

Roles and Tasks of Civil Society for the Multi-cultural World : The Experience of Women Migrants Human Rights Center of Korea

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Introduction

This article examines social issues which Korean society faces on the way to a multi-ethnic society and seeks for roles and tasks of civil society based on activities of civil organizations in the perspective of a field activist for women migrants' human rights. The roles of civil organizations assume in Korean society are geared on the one hand to criticize policies and suggest policy direction by monitoring multi-cultural discourses and policies, on the other hand, to support the protection of migrants' human rights, ensuring social security net and building solidarity platform. Also, this examines the roles, challenges of national and transnational solidarity activities of civil society organizations which define the contours of non-profit organizations, particularly based on experience of Women Migrants Human Rights Center of Korea. This center is a field-centered organization which focuses on migration, women, and human rights and supports women migrants' human rights. We review migration issues in the perspective of gender.

1. Situation of the multi-ethnic Korean society

a) Increase of migrants and beginning of multi-ethnic Korean society

The number of world migrants who left their countries for more than a year reached to about 214 million in 2008, which took about 3% of the 6.47 billion world population. Among them, 65-70% migrates for economic reasons such as maintaining livelihood and looking for jobs. 'Feminization of migration' featured particularly in Asia, which is 70% of migrants in the region are women. People who are pushed by globalization of poverty and feminization of poverty in developing countries cross the borders for overcoming poverty and dreaming a better life. On the other hand, developed countries need migrant workers because of the lack of laborers in labor intensive industries.

The population of migrant workers, marriage immigrants, and foreign nationals in the country is constantly increasing due to various social developments such as the avoidance of labor intensive jobs colloquially called 3D jobs, referring to "difficult, dirty and dangerous jobs" by Korean citizens, who have opted to work in automobile, electronic, business and other professional careers. The other causes are the rising cost of housing, education and other social services that prevented married couples to have children, thus the low birth rate and the increasing number of retirees making the country an ageing society. Also due to depopulation of rural communities, men have rare chances of marrying local women, thus the influx of marriage immigrants mostly from Asian countries, and the easing of immigration policies for overseas Koreans, that of opening up doors for ethnic Koreans to regain their Korean citizenship.

The number of foreigners residing in South Korea including short-term stayers as of December 31, 2007, finally exceeded one million, reaching 1,066,273. It has increased by 175.5% from 386,972 of 1997 and reached 1.4 million in 2011. In addition, the number of countries of origin for laborers has rapidly increased to 157, of which 15 countries have bilateral agreement with Korean government. Meanwhile the number of countries of origin for international marriages is 127, which includes 15 countries having over one thousand nationals. The total population of marriage immigrants is 210,000.

The government established the '2007-2008 Basic Plans of Foreigner Policy' and defined Korean society as becoming a multi-cultural society in earnest.¹ Thus, the Basic Act on Concerning Foreigners in Korea, and 2007 Basic Plans of Foreigner Policy were formulated. The Foreigners Support Ordinance of Ministry of Public Administration and Security defines migrants as residents and emphasizes making the country to become 'multi-cultural open society'. This also defines 'Society as magnified ethnical and cultural diversity'. In short, the Korean government examines the appearance of permanent immigrants like marriage immigrants as a proof that Korean society is becoming a multi-cultural society and established several policies pertaining to this.

b) Background of promoting "open multi-cultural society" by government

The term 'multi-culture' or 'multi-culturalism' came from migrant workers and marriage migrant women support NGOs and civil society in Korea. In the late 1980s, church based women organization called the children born between Korean woman and US soldier as 'double culture child' instead of 'mixed blood child'. Migrant workers and marriage migrant women were discriminated based on race and gender by exclusivism based on homogeneous society since 1988, the term 'multi-culturalism' ²was promoted to correct human rights violations resulting from racial discrimination.

