the education provided at the school.” Rural population, as well as rural schools, declined sharply ever since the 1980s. To revive life in the countryside, the Poolmoo Schools engage in organic farming, in ecological education (for both rural and urban students), as well as in cooperating with the community towards an ecological village. The sustainability that is built on these three columns is not only about economic equilibrium, but it also further includes environmental sustainability, as well as maintaining the functions and the culture of rural areas.

We have, for a long time, been integrating various aspects of the school to reach beyond the need of simply providing classes and education for the students. The very layout of the school, the schedules, the curriculum, and the students' time have all been planned in order to coincide with the town's activities. The graduates (many of which have settled down nearby after graduation) and local organizations continue to have close bonds to the school, helping to maintain the connection between the school and the local community. We are trying to build a new educational model in which the education and class activities of rural schools, with a focus on agricultural methods that center around rural areas, become an essential part in the continued development of the rural communities,

as well as of the wider society. The survival of the school depends on the community, and the survival of the community also depends on the school.

As a result, Poolmoo Schools have become an institution that hosts various examples of alternative education, organic farming, rural area revitalization, energy independence, intra- and international peace, and community led business models. We believe through these activities, the school is addressing the main problems of the 21st century, which are peace and human rights, environment and life, agriculture and community, and sustainability.

1.2. Model's Focus

1.2.1. Goals and Purpose

With the expansion of urbanization, the educational goals, teaching methods, and curriculum of the national school system have become geared towards a system based on competition. This kind of modernization of the educational system has spread to rural schools as if it was a model for all schools. Urbanization and modernization have brought educational values that do not take the local community into account, and this effect is directly proportional to the level of urbanization.

It has become a common belief that applying these same standards of urban educational environments and systems to rural areas will help the latter develop. However, this is a misconception. These

educational systems not only threaten the rural schools, they also harm the sustainability of the local rural communities that maintain the schools.

The fundamental role of education is to educate students of their own local community, while at the same time educating the community itself. Looking back upon our history, the link between community, school, and families have been the foundation in which rural area education has grown. As a result, strong relationships between nature and work, as well as those between culture and community, have been maintained, each area unique in their own culture and history. In this, we believe that our efforts are rooted in our own local history.

Located in the Midwestern region of South Korea, in an average rural area named Hongdong, with a population of 4,178, Poolmoo High School of Agriculture¹ was opened in 1958, a time when 70% of the population dwelled in rural areas. It was at the beginning of massive industrialization and urbanization. With the free market bringing in economic competition and creating social disparity and instability, the Poolmoo Community College of Ecological Agriculture² was opened in 2001, when the population of rural areas had already dropped down to 10%.



Figure 1. Poolmoo High School of Agriculture was opened in 1958



Figure 2. Poolmoo High School rebuilt in 1977 replacing early buildings shown in Fig 1 above.

1) <http://www.poolmoo.co.kr>

2) <http://www.poolmoo.net>

The program was initiated with the construction of Poolmoo High School of Agriculture. At the inauguration of the school, the founder, LEE Chan-Gab, proposed to “revive our people through education centered around the rural



Figure 3. Poolmoo Community College of Ecological Agriculture was opened in 2001

community, through educating minds, and through teaching both humanity and ability.” With the teaching principles of humanitarian values and interdependence with the local community as two sides of the same coin, he believed that true equality and democracy can be built. Another founder, JOO Ok-Roh, spoke of “citizens living side by side helping one another on a platform of trust built on education.” With these founding goals, Poolmoo School has strived to become one with the community through various ways.

First, soon after the school was founded, the teachers and students began to address various problems facing the development of rural areas.

A small store was opened in the school, run cooperatively by the students, in order for them to learn the spirit of mutual aid. Also, some families tested new ideas that were formulated in the agricultural classes at the school. For example: pest control and prevention through disinfecting barley seeds, new ways of vegetable storage, and improving the efficiency of heating systems.

These activities expanded out into other fields, settling into local functions, such as the local newspaper, credit union, and co-op. The teaching and implementation of organic farming since 1975 has especially been vital in steering the changes of our community.

In addition, graduating students are required to submit an essay of their future plans within the local community after graduation. These

essays helped them to make connections with local newspapers, credit associations, and agricultural associations.

1.2.2. Main Resources

“This new school must not be born from any one man of power or goods, but must come from this very town. It must be built by Hongdong. Also, our town must raise the children to all be our sons and daughters.³⁾”

These words from the founders have helped to layout a direction for the education and cooperative management we can follow. This has led to various cooperative associations within the school, volunteer work by the teachers (and local families) to help the local community, strong ties between the school and the community, local residency and stable foundations within the community for students after graduation, as well as continued solidarity between successive graduates and the school. Strong bonds are maintained between teachers, students, graduates, and also the parents and local people and organizations, because of the continued belief that the school is an offspring of the community. Both the school and the community interdependently draw from each others' strengths, creating a positive feedback loop for sustainable development.

