

# Ways of Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation for North Korean Women's Economic Empowerment (II)

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Cooperation for North Korean Women's  
Economic Empowerment (II)**

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## I . Introduction

### 1. Research Purpose and Necessity

An emphasis has been placed on the importance of inter-Korean economic cooperation since 2018, and discussion made on the “Peace Economy on the Korean Peninsula” or Korean Peninsula Peace Economy, for short. The Korean Peninsula Peace Economy should not be restricted to quantitative growth alone, but it should provide opportunities for the members of both South and North Korean societies to open the possibility of planning a new life. In particular, women should be able to become main agents of the peace process and of making a peace economy on the Korean Peninsula by exercising their competencies in the South and North Korean societies.

Because North Korea recently set economic development as an important national strategy and goal, economic empowerment of North

Korean women should be promoted in the process of attaining that goal. While empowerment of North Korean women is being achieved in North Korea, future inter-Korean exchange and cooperation, including inter-Korean economic cooperation, should be designed to contribute to empowerment of North Korean women.

In the existing inter-Korean exchange and cooperation, however, gender equality agendas have not been sufficiently addressed, nor has any gender analysis been conducted for the implementation of the exchange and cooperation projects. In order for the inter-Korean exchange and cooperation to contribute to promoting economic empowerment of North Korean women, it is necessary to establish directions for future exchange and cooperation based on a gender analysis of the existing exchange and cooperation projects.

Therefore, the purpose of this research is to prepare ways to lay the basis for implementing the inter-Korean exchange and cooperation projects to promote economic empowerment of North Korean women by conducting a gender analysis of the basis of implementing the existing inter-Korean exchange and cooperation projects and the experience of already-implemented inter-Korean exchange and cooperation projects.

## 2. Research Contents and Methods

### 1) Research Contents

- Analyzed the basis of implementing the inter-Korean exchange and cooperation projects from a gender perspective to develop ways to improve, focusing on legal and institutional bases, human basis, and external environment.
- Analyzed the legal and institutional bases of overseas countries which

have an experience of implementing North Korean projects for international cooperation as well as the basis of implementing gender-focused development and cooperation projects to explore the possibilities of applying to the inter-Korean exchange and cooperation projects.

- Collected and analyzed data on inter-Korean exchange and cooperation experiences to identify the contexts that failed to address women or gender equality agendas in the exchange and cooperation projects and to examine necessary conditions for implementing the projects for economic empowerment of North Korean women in the future.
- Surveyed and analyzed women entrepreneurs' intentions to participate in exchange and cooperation as well as conditions for encouraging their participation in exchange and cooperation because their participation in economic cooperation is necessary for creating an environment to implement the projects for economic empowerment of North Korean women.
- Prepared ways to lay the foundation for implementing the exchange and cooperation projects to promote economic empowerment of North Korean women.

## 2) Research Methods

### > Interview

- Interviewed a total of 17 persons, including 11 male and six female, who have participated in inter-Korean exchange and cooperation to analyze the environment and experience of implementing the inter-Korean exchange and cooperation projects.

- Interviewed three women entrepreneurs to analyze their intentions to participate in exchange and cooperation and constraints on their participation.
- › Overseas case survey
  - Identified the current status of North Korean projects being implemented in the international community, and analyzed the bases that enabled individual countries to implement their North Korean projects.
  - Surveyed and analyzed the legal and institutional bases of gender-focused development and cooperation projects being implemented at the international level.
- › Questionnaire survey
  - Conducted online questionnaire surveys of a total of 500 women entrepreneurs.
  - The purpose of the survey is to identify the demand among women entrepreneurs for the inter-Korean exchange and cooperation projects and to examine characteristics of women entrepreneurs who have intentions to participate in the projects and constraints on women entrepreneurs' participation in exchange and cooperation.
- › International meeting
  - Conducted online international meetings with two female researchers of China, which is closely related to North Korea and has carried out economic reforms.
  - Shared cases of women empowerment projects and experiences of North Korean projects through China's international cooperation.



