

Education in Refugee Camps as a Linkage Between Humanitarian Assistance and Development

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Abstract

In this paper, education is emphasized as an important factor that contributes to sustainable development. Education is very crucial in the sense that it contributes to individual empowerment which leads to self-reliance of people that directly leads to sustainable development. Refugee education and ‘The Miracle of Han River’ are examined to suggest that a fundamental approach is needed in the Post-2015 Agenda to well indicate the reality in developing nations. In order to enable education in developing nations and refugee camps to be linked to sustainable development, partnership with universities is necessary. The global partnership between universities and developing countries should be fostered and expanded in order to empower the capacity of people from developing countries so that they can be the main subjects that lead sustainable development in their countries.

Keywords: Post-2015 Agenda, refugee education, miracle of Han River, KOICA scholarship program, international development

1. Introduction

As the deadline of the Millennium Development Goals(MDG) has only an year left, the United Nations is examining a new version of MDGs to be attained again beyond 2015; post-2015 Agenda. In other words, the post-2015 Agenda has significance in that it is devised to overcome the limitations of the former developed MDGs. The UN Secretary-General (UN SG) Report on accelerating progress to the MDGs and the issues for approaching the UN development agenda beyond 2015 ([A/66/126](#)) stated that “[t]he post-2015 development framework is likely to have the best development impact if it emerges from an inclusive, open and transparent process with multiple stakeholder participation.” This statement indicates that international development should accommodate diverse global issues, numerous participants and transparent process in order to attain sustainable development which is regarded as the main goal of the post-2015 Agenda.

The post-2015 Agenda emerged to respond to the limitations of MDGs in a more human rights based and fundamental approach which is distinct from the previously stated in the MDGs 20 years ago. Among the various points of the post-2015 Agenda, we believe that education is very important in the sense that it helps individuals build self-reliance. To illustrate, self-reliance is surely a focal point in order to realize continuous development even after external assistance is lifted up and education is the key factor that can empower the individuals.

In this paper, education that is a driving force for sustainable development is narrowed down to education in refugee camps as it is the point where humanitarian assistance links to development. Refugee camps initially accommodate refugees from national disaster and severe violence who desperately demands safety and survival. The fact that refugee camps are set up for at least a year up to five years, refugees are provided with opportunities to be ready for the new start in their communities after the refugee camps are withdrew. In other words, refugee camps are a specific case where emergency relief can directly transfer to sustainable development. Therefore, diverse and high quality education will have a pivotal role in leading to successful resettlement of refugees and reconstruction of local community and the nation.

This research will examine the importance of education in the linkage of humanitarian assistance and sustainable development using case studies. Two case studies on refugee camps in Nepal will

indicate the high quality of refugee education that is not successful to be linked to community building. The South Korean case will be introduced as a successful example of high quality education playing a key role when transferring disaster to sustainable development.

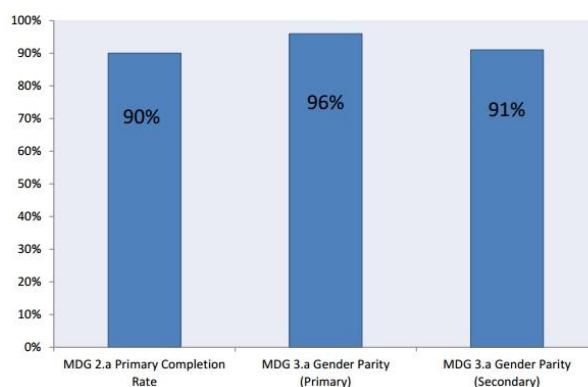
2. Education sectors of MDGs and Post-2015 Agenda

In 2000, the UN General Assembly agreed to the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) raised from the UN Millennium declaration (Barrett, 2009). Among the eight goals which deal with diverse issues, Goal 2 and Goal 3 are related to education. Specific contents of the two are as follows (Burnett & Felsman, 2012):

- Goal 2: Ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.
- Goal 3: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.