1.2.3. Process

1. When the school first started (from the 60s~70s), the goals were to find a way to expand the functions of the school out of the classrooms, and into the community, and this is still being applied to this very day. A good example is that the cooperative associations that were initiated in the school have found their way into the community. Beginning with the needs of the students, and then expanding out towards the needs of the community, has led to diversification. This has also led to educating local farmers and

3) 이찬갑, “산 믿음의 새생활, 학교를 개교하면서”, 시골문화사, 1958

establishing open classrooms for the local people, in which the teachers give lectures for the community.

2. Due to having more graduates that chose to remain and continue living in the local community during the 70s to the 90s, we saw more implementation of ideas that were developed within the school. Organic farming, which was taught to the students, became widespread during this period through the hard work of the graduates. Independently started organizations, such as the subsistence organizations, credit associations, energy self-dependence, and local newspapers, all began to mold with the community, changing the way they worked in order to help the local community to grow.

3. The founding of the Community College of Ecological Agriculture in 2001 brought about a higher platform on which the relationship between the school and the local community could be reanalyzed based on the needs of the modern age. Looking at the needs of the community, the people, and the students, college level education was provided in the areas of applicable agriculture, strengthening the ties to the needs of rural areas. The reach of activities has now increased, and the Poolmoo Community College is now a leading innovative network hub of organic farming, both for Korea and the rest of Asia.

2. Programme Implementation in School and Community

2.1. Basic Requirements

The main goals of the program are to lead the school towards educating the whole person, lead students towards continued self-improvement, and also to tie the school and each student to the community so that they feel connected to it. To reach the essence of this type of education, a strong community must be maintained, and the school must be an essential part of the community.

This type of educational system, provided by Poolmoo School, is categorized as an alternative education within the Korean society. It is based on tradition and the needs of the local community, as well as the principles of self-realization and integration with the community to work towards the preservation of life and peace. This is in accordance with the educational system of a “convivial community” (Ivan Illich), as well as the sustainable societies that were first presented by the Club of Rome.⁴

To achieve its goal the program included specific goals, which included the following:

1. Local schools should bring about sustainability in rural towns

The positive feedback loop of interdependent schools and communities in rural areas is the core of our activities. The culture of local towns are revived and sustained, and the education that takes place within the local community is the source for a healthy and sustainable rural society.

2. Raising awareness through ecological education for both rural and urban folks

Our own students, as well as students and consumers from cities, are educated on ecology in rural areas. This includes not only wetlands and other natural areas, but also farming areas. Rice

4) Limits to Growth The 30 Year Update by Donella Meadows et al. 2004

paddies, which are farmed organically, boast of biodiversity, and our ecological education program teaches participants to find and identify the various creatures that harmoniously co-exist in paddy fields.

3. Sharing knowledge about organic farming with students, with local organizations, as well as with other Asian organizations

Students graduate with a strong foundation of basic and applied knowledge on organic farming. Graduates, teachers, and students form a wider network of ongoing flow of knowledge, with local, national, and international organizations actively promoting organic farming and alternative education. New organic farming technologies and techniques are developed on the basis of cooperative research together with students, graduates, and partners from other regions and countries.

4. Sustainable livelihoods

Both the raising of awareness and the development of organic farming methods provide a solid knowledge base that allows graduates and locals to use local resources without damaging the environment, while at the same time providing lasting livelihoods for organic farmers.

5. Diversity not only in nature, but also in culture

Solidarity and cultural interexchange between rural and urban societies bring about mutual understanding and peaceful relations between the two. Cultural diversity and mutual respect is also aimed at a wider scope, by communicating with rural organizations in other countries to bring about peace in Asia.

6. Initiate new local organization, in cooperation with the local community

Many local organizations that are now independent from the school have their origin in the latter, and there are still more initiatives and organizations in different stages of development.

Undergraduates, local students, local farmers, and the local community itself are the primary targets of the program.

2.2. Agricultural School for Sustainability

Modernity, which spread rapidly with the promise of improving living conditions, is now struggling with growth and has become the leading cause of environmental problems, as well as social tensions between rural and urban parts of societies. In reaction, the concept of sustainable growth has been developed, addressing the core of the problem. Modern societies struggle with problems in human rights, peace, life, and the environment. In order to protect these concerns we can learn from organic methods of diversity, circulation, symbiosis, and networks. To learn from the balance of nature, we must expand these concepts towards the entire local areas, communities, and agricultures. Peace is not only important in the relationships between countries, but also in the relationships between different parts within a country. As our program strives to bring about mutual understanding of both rural and urban citizens, we hope it will in turn foster peace and the development of fair trading systems both within Korea, and throughout Asia.

Since the nature of the education is rooted in the fact that the school is within the community. With this in mind, we have been able to train agricultural successors, practice organic farming, move towards energy independence, revitalize local culture, create bonds with farmer organizations and other communal organizations, and have greater understanding of our own area. This is identical in spirit to the close ties between the people of our agricultural community. As globalization continues, we believe that helping to strengthen local communities will lead to a road towards peace and sustainable development; moving from the motto of 'Think globally, Act locally,' to that of 'Renew the local community, globally.'