## II . Analysis of the Basis for Implementing Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

### 1. Legal and Institutional Bases for Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

#### 1) Laws and Issues on Inter-Korean Relations and Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

As a representative law that prescribes reciprocal exchange and cooperation between South and North Korea, the Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation Act needs to examine the following matters to implement exchange and cooperation between South and North Korean women. The Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation Promotion Council (Article 4) is a crucial decision-making body that consults on and coordinates policies for inter-Korean exchange and cooperation and to deliberate upon and resolve important matters. However, as the composition of the council (Article 5) does not reflect any consideration of gender at all, it is impossible to expect to enhance representation of women, which will make it difficult to select for council meeting agenda any business plan that promotes gender equality through exchange and cooperation. The South-North Korean Exchange and Cooperation Support Association (Article 24, Article 25-2) surveys the current trade and economic cooperation, operates education centers, and carries out various projects on commission from the Ministry of Unification to promote related networks. But the association does not conduct projects or programs to strengthen exchange and cooperation competencies of women who are relatively lacking in information or resources related to inter-Korean exchange and cooperation.

The Development of Inter-Korean Relations Act has the nature of a basic law that covers overall inter-Korean relations in pursuit of unification going beyond the scope of ruling inter-Korean exchange and cooperation. The following matters should be taken into consideration to implement exchange and cooperation between South and North Korean women. The Master Plan for the Development of Inter-Korean Relations (Article 13) is an essential plan that presents directions for overall inter-Korean policies for five years. However, the master plan does not have any systematic plan for exchange and cooperation between the women but simply mentions it as an area of “support for expanding private exchanges in various areas (Core Task 3).” The term “South-North Korean agreements” (Article 4) means all agreements concluded in the form of documents between the South Korean government and the North Korean authorities. Aside from their legal effects, the agreements are significant from the aspect that they include the process of agreement between South and North Korea. However, an agreement is yet to be entered into that includes unique characteristics of exchange and cooperation between South and North Korean women, that is, such agendas as empowerment of women, promotion of their rights and interests, and facilitation of gender equality. The Inter-Korean Relations Development Committee (Article 14) is a decision-making body that conducts a wide range of discussion, from deliberation on the master plan to budget projects for inter-Korean exchange. But its related provisions do not have any content to guarantee women’s participation nor does it include the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family in its official members.

All the 17 provincial and municipal governments enacted an ordinance on inter-Korean exchange and cooperation and prepared a legal basis for

implementing “decentralized North Korean policies.”

The North and South Korean Economic Cooperation Act of North Korea is a law that corresponds to the Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation Act of South Korea, but the difference between the two laws is that the former is limited to economic exchange and cooperation rather than overall inter-Korean exchange. With regard to the provisions of “guaranteeing the necessary labor for North and South Korean economic cooperation (Article 6)” and “recruitment of labor (Article 17),” a deep consideration should be given to prepare ways of inter-Korean exchange and cooperation that can increase the skills and expertise of North Korean women accounting for a majority of workers.

## 2) Budget for Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

The budget for inter-Korean exchange and cooperation is operated through the Inter-Korean Cooperation Fund Act. However, the area of women is not included in the use of the Fund (Article 8). Here, the area of women does not simply mean women as policy targets but the aggregate of various types of business to seek the transition of South and North Korea toward a gender equal society through inter-Korean exchange and cooperation. On the other hand, the provision of guarantee, financing, and insurance are included in the use of the Fund (Article 8). As the provision of guarantee and financing play the role of facilitating access to inter-Korean economic cooperation, it is necessary to prepare ways to include small- and medium-sized enterprises whose financial conditions are relatively poor, particularly women entrepreneurs, in the criteria for eligible priority recipients. Although the ups and downs of inter-Korean relations affect all participating businesses and lead to

irrevocable losses, it should be noted that some groups are dealt with a harder blow, and this vulnerability of the groups should be reflected in the criteria for insurance. The deliberation and resolution on support for inter-Korean exchange and cooperation funds (proposal) are carried out by the aforementioned Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation Promotion Council. However, the problem is that because the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family is not included in its official members, the council has no opportunity to prepare ways to implement inter-departmental projects using the funds.

As there are no established gender-disaggregated data on the reciprocity rate of the inter-Korean cooperation fund, it is impossible to confirm the rate accurately. But stories from research participants in the inter-Korean economic cooperation make it indirectly possible to identify the current state of the fund reciprocity rate. Because women's participation rate in the inter-Korean economic cooperation project was low, it is possible to predict that women's reciprocity rate of the inter-Korean exchange and cooperation fund was actually very low.