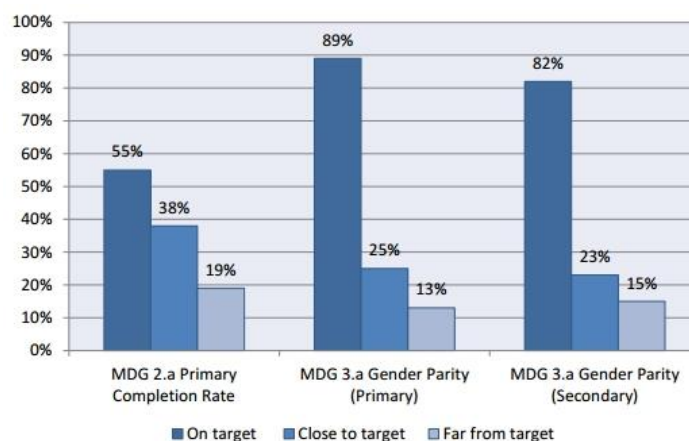
Barrett (2009) added that “the first MDG provided the overarching goal of eradicating extreme poverty, which may be viewed as a purpose for the education and gender equality goals”. In fact, Goal 2 and 3 seems to be achieved and contributed greatly to poverty reduction as Burnett and Felsman (2012) presented in Figure 1 and 2 which indicates the huge progress made towards the two MDGs regarding education. As indicated in Figure 1, the gender parity goal has shown remarkable progress as well as the primary education rate (Burnett & Felsman, 2012). However, it is difficult to discuss whether the two MDGs regarding education had positive effects on eradicating poverty with the given numerical statistics because the reality is quite different from the statistics.

Figure 1. Progress Towards the Education MDGs by Lower-Middle Income Countries, 2011



Source: World Bank Global Monitoring Report 2011

Figure2. Status of Developing Countries in Meeting the Education MDGs



Source: World Bank Global Monitoring Report 2010

Likewise, some people have raised questions about whether the MDGs were adequate to improve the situation of the developing nations. The criticisms are summarized in three points. Firstly, only the numerical statistics of the enrollment and completion rate measured are not enough to assess the expansion rate of primary education (Burnett & Felsman, 2012). According to an interview with Richard Margan who is the UNICEF Senior Advisor on the Post-2015 development agenda, the tremendous rise in primary school enrollment is a notable achievement but does not fully inform the reality whether children are actually learning from schools (Burnett and Felsman, 2012). Secondly, the success in primary enrollment rate leads to the growing pressure on secondary education to follow by in all developing countries (Burnett and Felsman, 2012). However, it is hard for low-income nations to meet the demand of secondary education in reality so that many students might finish their learning at the primary education level due to lack of education supply. In addition, international discussions on future goals mostly do not deal with higher education even though it is crucial for specialized and professionalized development to be possible in developing countries (Burnett and Felsman, 2012).

Upon acknowledgement of the limitations of MDGs, members of the international community are discussing about the Post-2015 agenda to better approach to eradicate poverty. Basically, the main theme of Post-2015 agenda is sustainability which is also called as ‘Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)’. For the Post-2015 world, education is singled out as the first or second top priority which clearly shows the intimate relationship between education and sustainable development (Post-2015

Agenda and Related Sustainable Development Goals, 2014). The main goals related to education presented in SDGs are as follows (Post-2015 Agenda and Related Sustainable Development Goals, 2014):

- Every child completes primary education with basic literacy and numeracy, in schools with grade divisions, books, light, meals and sanitation.
- All secondary schools to facilitate computing skills, and a 50 percent availability of digital facilities among primary schools without them.
- Increase the percentage of young adults with the skills needed for work.
- Achieve parity in enrollment and educational opportunities at primary, secondary and tertiary levels for girls and women.
- Curricula at primary level and at all levels above to include sustainable development concepts, with special emphasis on business schools.

The specified goals are commonly focused on improving sustainability of the development process by empowering human resources. The MDGs have proved that sustainable development is impossible to be realized by focusing only on diverse assistance toward developing countries. Whereas, empowering human resources is the answer toward sustainable development. Even though education might take a long time to witness improvement of developing countries, it will definitely last long because the subject of the local and national level development will be the independent citizens. This means that the international community should not structure every part of the developing countries but invest in educating human resources to let them improve their national situation by themselves even when foreign assistance is ceased. To sum up, education should be a primary agenda in the post-2015 Agenda due to its significant contribution to sustainable development in developing countries.