The commonalities between rural areas in Asia are that the areas for cultivation are small, that agriculture and labor is extensive, and that activities there are usually centered around rice farming. These

commonalities have risen from the fact that Asian rural cultures are based on towns with groups of small farmers that work together. Until now, many countries in the Asia-Pacific region have maintained wider areas of agriculture compared to the areas of urbanization. We must continue to maintain these areas in sustainable ways in order for the Asian culture to continue without a severe break in its development. We believe that the educational direction of rural schools serve a vital function to help protect these areas.

The school, the graduates, as well as the now independent organizations that were initiated by the schools (such as organic farmer associations) show that the rural area can be a place for sustainable development



providing secure income, ecological conservation, as well as a thriving place for a renewed and self-confident culture. By raising awareness for ecological concerns, as well as for rural culture and agriculture, consumers from cities gain an understanding for the situation of the rural areas. Through this, fair trade between consumers and producer associations and individuals is enabled as a new form of justice within the nation.

Revitalization of rural life and the raising of awareness have not only motivated locals to successfully install organic farms, but it has also motivated many city people to settle down in the countryside and take action themselves towards a sustainable agriculture and to reverse urbanization.

So far, many countries of the Asian-Pacific region have managed to maintain large areas of agriculture compared to the areas of urbanization, and this is a common strength within Asia that we may use to share and understand each other.

Through agriculture, especially organic agriculture, the town has been able to raise the sustainability of local ecosystems, and has also experienced a strengthening of networking that has risen naturally through education and the implementation of organic farming. Also, through sharing various methods and techniques in organic farming, a higher level of communication has opened up between Asian countries and their farmers, spilling out into the sharing of different cultures, which in turn, has helped to better our understanding of one another.

This is an example of the sustainable progress within Asia. Local schools can be vital tools in the sustainability of an area, as well as the starting point in cross-cultural dialogues that ultimately strive for peace.

2.3. Pedagogy/Teaching Methodology

We have structured our educational process towards providing and developing knowledge for a development that has a long term and holistic character, comprehensive studies across all academics, lessons and group assignments that teach the students to work as individuals within a community, exercises in investigating local problems, critical thinking to provide creative solutions (local self-reliance in food production, energy conservation, water pollution, environmental diversity, etc.), establishment of self-confidence through individual and group activities, and guided experience towards self-governance.

1. Education through classes

- Practical training in the field: Basic farming skills are taught by working on the field together, so students learn from other students and from



teachers through a form of experience that can be called “guided experience”. Furthermore, students choose from a list of topics and schedule the training themselves. They carry out the activities, coordinated within their groups, just as the agricultural community does.

- Record and Presentation: They record their studies and are required to present a presentation at the end of the activities. Presentations may include graduates and local farmers, adding depth and real world experiences to their education.
- Trips to and lessons with experts within the community in order to experience carpentry and ecological studies, as well as field trips led by local leaders.
- Studying local areas: Field trips to local sights and organizations are arranged, and talks are held with leaders of each organization.
- Starting businesses: Visiting local farms and seeing first hand realistic business models for farms, and having a question and answer session with local farmers.
- Communal studies and presentations: Students are put into groups that each investigate a topic pertaining to real world local topics and discuss ways of solving the problems, as well as presenting those solutions.
- Thesis and presentation: Students find a topic of personal interest and follow it for an entire year. At the end, each presents an essay of their experience.
- Various humanities lectures in the classroom: Writing classes pertaining to life in rural areas, language studies in rural culture, history, communication, agriculture and technology, and other classes on humanities related to rural life.

2. Student participation in local community activities

- Students participate in educational programs: Agricultural education (rice planting in May, harvesting in October), ecological studies (studying the biodiversity within rice paddy fields from June to September), horticultural education (yearlong programs with local students with disabilities).
- Participation in the school's subsistence association: Students help to run communal cafes, and help to plan and run communal garden, as well as the communal store. Through this, they learn not only farming skills, but also institutional skills, such as how to run and initiate cooperative associations.
- Participation in community festivals: Students participate in the organization of local town festivals, sporting events, and student performances. The students work with the town people to coordinate and participate in these events.
- Town lectures become school lectures: Lectures are not only held in the classrooms, but are also given in town locations, which are open to locals and students alike.



3. Student Schedules

- Practical training following agricultural seasons (4 weeks in May and June, 2 weeks in October)
- School days adhering to the flow of agricultural seasons (2 weeks of



Summer vacation, 3 months of winter vacation)

- School life adhering to rural lifestyle rhythms (rotating chore duties like cooking, caring for livestock, horticulture)
- 3 hours of classroom teaching before lunch, and 5 hours of practical and shared work after lunch. Classes are a mix of theoretical and practical lessons. Practical work is done in a form of apprenticeship or internship.
- The curriculum consists of 60% humanities and 40% specialty classes, accenting the harmony of using one's head, heart, and hand.
- Dormitory life for 1 to 2 years and humanities studies help to teach student cooperative living.