Local governments as well stipulate the content of raising the exchange and cooperation funds and the purpose of using the funds in the exchange and cooperation ordinance of each province and municipality. Except for the border areas, however, the rates of operating the funds are very low. Therefore, it is necessary to prepare ways for inter-Korean exchange and cooperation in spite of strained inter-Korean relations and develop projects to promote participation competencies of local governments.

## 2. Human Basis for Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

### 1) Administrative System

The Ministry of Unification, which supervises the overall inter-Korean exchange and cooperation, has only one female official in charge of exchange and cooperation. The central government ministries, including the Ministry of Health and Welfare and the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, implement projects related to inter-Korean exchange and cooperation through division of jobs. In the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, one of international cooperation officers takes charge of inter-Korean women's exchange and cooperation in addition to cooperation with UN WOMEN, multilateral cooperation, and public diplomacy.

The National Assembly formed the Special Committee on Inter-Korean Economic Cooperation in 2018, and the committee held meetings five times in total until March 2019. In these meetings, related ministries reported their jobs about inter-Korean economic cooperation, with participation of 16 ministries, including the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Ministry of Unification, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the Ministry of Health and Welfare, and the Ministry of Education. But the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family was not included in the 16 ministries.

As local governments gained legal status as principal agents of inter-Korean exchange and cooperation projects, they should take responsibilities of promoting women's participation in inter-Korean exchange and cooperation and raising related issues. When the current departments dedicated to inter-Korean exchange and cooperation were examined, no greater municipal governments separately allocated

officials to perform such roles, and most of them assigned human resources in charge of women's exchange as part of social and cultural exchange projects. It was also difficult to find policy research cases of inter-Korean women's exchange and cooperation that had been implemented by taking the local environment into account.

In the exchange between South and North Korean women, North Korean partners are mostly the Korean Council for Reconciliation and Cooperation and the Socialist Women's Union of Korea. Although the Socialist Women's Union of Korea is a quasi-government organization, the problem is that its status does not match with the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family of South Korea.

## 2) Principal Agents of Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

To date, there have been five inter-Korean summits and 658 working-level meetings of the South and North Korean authorities, but women's participation was limited. In other words, women's participation rates in the summits and working-level meetings were very low, and also the area of participation was limited, although the area had gradually expanded.

In the decision-making process of inter-Korean exchange and cooperation projects as well, women's participation was low. Not many women participated in the decision-making process or jobs related to unification issues and inter-Korean relations, nor gender was considered an important variable in each ministry's inter-Korean exchange and cooperation project. This trend applies not only to the central government but also to local governments.

Therefore, it is necessary to enhance peace and unification competencies

of individual women and women's civic organizations as partners of the central or local governments participating in the future inter-Korean women's exchange.

### 3. External Environment of Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

The most essential external factors influencing the present inter-Korean exchange and cooperation are UN sanctions against North Korea and humanitarian exemptions as an exception to the sanctions.

If UN maintains strong sanctions against North Korea, women situated in poor conditions in the North Korean society are bound to become even more vulnerable. As such, it is necessary to prepare a basis for South and North Korean women to actively participate in humanitarian cooperation, which is closely related to women's rights to survive.

In a situation where sanctions against North Korea is maintained, an effective alternative is to carry out health and nutrition projects for North Korean women together with international organizations or international NGOs like today. As providing infrastructure or service may unintentionally lead to impose restrictions on women or widen the gender gaps due to socio-structural practices or culture, it is necessary to make use of the Gender Equality Policy Marker when implementing humanitarian aid projects for North Korea.

### III. Possibility of Implementing Agendas on Women Seen from the Experience of Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

#### 1. Current Gender Issues and Agendas in Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

##### 1) Major Agendas on Women in Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

Agendas on women in the already-implemented inter-Korean exchange and cooperation were addressed at the level of inter-Korean women's exchange and humanitarian aid. Women-related agendas were never handled at the level of the government authorities, but the South Korean government provided support for North Korean pregnant women as a humanitarian aid. At the private level as well, agendas on women were addressed to offer a humanitarian aid for the protection of maternity.

In the exchange between South and North Korean women, agendas such as the issue of 'comfort women' of the imperial Japanese army and women's roles in the peace and unification on the Korean Peninsula were mentioned, but the exchange was not implemented to the extent of making one agenda as a sustainable project.