3. Education in Refugee Camps

According to the latest UNHCR global report, 51.2 million refugees escaped from their hometown worldwide due to vulnerable and emergency situations resulting from persecution and continuous conflicts that link to violence, this number of displaced population is the same as that of the 26th largest country in the world (UNHCR, 2013). In order to accommodate such numerous refugees,

refugee camps are set up to provide shelter and protection for those people who fled from their hometown searching for a safe condition to live in. Refugee camps aim to guarantee the human dignity of the refugees despite their fragile status by providing the minimum level of protection in sectors such as food, water and hygiene according to the SPHERE standard (Sphere, 2011). In addition to the minimum standard of protection, refugee camps also provide education to the refugees for their self-reliance after their lives in the camps. In fact, approximately 86% of the refugee population is from developing countries which are lack of human and material resources that are essential for restoration of communities independently (UNHCR, 2013). In other words, concrete measures that enable the displaced people to rebuild their community and step further toward sustainable development by themselves are highly necessary. For those people, education is the solution to cease the vicious cycle of overdependence on the international society and lack of self-reliance which marginalizes the community members who should be the subjects of community resettlement and reconstruction for sustainable development to be possible. Thus, it is very important that refugee camps not only provide shelter and protection in emergency situations for survival in the short run but also empower individual capacities by providing education which directly links to sustainable development in the long run. This paper indicates the significance of refugee camps regarding sustainable development as education in camps serves as a transition point from relief to development.

Education system with high quality is provided in refugee camps even though the situation in refugee camps is fragile in that it is in the middle of sociopolitical or religious crisis. The education curriculum in refugee camps is specified and professional with great amount of funding. Targets of education in refugee camps is specified to subjects who hardly had the opportunities to be educated in their hometown due to social norms and bias but had to be exposed to heavy load of labor such as child soldiers, young children, girls and subjects who were unable to experience well performed education such as adults and peacekeeping forces (Pigozzi, 1999). In addition to a specified range of education targets, the education programs itself is also diverse and specialized in areas such as vocational workshops, primary education and parenting educations. However, these factors are not sufficient indicators to check the quality of education in refugee camps. According to UNHCR, the

effective indicators of high quality refugee education includes inputs such as the number of students per teacher, percent of qualified/trained teachers as well as outcomes such as refugee/returnee qualifications (Dryden-Peterson, 2011). In other words, education in refugee camps should not only provide education but also need to witness successful outcomes from the education refugees in order to sufficiently empower human resources that will contribute to the community reconstruction. In fact, the reality of refugee education quality mostly do not reach the initial goal set by UNHCR as the number of students per teacher outnumbers the goal of 40:1, the percentage of qualified and trained teachers in some refugee camps still are under the goal of 80% and the refugee/returnee qualifications are not well recognized in some host countries which is far from what UNHCR have aimed (Dryden-Peterson, 2011). Even though the reality in some refugee camps are not sufficient to provide high quality education, the education system and targets definitely serves as a foundation for reconstruction of refugees and the indicators contribute to higher quality education to be provided to refugees which will eventually result in highly qualified refugees who will be the main actors of community resettlement.

When high quality education in refugee camps is assured, education can be protective which will lead to sustainable development in diverse developing countries with numerous refugees. The benefits of high quality education is not only socioeconomic, but also has psychological and peace building benefits that contributes to the future community resettlement. Refugees who experienced severe violence greatly suffer from mental trauma throughout their lives in the refugee camp and this trauma has a huge influence on their lives even after repatriation (Hollifield, Warner & Lian, 2002). Psychological restoration has a positive effect on physical health as well, thus psychological treatment should be prioritized in refugee camps. Education programs provide ways to deal with traumatic memories and precarious situations which help children and adults relieve their psychological memories as well as build a stepping stone for further development (VanderKamp, 2004). In addition to psychological treatment, education in refugee camps develops children and adults into peace building and democratic citizens. The peacebuilding benefit of refugee education has positive contribution to further governance of the communities led by refugees (VanderKamp, 2004). Refugees are the ones that should make up the future of their local and national level development, so it is very

crucial for them to build a peaceful community in order to prevent another crisis and violence they were deeply overwhelmed. To summarize, education in refugee camps which contains diverse approaches such as socioeconomic, psychological, and governance builds a firm platform for community building in the future which links humanitarian assistance and sustainable development.

As mentioned above, refugee camps enable refugees to participate in high quality education which they had never experienced even in their hometown. The high quality education in refugee camps is possible due to attempts of the international society to protect refugees' human rights to deserve education. However, the outcomes of refugee education are not well linked to higher education which should be conducted in order to make sustainable development possible after refugees go back to their hometowns. The following cases of refugee education in Nepal clearly shows how the education in refugee camps do not smoothly transfer to higher education, and furthermore to self-reliant community reconstruction and resettlement despite their high quality of education. To check the quality of education in refugee camps, number of students per teacher, percent of qualified/trained teachers, and qualification of refugees and returnees will be used as indicators.