4. Local Activities of the School

- Education in ecologically sustainable agriculture (organic farming)
- New developments in ecological energy use: solar energy, bio-gas
- Lectures and symposiums for local farmers, as well as farming experts from other countries, about methods in organic farming
- Study and research groups are formed with local farmers to find new and improved farming methods
- Creating spaces to cultivate local culture: This is done by using school spaces to work with local community people to organize and run cooperative ventures, such as carpentry workspaces and used book stores.
- Courses in humanities expanded into town lectures: school teachers give lectures outside of the school for local residents, and students are encouraged to participate.
- Strengthening educational solidarity within the town and the national society: Horticulture experience program with students with disabilities, ecological education program, and agricultural

experience program

- All teachers live within and actively participate in the local community

5. Cultural Exchange Between Farmers of Asia

- Exchange programs with foreign schools: The school holds yearly visits for the students of our sister-schools, from Aino, Ejin and other independent schools in Japan.
- Student exchange programs: We have been enrolling students from various Asian countries (Bangladesh(2005), Japan(2004, 2008, 2009), Cambodia(2007)), and through our interactions we learn new methods of agriculture and find ways that better suit the local ecology. Through this process, local farmers and foreign students build a dialogue, in which the farmers eventually visit the students' nation.

- Dialogue with Foreign Farmers: Visits to foreign countries to learn new methods in organic farming and invitations for lectures to foreign farmers in similar environments.



The school promotes the exchange of dialogue by inviting various farmers to learn and teach about the expanding methods of organic farming, and build better relationships between communities.

- Establishment of International Games: The school and local farmers have established the Asian Duck Farming Games(which held its tenth anniversary in Phillipines in 2009), which is held in a different Asian country each year. There is also the Korea-Japan Rice Paddy Ecology Exchange Conference (currently in its fourth year), which local farmers associations

and other consumer organizations work together to open. This has led to annual cultural visits both to and from the Kyushu area of Japan.



- Sharing Asian rural cultures: The school actively holds events for cultural exchange with schools in other countries (Japan: Aino School, Dokuritsu High School), Asian students that participate in organic farming (Bangladesh in 2005, Japan in 2004, 2008, 2009, Cambodia in 2007), and Asian duck farming symposiums.

The school educates students from the local community. Rather than leaving the town for the city after graduation, the students should be motivated by the education to settle down in the local community after graduation so that they may become valuable members of the community. In order to do this, the community and the local area must be a part of the school. Also, it must not be only the educational program of the school that leads the student, but the community and school working together.

- Grassroots Local Residents School: For educating successors that are independent and work for the diversity of the town by initiating and working, for instance, in local cooperative associations.
- Local community within the school: Graduates are taught to integrate various aspects of the future of the agricultural town into their thinking and activities (such as social, economical, cultural, and ecological) so that they analyze possible solutions through their own initiatives. The school itself acts as a model for the town. Students will learn through co-building in this model.

- The school within the local community: Many lectures are open to all local residents, and residents become field teachers and teach the students of the community's various



organizations and functions, and serve as the backbone for education throughout life. Students are also provided various books and information to study and solve problems regarding community development, and work with local residents and organizations, creating long lasting relationships.

Ever since the first graduates left Poolmoo Community College of Ecological Agriculture, many of them chose to settle down in the local community. Both the graduates that settled down, as well as the ones who now live in other rural areas, became valuable members of their local communities. They initiated local cooperative associations and other organizations, and still cultivate close personal ties with each other and with the teachers of the school. Most of them also run small organic farms. As they are practitioners and valuable community members at the same time, they become key individuals that link applied knowledge and



institutional skills within their communities. In an aging rural society, the new life that comes to the countryside with the graduates and their families is a crucial revitalizing force

for rural communities. Thanks to them, the sound of babies can once again be heard in the rural areas of Korea.

[Local Students] Graduates carry with them the cultivation of sensitivity, knowledge, sociality, understanding of society, and pride in their local community. Those are values that are largely different to those taught in an education system that only focuses on memorization and competition. The Poolmoo School enhanced their educational potential by using the vibrant resources of the local area (supplying agricultural and ecological education to other non-agricultural schools) and combines it with the educational program (combined education for students with disabilities, combined teachers associations).

The education of local farmers is also promoted by the combination of groups within the school and farmers associations, and works towards enhancing methods and techniques. Through the improvement of self-reliance and creativity, farmers can fully realize these techniques and help to spread them across the region with actual implementation. Through the exchange of vital information, research groups can work on theoretical aspects of new developments with the farmers, who can then teach other farmers, and thus new methods can be realized in the fields that they live by. The school gathers new methods and information on farming techniques from within and outside the country in order to supply this information to local farmers. Through this process, the school and the farmers together can learn from the experiences of other countries and exchange not only farming techniques with other countries, but also exchange cultural assets to better both sides.

