

Homecoming Kinsmen or Indigenous Foreigners?

The case of North Korean Re-settlers in South Korea



June 20, 2012

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Changes in the receiving societies

- ❖ Cross-cultural exchanges leading to changes in residential areas, working places, economic and political system.
- ❖ Polarization and tension: Immigrants tend to feel rejected or exploited. Members of the receiving society are susceptible to be annoyed at bearing the costs of acceptance of immigrants.
- ❖ Immigrants are expected to be grateful. Their confusion is often interpreted as ingratitude and lack of appreciation of sacrifices made for their absorption.
- ❖ Receiving society imposes a pressure on immigrants to assimilate and accept the dominant culture.



Psychosocial transition and acculturation of immigrants

- ❖ Resettlement is often affected by the psychological baggage and trauma experienced in the country of origin or country of transit.
- ❖ Migration can produce profound distress even among well prepared individuals.
- ❖ Negative responses as a reaction of pressure from the hosting society.
- ❖ Three stages of passing through a culture shock: clash, reorganization and new identification.
- ❖ Psychosocial transition with respect to other persons, material possessions, familiar world of home and workplace and individual's body and mind.



Lack of support networks and the feeling of isolation

- ❖ Resettlement facilitated by government agencies and helped by far too few NGOs and religious groups.
- ❖ North Korean re-settlers reported suffering from lack of friends and separation with one's family.
- ❖ 79 out of 109 respondents reported suffering from separation with one's family and 56% of interviewed reported difficulties due to lack of friends.
- ❖ Lack of friends and community involvement seems to be correlated with the increased feeling of linguistic and cultural difference with South Koreans. 1/3 of those who reported greatest difficulties spent from 0 to 3 hours a week with friends.



Difficulties caused by language differences with South Koreans

Category	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Very Difficult	16	14.7
Difficult	44	40.4
Somewhat difficult	17	15.6
Not difficult	21	19.3
Not at all difficult	6	5.5
No answer	5	4.6
Total	109	100

Difficulties caused by cultural differences with South Koreans

Category	Numbers	Percentage (%)
Very Difficult	14	12.8
Difficult	39	35.8
Somewhat difficult	22	20.2
Not difficult	23	21.1
Not at all difficult	5	4.6
No answer	6	5.5
Total	109	100

Overcoming the biases of South Korean society

“The South Korean co-workers were so mean; they were calling me a ‘North Korean beggar,’ I even experienced such curses from the clients in the supermarket I was working for.”

-A woman in her 50s-

“South Koreans think North Koreans are uneducated and lazy, so I had to work twice as hard to prove that we are not. I was thinking that if I don’t work harder than them, they would not employ more North Koreans there. Their attitudes changed since I got promoted. Despite the success, I would prefer to emigrate to the Western countries.”

-A man in his 30s-

“Young women working with me in the hair-saloon were ridiculing me all the time. It was unbearable; I would come back home and cry. I quit that job and in the new one they don’t know I’m from North Korea.”

-A woman in her 40s-



Overcoming the biases of South Korean society

“I use not to tell the South Korean students I’m from the North. Once I told and their attitude changed. If they don’t know, they treat me like an equal.”

-A student in her 20s-

“I know many South Koreans living in these apartment blocks. I talk to them, sometimes play chess with them outside. I invited them to my home many times, but they would never offer any single invitation to their home even though they know me for so long.”

-A man in his 60s-

- ❖ North Koreans who revealed their identities in their first job experience usually cope by not revealing their North Korean origin in the subsequent one.
- ❖ They try to conceal their accent by quickly adapting to the local dialect, especially in the southern provinces.
- ❖ 46 out of 109 respondents believed that North Koreans are viewed as a burden in South Korea. 47 interviewees reported feeling welcomed in South Korea while similar number reported not knowing if the society welcomes them.



Identity issues and attitudes

- ❖ 42% of our respondents answered that they didn't consider themselves to be North Korean any longer. 29% considered to be North Korean still and 24% didn't know how to identify themselves. At the same time 83% considered themselves full fledged South Korean citizens.
- ❖ Linguistic labels identifying the groups of belonging started to appear, similar to Germany's case of "Wessi" and "Ossi". North Koreans call themselves "crows" (까마귀) and South Koreans "pigeons" (비둘기). Those who adjust well to the South Korean society are labeled "magpies" (까치).
- ❖ 25 respondents expressed willingness to live abroad (majority of the group in their 20's). Nobody over 40's wanted to emigrate. 39 North Koreans were willing to marry a South Korean while 38 replied that they would never marry a foreigner.
- ❖ 90% wanted re-unification, but 65% were of the opinion that South Koreans did not want the two Koreas to unify.