Thus this term contains comprehensive and human rights friendly meaning, but it is being applied in a very narrow and negative way. Originally multi-cultural family means not only marriage between Korean and migrant but also between migrants including those having de facto marriage. However, the Support of Multi-cultural Families Act enacted in 2008 defines multi-cultural family as a limited category of family with a foreigner's marriage with Koreans. It includes family knitted to Koreans by marriage, blood ties and adoption and naturalized person's family but excludes family knitted by marriage between foreigners with different nationality and permanent residents' family. Besides, the Support Multi-cultural Families Act has limited scope of support to legal residents married to Koreans. This in fact mirrors the limited scope for foreign legal residents prescribe in the Basic Act Concerning Foreigners in Korea. Therefore migrant workers and refugees are not included in the scope of multi-cultural family in Korean society.

There are two basic reasons for the government's multi-cultural family support policy with slogan 'open multi-cultural society'. The one is race riots by migrants in France and Australia in 2006, which migrants resisted against racial discrimination.³ The government anticipates that the children of international marriage families would create 'social unrest' if the government does not support social integration and prevent human rights issues.

The other is multi-cultural family support and social integration policy as preparation for 'low birthrate and aging society' which is mentioned in government policy paper. In fact, the appearance of multi-culture in Korea is related to the increased number of international marriages. It comes out with an announcement of statistics which international marriage accounted for 13.6% for marriages in 2005. With this increase, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family initiated Korean the language classes and maternity protection support project. As the government started marriage women migrants support project and researched on their actual conditions, the issues on support for their social adaptation emerged. As a result, "Social integration support policy for marriage immigrants and their

¹The term of 'multi-cultural society' has been used than terms of 'multi-cultural world' or 'multi-cultural age' in Korea. I think Korean society is not multi-cultural society yet, although multi-race and multi-ethnicities co-exist. But Korean society should go towards desirable multi-cultural society. In this context, the title of this article is decided.

²DakahariGeich emphasizes answers of problems are in the field in his book, "Field is answer". Discourses of multi-cultural society should be discussed in the field of migrants, the subject of multi-cultural society, too.

³ These riots in France and Australia are mentioned as background in most government policy.

children" was announced as a presidential task on 26 April, 2006. It presents a vision, that is, the "realization of open multi-cultural society" with the term "Multi-racial, multi-ethnic, and multi-cultural co-existing society".⁴

From that point, the other government agencies have used the term 'multi-cultural society'. Government named 'international marriage family' as 'multi-cultural family' in 2008, which emphasized Korean society has become a multi-cultural society, enacting the 'Support multi-cultural families Act'. After that, the term 'multi-culture' itself has been used to designate international marriage family. Marriage migrant women glamorized with the name of multi-cultural family are granted the status of mother to resolve low birthrate problem and care giver of aging society. (According to statistics of Research Center for Low birthrate and Ageing Society, KIHASA, multi-cultural family would reduce decrease of economically active people 9.4% in 2050.).⁵ The term 'multi-cultural family' implies risk which treats women with the term multi-cultural family as instruments of childbirth and care-giving.

2. Addressing issues and alternatives on multi-cultural discourses in Korean society

a) Multi-cultural discourses in Korea

At present Korean society seems to fall into the rubric of multi-cultural discourses. Civil society organizations have definitely welcomed that multi-cultural discourses and actively promote the 'implementation of an open multi-cultural society which contribute to eliminate discrimination against migrants, which come from xenophobia, exclusive nationalism and myth of a homogeneous country. There are three main multi-cultural discourses. The first one is *melting pot theory* which emphasizes assimilation and convergence such as the U.S. The second one is *salad bowl theory* which respects ethnic identity and cultural diversity such as Australia. Finally the third one is *mosaic theory* that emphasizes harmonization of its ethnical culture based on the national culture such as Canada. Thus multi-cultural discourses are formed by introducing foreign theories, but missing the issues of human rights of migrants who are the subjects of multi-culture and improving their quality of life. Although Korean government and society talks about "open multi-cultural society", it is more likely to be closed multi-cultural society. This is because the government carries on assimilating migrants with the name of 'social integration', but excludes and do not recognize undocumented migrants as members of Korean society based on 'Basic Law Concerning Foreigners in Korea' which defines foreigners as members of multi-cultural society and as legal residents.