2.4. Primary Activities

This program is based on the history of interdependent relationship between the local community and the school, and is based around four main activities.

First, the school is run according to the agricultural nature of the local area.

The main goal of the school is to be a part of the community and to ease agricultural hardships by developing new and better applicable agricultural methods and by training the next generation of farmers. The



school, after creating middle school and high school programs, has opened the Poolmoo Community College for Ecological Agriculture in 2001. This institute has been actively promoting and implementing organic farming, and has been helping in educating students to appreciate communal life. The college provides interaction with the community at a higher and intertwined level. Furthermore, not only are agricultural experiences and technologies studied, but they are also combined with arts and humanities studies to connect all the farming and communal functions of the town with the school, creating a school village, in which classes are coordinated to match with farming schedules, in turn, using the farming areas as classrooms to create a village school. Through this process, local farmers and organizations have widened their influence and are now models for organic farming and cooperative organic production association with national and international significance.⁵

Second, the school works to provide for the needs of the community.

Main examples for this are the creation of new community organizations and the supplying of renewable energy sources. (i) The

5) Adaptation and Evaluation of Integrated Rice and Duck Farming in the Hongdong Community of South Korea and the Poolmoo Schools ? Knowledge Sharing and Learning in Sustainable Rice Cultivation Networks, Master Thesis, Department of Geography, University of Zurich, Dominik Rutz, May, 2008

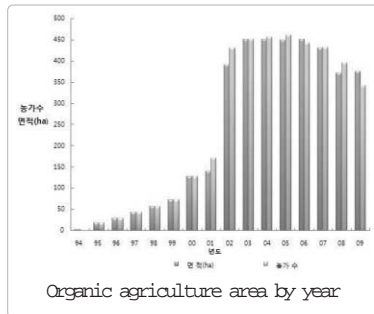
Poolmoo Consumer Co-op, initiated in 1969 within the school, became a part of the community and was opened to residents in 1980. This evolved into the Poolmoo Subsistence Community Co-op in 1987, run



by a group of farmers that produced organic products. (ii) The Poolmoo Credit Community Co-op, started in 1969 within the school, was opened to the community in 1975. Today, the credit co-op has 2,500 members. (iii) The Solar Panel Facility that was developed entirely by the school in 1979 started with an interest in alternative energy sources and led to the Appropriate Technology Center in 1980. This, in turn, led to the Wind Power Facility in 1998, and another Solar Power Facility in 1999.⁶ This research and development in advanced technologies is still continuing within the school's subsistence community co-op. Other examples include the production of renewable soap from used oil, using local grains to produce bread, running local shops to sell local agricultural products, and farmer's market for organic products.

Third, the school aims to meet the needs of the local community to the best of its ability.

In 1975, the school was the first in South Korea to teach organic farming, which allowed organic farming to spread into the local community. The school developed Integrated Rice and Duck Farming and ecologically diverse agricultural methods for organic farming, and local farmers visited Japan to learn more



6) Yoo Jin Lee , "Hope in Local Energy. Hongdong, Learning About Energy.", Imagine Publishing, 2008

advanced organic farming methods, bringing back and translating five books on farming. Now with over 500 farming households and two million pyeong (more than 8.5 square kilometers) of agricultural land dedicated to organic farming, this area is being called the mecca⁷ of South Korean organic farming.

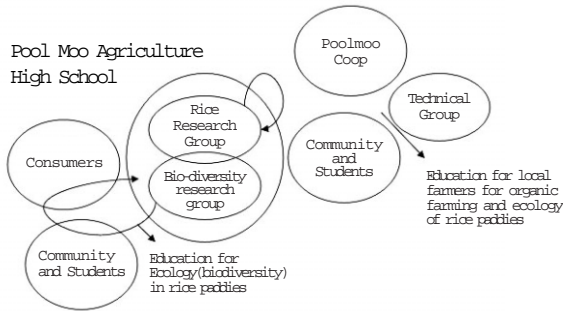
Organic farming was being developed in the school, and has become successful on a bigger scale with the introduction of “Integrated Rice and Duck Farming”, a farming technique in which ducks are systematically introduced into rice paddies for weed and pest control, fertilization, and enhancement of rice growth. In order to supply hundreds of local farmers with ducklings for this method, the department responsible for raising livestock was placed in charge of incubating the ducks and providing duck feed for the farmers. Now, this agency works together with the farmers to further improve and develop new methods for organic farming in the “Poolmoo Rice Research Group.”

It is imperative to work cooperatively with different village organizations when finding materials for organic farming cultivation and ways in which to distribute the organic production. As organic farming spreads, it is natural for the community to become a part of the entire process, such as Moondang Ecological and Agricultural Town⁸ drafting a hundred year plan dedicated to enterprises that aim to restore the town.