North Koreans characteristics

1. Aggressive (52.3%)
2. Patriotic (43.2%)
3. Conservative (38.6%)
4. Practical (35.2%)
5. Cold (30.7%)

South Koreans characteristics

1. Friendly (50.0%)
2. Gentle (47.7%)
3. Practical (47.7%)
4. Humorous (39.8%)
5. Sociable (38.6%)



The most important issues for North Korean re-settlers

Category	Very Important (%)	Important (%)	Normal (%)	Unimportant (%)	No answer	Total
1. Health	73.9	15.9	6.8	2.3	1.1	100
2. Work	71.6	19.3	3.4	3.4	2.3	100
3. Knowledge and Education	70.5	18.2	6.8	2.3	2.3	100
4. Children	60.2	25.0	9.1	3.4	2.3	100
5. Affordable rent	54.5	23.9	14.8	5.6	1.1	100
6. Being able to select the leader of the country	54.5	18.2	22.7	1.1	3.4	100
7. Living in a democratic country	53.4	21.6	15.9	5.7	3.4	100
8. Personal security	52.3	26.1	12.5	8.0	1.1	100
9. Environment	51.1	31.8	5.7	7.9	3.4	100
10. Financial security	48.9	33.0	11.4	3.4	3.4	100



Socio-economic issues

- ❖ Many studies suggest a causal relationship between immigration and disease and point to a general poorer level of health among immigrants. Psychological and maladjustment problems can be expressed on physiological level.
- ❖ Half of our respondents stated that the first 5 years were the most challenging and the first year after arrival is the most difficult.
- ❖ 58% of respondents used hospital services 3-10 times a year and 30 reported to be hospitalized longer for more serious health problems. 1/3 reported suffering from depression, nightmares, anger, problems of trust toward people.
- ❖ 37 respondents were detained in various detention facilities and underwent interrogation, torture and forced labor. Impact on physical and mental state.



Socio-economic issues

- ❖ North Korean residents are offered various types of privileges to find employment. They range from support for employers who hire them to financial incentives to finish certified vocational training. The biggest problem is job retention and not job searching or job attainment.
- ❖ Among 88 adult interviewees, only 34 were employed and half were making income from one's own or family member's employment.
- ❖ 1/3 responded that South Korean colleagues attitude changed negatively after revealing that they came from North Korea.
- ❖ Lack of follow-up programs, such as job coaching.



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The Youngest Group of Re-settlers

- ❖ It is considered that the origin of higher education is a decisive factor for its value. Thus, the youngest group of North Koreans educated here has the highest potential to generate future leaders in various areas of the society and provide support during re-unification.
- ❖ Drop-out rates are few times higher than South Koreans. Can choose between alternative schools or normal ones.
- ❖ No systematic program in the normal schools for them, other than private initiative from the teachers. 95% of students satisfied with relationship with the teachers and in case of the problems almost half confides in them. 40% reported living with one parent or without parents.
- ❖ Regular aid programs in schools necessary, as well as mentoring, psychological support and integration programs.



Problems within the system of support

- ❖ Government-run Hanawon Resettlement Center provides 12 weeks training for new arrivals.
- ❖ Establishment of “local adjustment centers”: Hana Centers in 30 places providing obligatory programs for 3 weeks after release from Hanawon (only new arrivals).
- ❖ They suffer from lack of human and financial resources. The Korean system is too centralized and overburdened.
- ❖ Hana Centers or welfare centers initiatives better suited for everyday life problems. 57% of respondents replied that they don't use the knowledge acquired in Hanawon and 63% would prefer to receive more counseling after release.
- ❖ North Koreans indicated low levels of satisfaction with Hanawon (34% satisfied and 30% dissatisfied) and showed lowest trust toward it (38%). The highest trust was shown toward social welfare centers (72.7%), Hana Centers (64.8%) and police (61.4%)



What NKHR does

What We Do



Proposes that international organizations condemn human rights violations in North Korea, particularly with respect to the forced labor of political prisoners and extrajudicial killings.

Collects and publicizes facts and other information on the current North Korean human rights situation, particularly regarding political prison camps.

Protects the lives and human rights of North Korean refugees.

Assists North Korean defectors living in South Korea, focusing on youth education.

Coordinates efforts with other human rights organizations to fulfill the above mentioned programs.