The Nepal refugee camp accommodating Bhutanese refugees provide high quality education including psychological, socioeconomic and peacemaking areas but did not successfully link to sustainable development. These Bhutanese refugees were originally living in Nepal, but they fled to Bhutan due to their religious disparity with Nepal. Living in Bhutan where Buddhism is the national religion, these people actively participated in Bhutanese society in diverse sectors. However, since 1990, these Bhutanese refugees, also called as Lhotsampa refugees, were forced to be expelled from Bhutan by the government with excessive torture and harassment (Shrestha, Sharma, B& de Jong, 1998). The Lhotsampa refugees fled to Nepal refugee camps funded by UNHCR and their number reached to 85,078 in 1994 (Shrestha, Sharma, B& de Jong, 1998). The Lhotsampa refugee issue was very controversial in the sense that neither the Bhutan nor the Nepal government acknowledged them as their citizens, so the Lhotsampa refugees had nowhere to settle down (Blanck, Bowman& Woodruff, 2002). Despite the harsh situation the Lhotsampa refugees had to face, the UNHCR refugee camps provided them with high quality education for their empowerment.

First, the teacher and student ratio in Nepal refugee camp is 1:42, which is slightly overpassing the

goal of UNHCR which was 1:40 (Crisp, Talbot & Cipollone, 2001). Although the teacher-student ratio outnumbers the UNHCR goal, still the education environment is highly qualified regarding the number of teachers who are recruited to meet the huge number of refugees learning in refugee schools; 40,000 students and 1,000 teachers in the Bhutanese refugee camps (Sinclair, 2001). This indicates that education service in the Nepal refugee camp is in high quality since it has an ideal teacher and student ratio despite the large number of refugee students. In other words, Lhotsampa refugees are provided with an ideal classroom environment where students can interact well with their teachers effectively due to a moderate number of students per teacher.

Second, the training system of teachers is another great strength of the Nepal refugee camps. The remarkable point of Nepal refugee education is that they provide continuous resources of teachers by training refugees who finished school in refugee camps (Crisp, Talbot & Cipollone, 2001). The refugees who are trained to be teachers have to plan their lectures, develop teaching materials, and learn methods to teach students effectively (Crisp, Talbot & Cipollone, 2001). This innovative system to supply trained teachers allows refugees to receive a constant and high quality education in refugee camps. In addition, training refugees to be teachers contributes to individual empowerment so that they can be self-sufficient for education even after they leave refugee camps.

Lastly, the qualifications of refugees do not go further than secondary education and if they are qualified they do not return to their society but search for a high salary job outside of refugee camps. Only primary and secondary education is provided within the Nepal refugee camp due to the limited funding of UNHCR to no more than secondary education (Crisp, Talbot & Cipollone, 2001). So the refugees do not have the opportunity to experience further education which is very crucial for the higher level national development. There are a few students who receive higher education in urban areas outside the refugee camp, but most of them do not come back to the refugee camp but seek job opportunities providing satisfying compensation (Brown, 2001). In order for the refugees to build capacity for resettlement and reconstruction of their communities, the educated human resources should not leak. However, the reality is that many qualified human resources search for new jobs outside the refugee camps with better compensation rather than contributing to the development of their nation. Thus, lack of higher level education and leakage of highly qualified human resources

limits refugees to build full capacity to contribute to sustainable development in the future.

Similar to the Nepal case, many refugee camps provide high quality education but they fail to fully transfer the educated human resources to community reconstruction. The problem is that refugee camps fail to successfully implant the qualified refugees in their society to lead them contribute to their community. In addition, as examined in the Nepal case, many refugee camps do not provide higher level education which is the most crucial aspect of higher level national development due to lack of funding. As refugee camps are situated in the middle point of relief to development, high quality education provided in the refugee camps should be linked to higher education and assure return of those educated human resources to make sustainable development possible. To expand, human resources qualified with high level education are needed to enable developing countries to witness sustainable development.