With the continued spread of organic farming, it has become easier for other areas to internalize the various methods, learning from the trial and error of other countries. Furthermore, through the process of providing and sharing information across the Asian-Pacific area, we have formed close ties to other farmers outside our own country: Apart from Japanese farmers, we have also hosted the Asian Farmers Symposium twice in our area, inviting farmers from South Korea, Japan, China, North Korea, the Philippines, and Vietnam, creating relationships with these countries based on peaceful humanitarian goals.

7) www.hongseong.go.kr/village/hd/

8) <http://mundang.invil.org/>



Fourth, the Poolmoo School builds networks between different schools, and between schools and community organizations. Through various programs, the schools and community organizations together tackle local issues dealing with the economical, cultural, and social problems.

For example, there is the Farming Experience Field Study (2006~), which provided to each level of education (elementary, middle, and high school), the Horticulture Experience Field Trips (2007~), which is for local students with disabilities, and the Rice Paddy Ecology Field Study (2009). Also, there is the used book store run jointly by the school and the local publisher (GuMoolKo Publishing), the “Poolmoo Rice Research Group” (2006~), which is run in cooperation with a local farmers organization to improve and develop new organic farming methods, the Local Resident Lecture Classes (2009~), which is held by the school and the local library association to provide lectures for the local community, and the Organic Cultivation Farmers Education (2009), which is run by the school’s research department and the farmers organization.

Furthermore, the target participants have expanded steadily as the schools worked closely with the local community throughout the years. In the beginning, the participants were mainly the teachers and the students, but as the students graduated and spread out into the local community, new ties to the local farmers began to grow with the school. Many graduates have helped to connect the school to the

farmers by helping the latter to implement various programs developed in the school, and these ties are still expanding to include various organizations through ongoing networking.

2.5. School and Programme in Regional Community

With ties between the community and the school going back 50 years now, and with the help of graduates and local residents, the following Local Resident Associations are shaping the local community.

1. Education: GatGol Daycare and Nursing Center, Poolmoo High school of Agriculture, Poolmoo Community College of Ecological Agriculture, and ecological education programs provided to the Hongdong Elementary Public School and Hongdong Middle School.

To provide continual specialized education for the town, the school provides extended field trips for students with disabilities in all levels of schooling. Also, after researching the ecology of organic rice paddies in 2008, local teachers, residents, and students were placed into groups to continue and extend the research of rice paddy ecosystems every year, allowing local students to learn about agriculture and ecology. This has led to the publishing of books and other education material on the diversity of rice paddy ecosystems.

2. Associations: Poolmoo Subsistence Association, Poolmoo Credit Union, Poolmoo School Subsistence Association: Starting with the self-service store within the school in 1960, the Subsistence Association branched out into the local community in 1980, drawing in organic farmers and growing to 800 members. This allowed a firm base in which organic farming could continue to expand. Poolmoo School created the Poolmoo School Subsistence Association to produce soap by recycling used oil, and breads and cookies from local grain, starting a business

venture using preferably local organic produce. The local branch of the nationwide Agricultural Association (called Nonghyup⁹⁾) has also started an organic crop department following the trend of spreading organic agriculture.

3. Organic Agriculture: Hongseong Eco-Friendly Crop Group, Poolmoo Subsistence Association, Hongseong Organic Farming Association, Poolmoo Livestock, Hongseong Ecological Town Association: Since 1975, organic farming has spread throughout the area from the hard work of graduates, and the ongoing exchange of information between the graduates and the school. These changes have brought new opportunities that are shaping one part of Hongdong municipality, called Mundangri, into being an entirely ecologically sustainable town. It serves as a model for other communities through the continued hard work of the local community and the school.
4. Manufacturing: Rice cakes, PyeongChong Yogurt, and other organic food products.
5. Women: Hongseong Women Farmer's Center, with a community store, child care system, and room for various community activities such as gymnastic lessons and others.
6. Culture: GuMoolKo Publishing House, NeuTeeNaMu (Zelcova Tree) used bookstore, Rural Lifestyle Historical Museum
7. Craftwork: BanJeeGoRi workshop, GatGol carpentry workshop
8. Research: GatGol Ecological Agriculture Research Institute with soil, water, and ground water testing labs, as well as offices with joint research groups
9. Energy: Energy Recycling and Conversion
10. Welfare: HaNul Community (for persons with disabilities), Retirement Home, The Home of Wishes (elderly persons with disabilities), Hanul Town (ecological town)
11. Furthermore, following the trend of sustainable development in many aspects of rural life, many organizations and NGOs chose

9) www.nonghyup.com

to establish branches and headquarters within and near Hongdong: (Centre for Energy Alternative, Hongseong Organic Farming Cooperative)



'Preparing villages, thinking farmers' cover of community guide book

3. Implications & Reflection

3.1. Model s Impact

The school and its program has been critical in raising the possibilities in sustaining rural populations in South Korea

1. Nurturing successors for the preservation of rural agricultural towns

- Graduates from the school, by large, have remained within the local community, and all are practicing organic farming.
- Graduates work not only for their own farms, but also for the good of the entire local agricultural community (becoming members and leaders in Local Farmers Association and Local Subsistence Association).