b) An activist's definition of multi-cultural society

What should be considered a featured multi-cultural society? I would like to define "multi-cultural society" as a society which ensures the right not to be discriminated with regard to race, ethnicities, sex, culture or religion in their daily life. This definition is based on my field experience and the Art.2 of UN UDHR (Universal Declaration of Human Rights). Therefore an open multi-cultural society should be a society that protects migrants' right to live like human beings in all aspects of life. Open multi-cultural society means multi-cultural, co-existing society which is harmonized to respect different and diverse cultures regardless of race, ethnicities, sex, class and difference cannot be discriminated. Therefore the basic value of multi-cultural co-existing society is respecting not only different cultures but also the ones who are in those cultures.

⁴Sourcebook on Social Integration Support Policy for Women Marriage Immigrants Family》, 2006. 04,26. President Advisable Committee on the gap between the rich and the poor and discrimination remedy.

⁵ Sam-sic Lee, 'Influence on level of population both in quality and in quantity as increasing multi-cultural family', report of Research Center for Low birthrate and Ageing Society, KIHASA. 2010. 2.22.

Do migrants who are the subjects of multi-cultural society get respected in our society that highlights "open multi-cultural society"? The reason I raise the question is that 'multi-cultural' co-existing society cannot come true without respecting migrants, the subject of multi-cultural society. If it is realized without respect, it will be definitely false. How is the status of migrant workers or marriage immigrants who are the subjects of multi-cultural society in actual practice? Is that real or fiction to talk about multi-cultural society without respect for migrants? In reality, the human rights of migrants, the subject of multi-cultural society are ignored and not respected in our society which talks about open multi-cultural society.

3. Multi-cultural society as foreigner policy-conflict between national security and migrant human security

This chapter focuses on the fact that Korean government's foreigner policy is inconsistent with its multi-cultural society policy, although the government presents the vision of 'realization of open multi-cultural society' with the banner 'multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural co-existing society.'

a) Discriminative nature of foreigner policy

The fundamental problem of government's Basic Plans of Foreigner Policy is that it claims to create a multi-cultural society, but the policy is discriminative nature and relegates migrants' human security for national security. As the number of migrants increase, the Korean government carries out varying policies and systems which are oftentimes contradictory and inconsistent with other laws and policies affecting the community of migrants and immigrants.

The Employment Permit System (EPS) was introduced in 2003, and Basic Act Concerning Foreigners in Korea was enacted and in 2007 abolished the industrial trainee system to clean up the stigma of Korea as a country that practices 'modern slavery'. The government also launched the visit employment system (H-2 visa) for overseas Koreans mainly foreign nationals from China and former Soviet Union countries and established the Basic Plans of Foreigner Policy. Various systems were set up to protect human rights of marriage immigrants - adjustment support for integration into Korean society, simplified naturalization system, hotline, shelter for domestic violence victims, and enacting the Marriage Broker Registration Law.

However the government implements discriminative policy with double standards. The main stream in the government policy is "the attraction of good human resources and control foreigners from developing countries" to enhance the national competitiveness. The average brain gain index of OECD countries showed an increase of 0.6% from 1.0% of 1990 to 1.6% of 2000, while South Korea showed a decrease by 0.1% from -1.3% to -1.4% during the same period. It encouraged the Korean government to establish a series of policies such as conferring citizenship or allowing dual citizenship in order to secure good human resources enough to lead a technology innovation with proper knowledge and information. On the other hand, the government reinforced border control of migration from developing countries. These policies presents economy-centered national egoism and inconsistency with multi-cultural society claiming policies. The government makes an excuse that it is the world trend to reinforce border controls after 9.11 terror such as use of biological information upon immigration screening in order to block illegal migration and the people who harms national interest out. It could seriously infringe human rights of migrants from developing countries by regarding them as potential criminals.

