

## **Issues in Development (No. 67): Meaning and Cases of an Integrated Approach to Development Cooperation**

The SDGs adopted in 2015 are a set of 17 integrated and indivisible priorities for sustainable development. In order to achieve the SDGs with high linkage between goals, the need for an integrated approach based on the participation of all stakeholders at all levels in various aspects such as economy, society and environment is emphasized. Korea is also continuing its efforts to establish an integrated ODA base to resolve the fragmentation of development cooperation projects. As the importance of the integrated approach is emerging, KOICA needs to review the meaning and method of the integrated approach in terms of enhancing development effectiveness and expanding project performance. Therefore, in this study, the background and meaning of the integrated approach will be examined, and the direction and implications of KOICA's integrated approach will be suggested by analyzing the cases of the integrated approach of organizations performing development cooperation projects.

The integrated approach in the field of development cooperation has been consistently raised as part of an effort to reduce the adverse effects that may arise from a fragmented approach in economic or technical aspects in discovering projects. In addition, as interest in aid effectiveness and aid accountability increased due to aid fatigue, an attempt was made to improve project effectiveness by identifying the relationship between each component for achieving project goals and creating outcomes based on the theory of change. In particular, an integrated approach is being emphasized again as a way to achieve the SDGs. An integrative approach can be defined as either an approach that connects the design, delivery and evaluation of programs across the fields to have a lasting impact on people's lives, or an approach that simultaneously promotes multiple benefits across the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economy, society and the environment. The integrated approach is not a new concept for development cooperation projects, and it appears that several organizations carrying out development cooperation projects are already applying this integrated approach when necessary depending on the development topic.

In this study, the each case of bilateral donor organizations (USAID), international organizations (GEF), and NGOs (World Vision) was analyzed one by one, and similarities and differences between the analyzed projects and existing projects were examined. The three analyzed cases reflect the characteristics of each performing organization. In the case of USAID, they were operating the

nutrition improvement project as an expansion of the existing project under the representative strategy, and the GEF was operating a food project in a common area through the collaboration of each partner organization. World Vision was operating various projects under one goal of child welfare by utilizing the characteristics of an NGO and using a close network with local residents. USAID sought to discover the Rwanda CHAIN (Community Health And Improved Nutrition) project under the multi-sectoral strategy and national strategy with the aim of improving community health and nutritional status. Projects were discovered, planned, and budgeted by each department, and a project management team drawn from staff of each department was put in place to create an integrated work plan and coordinate R&P, enabling communication between various participants. The GEF is carrying out an integrated program aimed at responding to food security and climate change through collaboration with GEF partners, centering on the IFAD. Each sub-project is carried out based on loose integration between each organization, and management and evaluation are also different for each organization. However, an integrated plan has been established, and each collected data, progress status and activities are shared with the purpose of knowledge diffusion. World Vision may be similar to USAID in that it is an independent organization running multi-sectoral projects. However, there will be differences in that the implementation organization of individual project is also World Vision, the organization has a rather specific purpose, and the project period is relatively long compared to the previous organizations.

An integrated approach in development cooperation projects is meaningful as an attempt to comprehensively respond to complex development problems and as a key measure for achieving the SDGs. If synergy is created through systematic cooperation, it can be a solution to insufficient financial resources and to low development effectiveness. However, in order to create the intended synergy, it is necessary to secure manpower with the capacity to plan complex large-scale projects based on the theory of change, and to plan and manage projects from a long-term perspective of 5 years or more. In addition, the cooperative system among the participants must be established in advance. After looking at development cooperation cases, it is believed that KOICA will be able to gradually try an integrated approach to the existing projects. In addition, collaboration with international organizations or other international development cooperation organizations may be considered in order to develop related capabilities. At the same time, KOICA should expand and improve the existing project planning, management, and evaluation framework of projects so that the integrated approach can be embraced in the project, and contemplate how to strengthen related capabilities.