##### 2) Contexts for Implementing/Not Implementing Agendas on Women in Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

- Indifference of the main agents of exchange and cooperation to agendas on women

Agendas on women are considered secondary due to unstable inter-Korean relations and approach to the issue of national division



of North and South focusing on political, economic, and military issues. Indifference of the North Korean authorities acts as a factor that make it difficult to address agendas on women. The principal agents of implementing exchange and cooperation in each area were indifferent to women-related agendas, arising from the serious situation of North Korea and the stance toward solving problems of women through a general approach.

- Difference in the perception of ‘women’

The inter-Korean women’s exchange is implemented based on the identity of ‘women.’ However, there is a wide gap between South and North Korea in the perception of ‘women,’ which makes it difficult to identify common agendas. Even women in South Korea have different perceptions of ‘women,’ and the difference in women who implement inter-Korean women’s exchange leads to difficulties in identifying agendas.

## 2. Competency of Pursuing Gender Issues in Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

### 1) Non-autonomy of the Main Agents of Pursuing Agendas on Women

The overall exchange and cooperation cannot have autonomy due to unstable political and military situations on the Korean Peninsula and the attitude of North Korea toward inter-Korean relations, thus affecting agendas on women as well.

North Korean participants in the exchange with South Korean women have difficulty securing autonomy from the South and North Korean authorities. Because North Korea’s female participants largely consist of

organizations outside the Communist Party, it is difficult to secure autonomy from the Party. South Korea as well, women's organizations are not free from the government intervention depending on the inter-Korean relations at the time of implementing exchange with North Korean women.

Because exchange and cooperation are implemented in a limited space due to representation of 'women,' it is not easy to carry out inter-Korean women's exchange independently or to exercise autonomy. Inter-Korean women's exchange became an area of women in the framework of general joint events or exchange and cooperation between civil societies. No channel is even prepared for smooth communication for events or exchanges.

## 2) Low accessibility to Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

Women's accessibility to inter-Korean exchange and cooperation is found to be low due to a lack of information and network. Seeing from the experience of male participants in exchange and cooperation, network works as an important resource and increases accessibility to exchange and cooperation. Also, it is easier for men to build network than women in the relations with North Korea.

Accessibility to inter-Korean exchange and cooperation is closely related to political, economic, social, and cultural environments in South and North Korean societies. As the space of exchange and cooperation itself is not only male-centered but also the environment in which the main agents of exchange and cooperation are situated consist mostly of men, women's accessibility is bound to be low.

### 3) Women's Weak Political and Economic Competencies

Only a small number of women appear in the stage of exchange and cooperation, and women's competency is low in the overall venues of exchange and cooperation.

Competencies of women participants in exchange and cooperation have close relations to political, economic, and social environments in South and North Korean societies. As for North Korean women, they are not independent or autonomous in negotiations because they cannot have power in contrast to men in the North Korean society. As for South Korean women, a small number of women participate in exchange and cooperation, and from the economic aspect too, they have weak competencies compared to those of implementing exchange and cooperation projects in other areas. These weak competencies of South and North Korean women result in difficulties of expanding inter-Korean women's exchange and reflecting women's agendas in the overall exchange and cooperation.

## 3. Possibility of Expanding Women's Agendas and Main Agents in inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation: Focusing on Women Entrepreneurs

### 1) Women Entrepreneurs' Interest in Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

Of the 500 women entrepreneurs who participated in the questionnaire survey, 78.2% responded they were interested in inter-Korean exchange and cooperation. Of the 391 respondents who took interest in inter-Korean exchange and cooperation, the largest proportion of 69.3% were interested in the area of 'economic' exchange and cooperation, followed by 13.0%

in ‘social and cultural,’ and 12.8% in ‘women.’ Women entrepreneurs also showed a high level of interest in inter-Korean economic cooperation, with 78.6% of the 500 survey participants responding they had interest in economic cooperation.

Of the 500 women entrepreneurs, 29 women or 5.8% had experience of participating in inter-Korean exchange and cooperation. The areas of their participation in exchange and cooperation included economic, women, social and cultural, medical and health, and religious areas.