International Conference on North Korean Human Rights & Refugees

International Conference



1 st	1999.12.1~12.3	Seoul, ROK	Over 1,000 participants from 5 countries
2 nd	2000.12.8	Seoul, ROK	250 participants from 8 countries
3 rd	2002.2.9~2.10	Tokyo, Japan	450 participants from 8 countries
4 th	2003.3.2	Prague, Czech Rep.	250 participants from 12 countries
5 th	2004.2.29~3.2	Warsaw, Poland	300 participants from 11 countries
6 th	2005.2.14~2.16	Seoul, ROK	550 participants from 9 countries
7 th	2006.5.9~5.11	Bergen, Norway	500 participants from 22 countries
8 th	2008.1.22~1.23	London, UK	150 participants from 13 countries
9 th	2009.3.20~3.21	Melbourne, Aus.	300 participants from 8 countries
10 th	2010.8.19~22	Toronto, Canada	200 participants, 5 countries
11 th	2011. 11.23	Geneva, Switz.	100 participants, 25 countries
12 th	2013. 06	Berlin, Germany	Planned



ITN'L Campaign & Advocacy

Urgent Action Call



Cooperation with the UN Agencies



Friends Network News (FNN)



Friends Network News: North Korea - 23 April 2009
Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights
Shining the Light of Human Rights on North Korea

NK Refugees more+

Korean Rights Activist Speaks
The Crimson, 21 April 2009
Author of 'Escaping North Korea: Defiance and Hope in the World's Most Repressive Country' Mike Kim, in 2003 left his financial planner job in Chicago to go to China to work with North Korean refugees. On April 20, 2009 he spoke at Harvard University sharing his experiences and the current situation North Korean defectors in China are facing.

NK HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL more+

Largest-Ever U.S. Gathering of North Korean Defectors and Rights Activists
PR Newswire Association, 21 April 2009
North Korean Freedom Week is April 28th to May 2nd with various events being held in the U.S.A. capital of Washington D.C. There will be 30 North Korean defectors as well as Japanese, South Korean and American activists, politicians, policy experts and veterans present. For a complete schedule of events please visit: <http://www.nkfreedom.org/>.



Education Programs

Education
For
NK Youth



Hangyoreh Seasonal School



South-North Integration Program

Leadership Program



To Boost
Confidence

L4 Soccer Team



Hanawon Program



Education for the Public



▲정치외교학, 국제법, 사회학, 사회복지학, 교육학 등 많은 전공에서 학생들의 관심이 높다.



▲국제대학원, 특수목적고 등에서 영어로 열리는 특강은 작은 국제 심포지엄이나 청문회를 연상케 한다.

Awareness Program (AP)



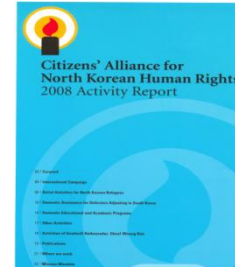
Education for Volunteers

Seminars

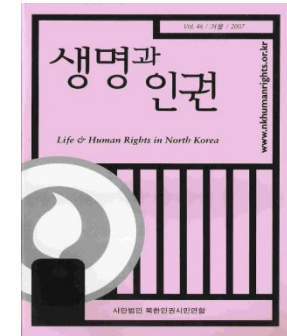


Publications

Monthly Newsletter



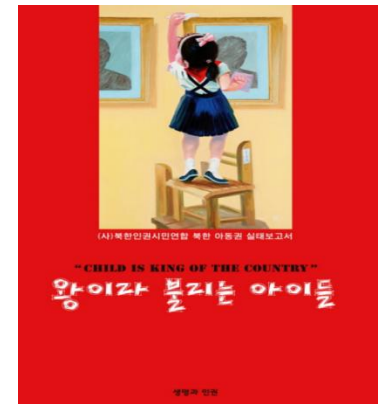
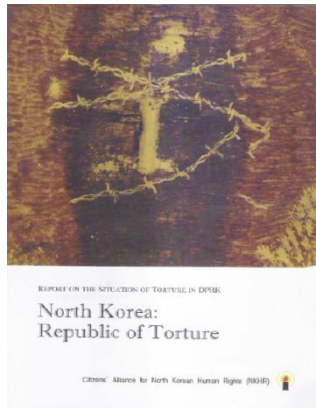
Quarterly <Life & Human Rights>



Activity Report



Thematic Reports



Relief Activities for NK

Relief Activities

3 Principles

- Quietly
- Safely
- No Charges

◆ Priority Relief ◆

- Women & children
- Those who escaped from political confinement and face repatriation

- **383 people helped**



▲ 어린 탈북청소년(꽃제비)들이 머물던 버려진 버스



▲ 깊은 신숙 움막을 짓고 탈북자들이 숨어 있던 자리



▲ 김문과 체포를 피해 험한 길로 이동중 진흙탕에 빠진 차량, 구호활동이 얼마나 험난한지 알 수 있다.