4. ‘Miracle of the Han River’

The South Korean case of development is regarded as one of the most outstanding achievement in the field of international development due to its rapid growth and sustainability. Even though South Korea did not possess any natural resources or a great amount of capital necessary for national development, it experienced successful improvement despite the destructive situation after the Korean War which named the Korean case as ‘The Miracle of Han River’. The major factors that contributed to achieve such remarkable development in South Korea were human resources mainly educated in two areas; one is ‘higher education’ and the other is ‘vocational education’.

In this section, the miracle of Han River will be examined to prove the significance of education which directly links to sustainable development as it is the most successful case of high level and quality education playing a decisive role in remarkable development. The South Korean case suggests the effective way of accomplishing sustainable development in developing countries.

Shin (2012) asserted that “a noticeable feature of Korean higher education is that its growth has been closely related to economic development”. In other words, there is a cyclical chain between higher education and economic growth (Shin, 2012). To explain, economic development not only could provide a job market for educated people but also it enables the government to invest public funds to form better education systems which could incubate qualified human resources needed for

national development (Shin, 2012). Throughout the process of South Korean growth, educational system has also improved in both quantitative and qualitative ways.

Despite the disastrous reality right after the period of 1960-1970 in South Korea, the quantitative development of education has shown remarkable progress on all levels of education (Korea Journal, 1971). For example, as shown in Table 1 below, the number of primary schools, students and teachers increased during 1960-1970 which was led by strong governmental leadership. Primary education provided people with the basic abilities that built productive labor force who were able to read and use basic mathematical methods. In other words, the productive labor force provided with primary education was the main manpower that driven the labor-intensive industry in the 1960s and early 1970s which led to the initial development stage in South Korea(Shin, 2012).

Table 1. Primary School Statistics in 1960-1970

Year	Schools		Pupils		Teachers		Teacher-to-Pupil Ratio
	Number	Growth Rate	Number	Growth Rate	Number	Growth Rate	
1960	4,496	100	3,621,267	100	61,749	100	58
1965	5,125	144	4,941,342	136	79,164	128	62
1970	5,961	133	5,739,301	159	101,095	164	57

Source: Korea Journal

In addition, the rate of secondary schools increased strikingly during 1960-1970 while that of the primary schools, pupils and teachers slowed down during the 1960-70 (Korea Journal, 1971). Table 2 below indicates that the number of secondary pupils and teachers increased more than 2 times in 1970 compared to 1960. The main reason for this growth could be that most of the people who finished primary education transferred to the secondary school. In fact, Korea Journal (1971) insisted in its report that “more than 80% of primary school graduates continued their schooling”. The increased number of people who finished secondary education was the main workforce in chemical and heavy industry in the 1970s and in the early 1980s when these fields were highly invested by the government due to its prospective future for economic development (Shin, 2012). To illustrate, the Korean government made a nation-wide policy to foster chemical and heavy industry from 1970 to 1980 in

order to strengthen military force and foster export-oriented development, so there was a high demand for more specialized and professional workers to be recruited in the chemical and heavy industry.

Table 2. Secondary School Statistics in 1960-1970

Year	Schools		Pupils		Teachers		Teacher-to-Pupil Ratio
	Number	Growth Rate	Number	Growth Rate	Number	Growth Rate	
1960	1,693	100	792,177	100	22,717	100	35
1965	1,909	113	1,177,872	149	33,175	146	36
1970	2,497	148	1,909,190	241	51,061	226	37

Source: Korea Journal

In the meantime, the quality of education in South Korea has gradually improved following the expansion of primary and secondary education. The South Korean government endeavored to foster qualified teachers by establishing a number of teacher-training schools at the secondary level as well as non-degree granting teacher training centers after the Korean War when the number of elementary school teachers was seriously insufficient (Center on International Education Benchmarking). Moreover, in 1961, teacher-training schools were upgraded to two-year teachers colleges, and these were further improved to four-year institutions between 1981 and 1984 (Center on International Education Benchmarking). Not only giving effort to maintaining the quality of teaching fellows, but also the South Korean government enhanced the student-to-teacher ratio. According to Table 1 and 2, the number of teachers kept increasing to decrease the student and teacher ratio during 1960 to 1970. Thus, the education quality has enhanced along with the increased number of schools provided to Koreans over the ages of South Korean rapid development.

As the industrialization process of South Korea moved toward technology-based industry in the 1980s and 1990s, university education became important and as knowledge-based economy emerged in the late 1990s graduate school education became necessary to be fit into such industry (Shin, 2012). As a response to such industrialization trend, high school enrollments grew in the 1970s and the 1980s, university education enrollments in the 1980s and 1990s, and graduate school enrollments in the 2000s (Shin, 2012). To sum up, South Korean pattern of education system was dependent on the

industrialization trend in order to supply adequate workforce to such industries.