## 2) Incentives for Women Entrepreneurs to Participate in Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

Of the 500 women entrepreneurs surveyed, 73.2% had intentions to participate in inter-Korean economic cooperation. Except for the primary industry, their intentions to participate in the economic cooperation were high in all areas. Such intentions of women entrepreneurs were largely influenced by economic factors, including reduction in labor and logistics costs. As for the reasons that they did not have intentions to participate in inter-Korean economic cooperation, the largest proportion of 40.3% responded that “it seems to be difficult to stably implement economic cooperation due to the heavy influence of inter-Korean relations,” followed by 35.8% who answered “the business type of my company does not seem to be in the area that can implement inter-Korean economic cooperation.”

The biggest incentive for women entrepreneurs to have intentions to participate in inter-Korean economic cooperation was economic, but their awareness of tariff effect was low. Although one of the most important advantages of inter-Korean economic cooperation is tariff effect, merely

26.4% of women entrepreneurs were aware of the effect. Even if they had intentions to participate in economic cooperation and took interest in economic cooperation, they were alienated from specific information.

### 3) Conditions for Promoting Women Entrepreneurs' Participation in Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

Women entrepreneurs predicted to have the following difficulties when participating in economic cooperation: 'lack of information and understanding of the support system or procedures related to inter-Korean economic cooperation' (23.6%), 'safety issues including personal protection during stay in North Korea' (21.9%), and 'damage when economic cooperation is discontinued' (18.8%).

A difficulty that women entrepreneurs currently have in relation to participation in economic cooperation is that they have no specific information. They do not have information, for example, on the procedure of participation in economic cooperation, nor do they have sufficient channels to get such information. Most of the time, they get information online, and seem to get more information when surrounded by network or male entrepreneurs who are interested in economic cooperation. As 20.6% of the women entrepreneurs surveyed had intentions to participate in programs related to inter-Korean economic cooperation, it is necessary to expand opportunities for women entrepreneurs to participate in inter-Korean economic cooperation programs.

Another difficulty they face is the safety issue. Women entrepreneurs were greatly concerned about their safety because of the situation that inter-Korean traffic and communication are not free. Restrictions on their long-term stay and communication coupled with the issue of work-life

balance make women entrepreneurs' participation difficult.

Still another difficulty is the fear of damage or losses when inter-Korean economic cooperation is discontinued. Women entrepreneurs are all the more afraid because they confirmed the tangible difficulties of participants in inter-Korean economic cooperation after the shutdown of the Kaesong Industrial Complex. Therefore, it is necessary to prepare a support system for women entrepreneurs to enter an economic cooperation project together with a system to guarantee the stability of the project after their entry.

#### **IV. Implications of Overseas North Korean Projects and Gender-Focused Development and Cooperation Projects**

##### **1. Overseas Cases of North Korean Projects**

###### **1) Sweden**

Sweden has both humanitarian aid projects and empowerment projects for North Korea. As for Sweden's humanitarian aid projects for North Korea, the Swedish government supports funds for the humanitarian aid projects, and international organizations implement the projects. As for the empowerment projects of North Korean residents, agencies in Sweden directly carry out the projects.

Sweden has experience of implementing gender-related projects, and in this background lie Sweden's feminist foreign policies and the government's interest in agendas on women, peace, and security.

## 2) Germany

Germany also has both humanitarian aid projects and empowerment projects for North Korea. Germany's humanitarian aid projects have a characteristic that they are carried out for particular regions in North Korea. Germany's empowerment projects are implemented mostly by the country's political foundations, including Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and Hanns-Seidel-Stiftung as leading examples.

Germany's North Korean projects have the following two characteristics: First, the country implements the projects through German Red Cross and Germany-based NGOs, which is presumed to derive from the German and North Korean relations. Second, Germany's political foundations actively participate in the projects as they can secure budget while their independence is guaranteed.

## 2. Basis for Implementing Gender-Focused Development and Cooperation Projects

### 1) Policy Basis

Representative cases of policy basis for implementing gender-focused development and cooperation projects include Canada's feminist international aid policies and the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the UN Security Council's Resolution 1325.

The purpose of Canada's feminist international aid policies is to eliminate poverty in developing countries through the promotion of human rights of women and girls. The essence of the country's six major project areas is to enhance gender equality and strengthen the rights of women and girls. Accordingly, Canada implements projects focusing on

women's empowerment. Also, by creating equality funds, the country provides financial support continually and stably for women's organizations and women's movement in developing countries.