▲ 동남아지역 골든트라이앵글을 건너가는 장면, 현재는 보트이용은 거의 불가능한 상황이다.

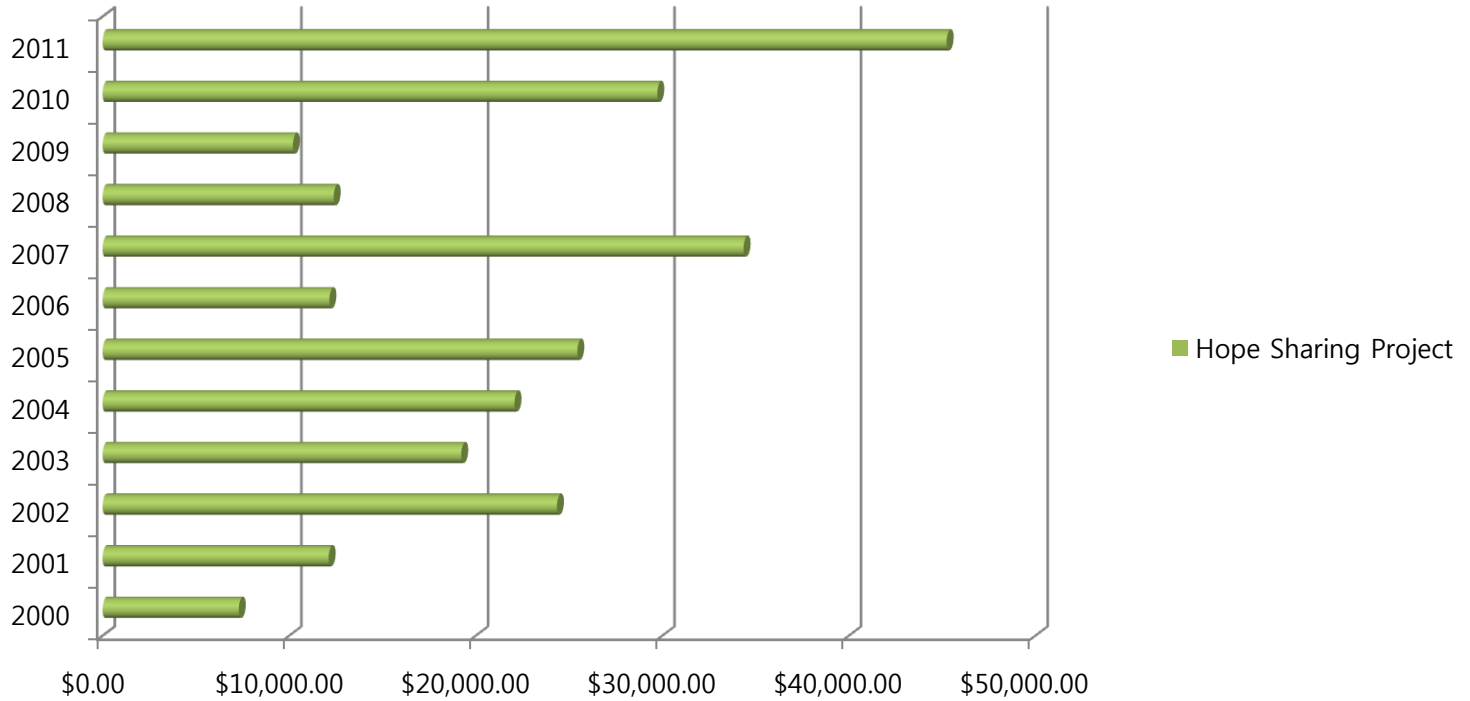


Fundraising

Annual Assistance Fund

Beautiful Dream Concert

Hope Sharing Project



North Korea: 42 Years is Enough - Let Hijacked Airplane Victims Reunite with Families

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Signatures
28 out of 50,000

Petitioning
North Korea (+ 1 other)

Created By
Citizens' Alliance for North Korean Human Rights (NKHR)

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25 Signatures Reached | June 19, 2012

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