The case of South Korea highly emphasized the development of human resources to stimulate the national development (Shin, 2012). This research insists that education made the South Korean development to be a sustainable one instead of a short term one by supplying adequate workforce to the major industries. In particular, Shin (2012) stated that “education was not regarded as independent from economic development, but as a supporting system through producing a trained and educated population”. The correlative planning between educational reform and economic growth made South Koreans to successfully eradicate poverty and witness national development even after foreign assistance was ceased. In conclusion, the South Korean case points out the significance of higher education to be followed along with economic development to the developing countries to go through sustainable development.

5. Role of University in Sustainable Development

Universities can be the most important partners in the range of developmental assistance. Lee (2008) claimed that “universities can offer the most substantial cooperation, given their comprehensive knowledge and understanding in developing countries and expertise and technologies in specific fields”. That is because universities can train local professionals to implement quality development programs (Lee, 2008), they will provide proper workers in developing countries. As Lee (2008) asserted in his report, “knowledge and ideas are needed as urgently as financial assistance for sustainable growth in a developing nation”, so “exchange and transfer of knowledge and information to developing countries is as important as transfer of capital and technology”.

As examined in the refugee camp case, continuity of education is very crucial for high quality education to step further toward sustainable development in developing countries. However, the reality is that these countries do not have enough infrastructure and capital in order to provide high level education such as universities and graduate schools which results in a widened gap between developed and developing countries as the development level differs due to education levels. The importance of university and graduate school education was introduced in the case of Korea where it conducted development by correlating the industrialization process and education to gain the best

output within a relatively short time. This paper suggests that if universities in developed countries offer opportunities to students from developing nations, they could give decisive help for them as well as gain academic contribution by making a global partnership. In fact, many universities in South Korea are conducting those global partnership programs and this paper will introduce the example of Ewha Womans University offering specialized women empowerment program in its graduate school.

Ewha-KOICA Master's Program has provided women from developing countries with development cooperation specialized program with its expertise and funds in official development assistance (Ewha Womans University: Ewha-KOICA). With regard to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, the aim of this program is training and educating women as main actors and subjects in development in developing countries (Ewha Womans University: Ewha-KOICA). The role of women leaders in developing nations has become essential not only for achieving gender equality and empowerment, but also for accomplishment of country's development as a whole (Ewha Womans University: Ewha-KOICA). The striking point is that it could share the experience of remarkable economic achievement of South Korea with other partner countries abroad. Ewha Womans University has been made partnership with more than 30 countries; Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Nepal, and so on. Likewise, the Ewha-KOICA Master's Program provides women from developing countries with higher level education that is not sufficiently available in their home countries. By education such elites from developing nations, they can make a remarkable contribution to their home country based on the learnings from South Korea and this will surely lead to sustainable development as the nationals are the subjects that lead national development. Therefore, universities should provide more opportunities for students in developing nations to participate in university education in order to contribute to sustainable development in their country.

6. Conclusion

As the deadline of the MDGs is close and several limitations of the MDGs are appointed by the international society, the importance of the post-2015 Agenda is emphasized. In spite of the importance of education presented in the MDGs, the international community only succeeded in improving the situation in numerical figures but failed to improve the reality which numerical figures cannot fully explain. In order to attain sustainable development that is emphasized in the post-2015

Agenda, education should be approached not only in numerical figures but also in the quality and continuity aspect. This paper emphasized the importance of refugee camps as a midpoint of humanitarian assistance and development. Thus, the high quality education provided in the refugee camps will successfully contribute to sustainable development when the educated refugees are provided with higher education and return to their hometown for contribution to national development. The South Korean case was suggested as a successful case of high quality education directly linked to national development which built individual capacity that led to sustainable development which made South Korea as it is now. Furthermore, this paper suggested the importance of fostering scholarship program with developing countries to give higher education opportunities to students in developing countries so that they can implement changes to their hometown based on high level education.

In the sense that education is an emerging sector that has a great impact on sustainable development, this paper has a critical academic contribution by attempting new issues in the international society. By suggesting refugee camps as a stepping stone for relief to be transferred to development, this paper examined the importance of the participation of community members to make sustainable development to be possible which was not much discussed before.

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Tables

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Figures

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