The National Action Plan for the Implementation of the UN Security Council's Resolution 1325 gives the imperativeness that national action planning countries should reflect a gender perspective when implementing development and cooperation projects. The United Kingdom, Norway, and the United States stipulate in their national action plans that development and cooperation projects should be carried out with a specific goal of women's empowerment, thereby laying the practical policy basis for implementing gender-focused development and cooperation projects.

## 2) Budget: UN Women's Fund for Gender Equality

The purpose of the UN Women's Fund for Gender Equality is to support national, women-led civil society organizations in achieving women's economic and political empowerment and the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

(Former) socialist countries which benefited from the UN Women's Fund for Gender Equality include Cambodia, China, and Vietnam. Cambodia implemented projects to develop women's leadership, promote gender mainstreaming, and support female AIDS patients. Also, the country used the Fund for Gender Equality for projects to empower women leaders of local governments and support women in rural areas. China implemented projects aimed at women's equal participation in politics. Vietnam implemented projects to empower women immigrants living in Vietnam, including expansion of social protection, access to health services, and social economic support.



### 3) Evaluation System: Gender Equality Policy Marker

The Gender Equality Policy Marker is a tool to objectively evaluate development and cooperation projects, and member states of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) are required to report gender-focused projects every year. According to the OECD's official counting, gender-focused development and cooperation projects among the total bilateral allocatable ODA tend to increase, overall, from 27% in 2007 to 35% in 2017.

Between 2009 and 2017, projects granted with one point in the Gender Equality Policy Marker, which had a positive impact on achieving gender equality, accounted for roughly 87% of the total gender-focused development and cooperation projects; and projects given with two points in the Gender Equality Policy Marker, which had the achievement of gender equality as a clear goal or essential element of the projects, made up 13% of the total gender-focused development and cooperation projects.

The Gender Equality Policy Marker is not only a criterion for considering how to apply gender elements from the time of planning a project but also an important system to evaluate how gender elements are reflected after the implementation of the project. As such, it is necessary to make use of the marker in inter-Korean exchange and cooperation.

### 3. Implications

Although major donor countries, international organizations and NGOs are carrying out various North Korean projects, there is an absence of gender-focused projects, such as political and economic empowerment

projects for women, except for health and nutrition projects for some women and girls as main groups of recipients. If the international community lessens its sanctions against North Korea and expands development and cooperation projects from now on, it is necessary to actively identify and implement gender-focused projects.

When major donor countries implement gender-focused development and cooperation projects, feminist international aid policies or the National Action Plan for the Implementation of the UN Security Council's Resolution 1325 provided a policy basis for the implementation. Inclusion of economic empowerment of women in the main content of these policies and the national action plan laid a basis and became a driving factor for implementing such project. Because South Korea has established its national action plan, it is necessary to implement inter-Korean exchange and cooperation projects in connection with the national action plan.

At the budget level, the UN Women's Fund for Gender Equality has great significance for creating a financial basis when implementing gender equality agendas in inter-Korean exchange and cooperation. The Inter-Korean Cooperation Fund is a good example of creating a gender equality fund in implementing inter-Korean exchange and cooperation projects. Also, it is necessary to consider using the UN Women's Fund for Gender Equality for future inter-Korean cooperation projects.

The Gender Equality Policy Marker seems to be an important device that can promote gender equality agendas in the overall inter-Korean exchange and cooperation projects. Hence, it may be attempted to apply the Gender Equality Policy Marker to the monitoring of project details or to the overall Inter-Korean Cooperation Fund.

## V. Ways to Lay the Basis for Implementing Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation Projects for Economic Empowerment of North Korean Women

### 1. Form a Consensus between South and North Korea on Implementing Gender Equality Agendas

#### 1) Hold a dialogue between the South and North Korean authorities

- Reach an agreement between the South and North Korean authorities on the importance of gender equality agendas in the exchange between South and North Korean women as well as in overall exchange and cooperation.
- What should be addressed in the dialogue between the South and North Korean authorities include the promotion of inter-Korean women's exchange, the encouragement of women's participation in the process of establishing peace on the Korean Peninsula, the cooperation between South and North Korean women in the international community, the reinforcement of continued dialogue and collaboration related to gender equality agendas, and a joint response to common gender issues of South and North Korean societies and gender norms in the international community.