2. Ecological sustainability for rural towns

- Organic farming, which was implemented by the town through the school, is now being used in 40~50% of all cultivated agricultural area (for more information: <http://www.hongseong.go.kr/village/hd/>). Furthermore, Hongdong community and the Poolmoo Schools have become

a knowledge hub of organic farming for the national, as well as international, network of organic rice farming in Asia.

- Solar panels and wind turbines have been installed in local farms and town hall as an approach to implement the ongoing research in alternative energy sources by the school. (for more information: "Hope in Local Energy. Hongdong, Learning About Energy." Yoo Jin Lee, Imagine Publishing, 2008)
- Ecological education programs are part of the regular curriculum in all levels of schooling. Through the growth of information and diversity in these programs, they are now starting to be provided to schools in urban areas. (for more information: "Diversity in Rice Field Ecology", GeuMoolKo Publishing, 2009)

3. Sustainability of Rural Towns through Organic Agriculture

- The research groups that are jointly led by the school and local farmers are continuing to provide new cultivation methods, which will improve the quality of organic farming techniques. This is an ongoing knowledge development process that is mutually beneficial for both the school and local farmers.
- Through the solidarity of the local farmers associations, farmers are provided with education in agriculture and ecology.
- Apart from being beneficial to ecology, organic agriculture is also a growing market and remains largely unaffected by geopolitics and free trade agreements. As such, it provides secure income to farmers, helping them sustain their livelihoods.

4. To Sustain and Revive Rural Town Culture

- Through communal and cooperative methods, various ventures (recycled soap, workshops, used book store, etc.) are being created to expand the cultural aspects of rural towns.
- A local library is being planned to provide various educational programs (English, Classics, History, etc.) for the local community.

5. Sustainability of Rural Town Education

- We are providing agricultural seminars in the field, which is nearly impossible to introduce in conventional platforms of education. This allows the students to get a hands-on experience of agriculture, and we continue to expand these field seminars to include students with disabilities.
- The agricultural and ecological education provided to the students helps them understand the local area in its present state, and we are continually trying to expand upon this understanding.

3.2. Reflection

The link between the rural area and the urban area does not yet have a long history. We are only in the beginning of this interlinking process, in which the education of consumers in ecology and rural culture is a growing concern. In recent years, the fast development of the Korean government to boost nature-friendly farming has led to marketing problems for organic goods of some producer associations in Hongdong area. Although, this can be overcome by stronger solidarity between rural and urban citizens, it is an arduous process.

3.3. Suggestions for Implementation

The following needs to be taken into consideration for any educator interested in implementing the ideas and principles of this program into their own:

Diversity, mutual dependence, circulation, symbiosis, these are fundamental principles of ecology. These same principles should also be applied to education. To ensure a healthy and peaceful society, we need to respect the cultural diversity and harmonious co-existence of different sects of society, and at the same time help each other use one's own individual strengths for the good of the entire society.

The school wishes to leap above the current social model based on competition, and find true sustainability. Because the sustainability of the school depends on the sustainability of the local community, we must continually look upon our founding goals so that students can come to believe and understand that they are part of the community. These methods will teach students to appreciate work, education, and cooperation. Rural life has its values, which are beneficial to the entire society, and if the students internalize them, they may become one with the local community and the wider society.

We must remind ourselves that these principles of community can be more easily understood in agricultural and fishing communities than in urban communities.