#### 2) Prepare a (written) inter-Korean agreement on implementing gender equality agendas

- Enter into an inter-Korean agreement that contains a pledge to promote inter-Korean women's exchange and to expand gender

equality agendas in the overall inter-Korean exchange.

- Guarantee the stability and continuation of women's exchange and institutionalize the expansion of gender equality agendas through the conclusion of an agreement.

### 3) Implement a pilot project to resolve the gaps in gender equality awareness

- As there are wide gaps in the awareness of gender equality between South and North Korean societies, implement a pilot project as a start to resolve the gaps.
- Implement projects focusing on issues that can be handled together in the international community or specialize women-related projects among the currently ongoing humanitarian aid projects, using various frames of South and North Korea, South Korea, North Korea, a third country, or international organizations.

## 2. Improve Laws and Institutions Related to Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation

### 1) Improve laws to promote the exchange and cooperation between South and North Korean Women

- Improve provisions on the commissioning of members of the Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation Promotion Council and the Inter-Korean Relations Development Committee in the Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation Act and the Development of Inter-Korean Relations Act.
- Prepare laws and administrative rules on the inter-Korean women's

exchange and cooperation, including Guidelines for Supporting Inter-Korean Women's Exchange (tentatively), and Rules on Inter-Korean Women's Exchange and Cooperation Projects (tentatively).

- Expressly include women in the use of the Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation Fund in the Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation Fund Act. Also, include women as priority recipients in the Inter-Korean Cooperation Fund Support Guidelines for Inter-Korean Social and Cultural Cooperation.
- 2) Implement inter-Korean exchange and cooperation projects using the Gender Equality Policy Marker
- Use the Gender Equality Policy Marker in all the processes of planning, implementing, and evaluating the inter-Korean exchange and cooperation projects.
  - Apply the Gender Equality Policy Marker 2 projects to North Korea on a pilot basis.

### 3. Prepare Implementation Systems

- 1) Prepare an agency for implementing inter-Korean women's exchange and cooperation
- Prepare an agency for implementing inter-Korean women's exchange and cooperation to resolve the issues of asymmetry and non-autonomy of the principal agents of inter-Korean women's exchange.
  - The agency shall take a form of public and private governance with cooperation between the government and the private sector. At the

government level, the agency shall work in connection with various ministries. At the private level, it shall be connected not only with women's civil society organizations but also with civic groups in various areas.

- This agency shall perform the role of identifying agendas and promoting cooperation in South Korea, negotiating with North Korea, and implementing exchange and cooperation.

2) Prepare a system for gender-mainstreaming of inter-Korean exchange and cooperation

- Establish a new gender equality officer in the Ministry of Unification to promote gender mainstreaming in the overall inter-Korean exchange and cooperation and unification policies.
- Build a cooperation system between the Ministry of Unification and the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family. Through the system, the two ministries are expected to identify new agendas based on their respective expertise on inter-Korean exchange and cooperation and gender equality agendas.

3) Establish a global cooperation system

- Establish a global cooperation system as the role of the international community is important for inter-Korean relations and it is easy for overseas countries or international organizations to implement North Korean projects.
- Implement economic empowerment projects for North Korean women in cooperation with women-centered international NGOs, UN, and UN Women.

#### 4. Strengthen the Human Basis

- 1) Expand education for women in relation to inter-Korean exchange and cooperation
  - Prepare inter-Korean exchange and cooperation programs for women, and encourage women's participation in existing programs.
  - Operate education programs on inter-Korean exchange and cooperation for women by including them in women-specific programs and existing programs.
- 2) Enhance gender awareness of participants in inter-Korean exchange and cooperation
  - Strengthen gender education for policy makers and implementers of exchange and cooperation, and workers in related areas.
  - As an education method, employ the framework of unification education and gender education as well as private programs.
  - Consider ways to make it mandatory for visitors to North Korea to receive gender education, including preventive education on sexual harassment and sexual abuse.
- 3) Develop professional female human resources
  - Lay a basis for developing professional female human resources through unification education of next generations.
  - Plan and operate programs to develop female experts on negotiation for officials and participants in exchange and cooperation.
  - Prepare instructor development programs to strengthen gender awareness of female instructors of unification education.