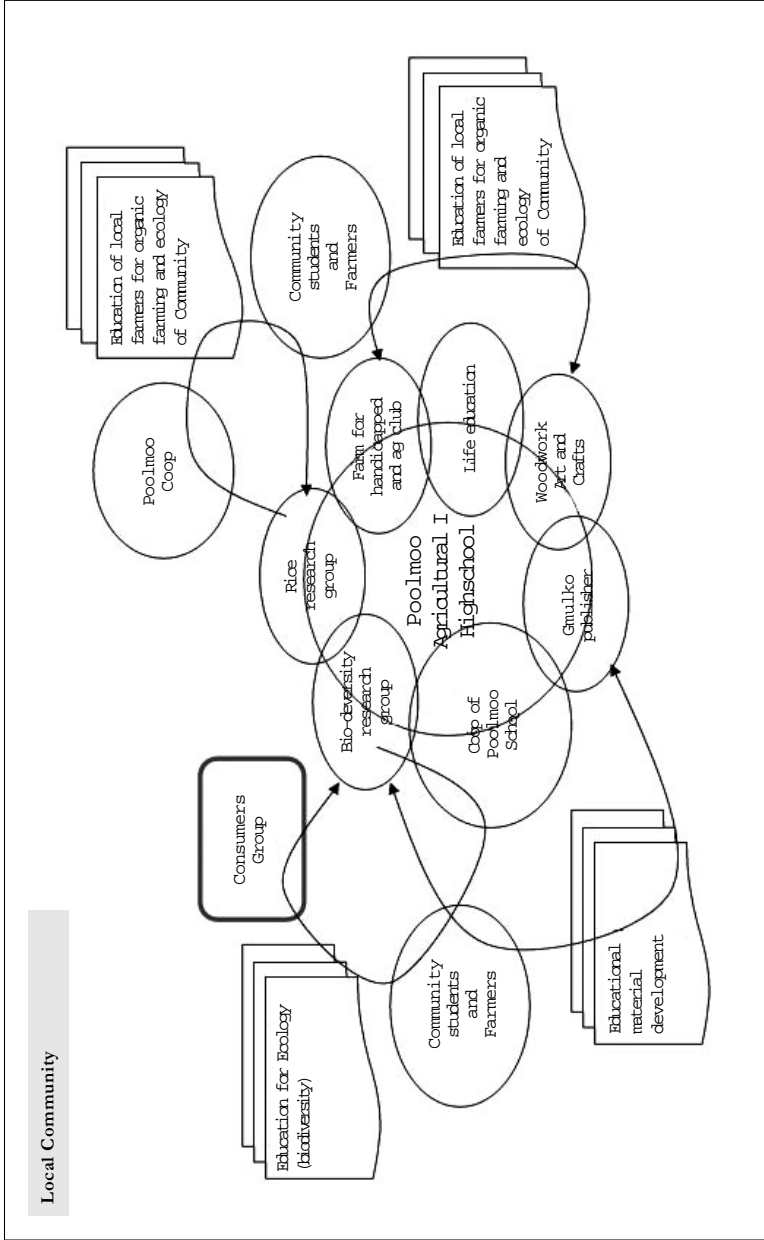
This educational framework must not terminate at the end of each level of schooling, but must continue on and grow, adjusting to the levels of education and becoming a holistic local educational system that works hand-in-hand with local community resources.

It is time for a transition from “an urban educational system based on urbanization, materialism, and competition, towards a new age of agricultural, philosophical, humanitarian, and individualistic education.” (LEE Chan Gab, during 1958 inauguration of Poolmoo school)

Appendix

Inter-school community Chronology

Time Period	In-School Activities	Community Activities
Poolmoo School Establishment Period (1958-1962)	1958 Poolmoo Civil Educational School established (middle school education) 1959 Poolmoo Co-op launched 1959 School Newspaper established	
Poolmoo School Settlement Period (1963-1991)	1966 High School Education started 1966 Poolmoo Book co-op launched 1969 Poolmoo Consumer co-op launched 1969 Poolmoo Credit Union testing period begins 1971 Book co-op publishes first book [Ghandi, Social Pioneer] 1975 Organic Farming courses begin 1978 School magazine [Poolmoo] is launched 1980 Education Bureau reforms close middle school educational programs	1964 School opens Township Sports Games 1967 School begins Eastern Culture Lectures 1972 Poolmoo Credit Union firmly established 1975 Dietary Improvement classes provided 1976 2 graduates begin first organic farming 1978 Hongdong food processing factory established 1979 Hongdong student library opened 1979 Poolmoo Agricultural Equipment Co-op founded 1980 Poolmoo Consumer Co-op Office opened 1980 Alternative Industrial Research Facility opened, alternate water heating facility is developed 1980 Yangkok Bank founded 1981 Gatgol nursing and daycare center founded 1983 Poolmoo Consumer Co-op re-established, agricultural products begins distribution and shipping 1984 Direct transactions with urban consumer associations is started 1985 Joining of Federal Consumer Co-op Association 1985 Local Newspaper [Hongdong] is established 1988 First regional newspaper in Korea [Hongdong Weekly] is established 1987 Hongsung Township Organic Farming Organization established
Poolmoo School Expansion And Development Period (1992-Current)	1993 Poolmoo School Subsistence Co-op established 1994 Poolmoo Soap Co-op established 2001 Professional Courses in Ecological Farming provided (two year college level course) 2006 76 members in Poolmoo School Subsistence Co-op	1995 Duck Farming methods implemented, organic farming techniques provided in full 1999 Poolmoo Subsistence Co-op re-established 2000 Hongsung Environmental Agriculture Educational Facility is built 2002 Hongsung Women Farmer s Center started 2004 Soil Health Surveying center is built 2006 Organization for Disabled People and Haneul Community is established



Field Visit

On behalf of APCEIU, Dr. KIM Kwang-Hyun, Chief and Mr. AHN Sung-Hwan, Junior Programme Specialist of the Publication and Information Team undertook a field visit to Hongseong, Korea on 29 October 2009 to carry out the following missions: 1) to confer the EIU Best Practices Award on the Author, 2) to provide the guidelines on finalizing the report: and 3) to interview teachers and students involved in this cases, and discuss how to continue and enhance futher activities related to EIU.



▲ Awarding the certificate



◀ Interview with the principal and teacher



◀ Visitation of a local bookstore



◀ The grain storehouse for local residents