b) Conflict between national security and human security

Conflict between national security and migrants' security in foreigner policy is one of the most serious issues. According to basic foreigner policy, the government insists that it is necessary to adopt the comprehensive approach in connection with economic, social, cultural, and security policy, beyond

the conventional concept of border control. The Korean government declared the goal for a mature multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society in order to prepare and approach the future featuring globalization and increase of foreigners. It emphasizes that it is important to prevent unreasonable discrimination against foreigners and to establish a social norm and citizen's ethical code for co-existence of various ethnic groups and cultures. However, the problem is that the government establishes the open-door policy focusing on order and safety because it believes a multi-cultural society will face social conflicts due to immigrants' low social and economic status. This open-door policy features immigration control to prevent side effects of immigration such as increase of potential threat to national interests, increase of number of illegal stayers e.g. undocumented migrant workers, settlement of 3D type industry laborers and increase of crimes committed by foreigners. The government particularly stresses the need of systematic management of foreigner information, early detection of possible threat and establishment of infrastructure for preemptive responses.

The emphasis on order and safety is always accompanied by crackdown on undocumented migrant workers. The number of undocumented migrant workers has risen to 175,679 out of 1,437,576 residing foreigners in South Korea as of August, 2012, which marked 12% of illegal stayers. The government believes that undocumented migration results in encroachment of domestic workers' job opportunities, infringement of migrant workers' human rights, and increase of foreigners' crimes, which will increase social conflict and unrest. Therefore, the government endeavors to eliminate the possibility of illegal stay by suspending the visa waiver agreement with countries marking frequent incidences of illegal stay. The government insists that crackdown on undocumented migrant workers is the effective corrective measure to save huge administrative and social costs caused by undocumented migration. It proceeds with related policies such as abolishment of limitation on the investigation authority of immigration office personnel, establishment of immigration investigation squad, improvement of crackdown infrastructure including personnel, vehicles, and equipments. The introduction of immigration investigation squad followed a Japanese model. The Japanese government established 'special investigation squad' directly affiliated to the Ministry of Justice and as a result, the number of undocumented migrant workers decreased from about 290,000 in the end of 1993 to about 170,000 in the end of June 2007.

c) Relationship between human rights of migrants and human security⁶

Howard Zinn who is dreaming of the borderless world once mentioned "A security is the product of nationalism. The security of other countries is never taken into consideration (Howard Zinn 211)". From the above perspective, migrants are merely instruments for national interests, for which they need to be carefully handled. Therefore, there is no interest for the individual security of migrants. In the globalized world, a nation guarantees its citizens' security; however, the security of undocumented migrant workers (illegal stayers) is never protected by the nation. Hence, the security of migrants moving across the border should be reviewed in terms of individual security, not national security.

In this paper, the concept of security has been adopted from the definition of security by UNDP (United Nations Development Plan) and Amartya Sen. UNDP insists that the individual security has a priority to the national security. It regards every factor possibly threatening human peace as a threat to the security. Its concept of the individual security contains freedom from economic difficulty, quality of life, freedom, and human rights.¹⁾ Migrants who crossed the border to escape from economic difficulty still suffer from the same difficulty after migration. They also suffer from low quality of life and infringement of freedom and human rights by citizen-centered welfare system. Therefore, the concept of the individual security of UNDP is proper to migrants from a perspective of their advocates.

⁶This chapter is partly recited from "Human Rights and Security of Immigrants in South Korea" presented in The 5th International Conference on East Asian Studies, 21st-22nd September 2008, International House, Osaka, Japan.

ObuchiKeizo's definition introduced by AmartyaSen is more specific. In the keynote speech at the 1st intellectual dialogue for the future of Asia, AmartyaSen introduced ObuchiKeizo's words as follows. "I strongly believe that a human being should lead a creative life, free from any kind of threat to the existence or infringement of human dignity. Although a human security is a new term, but I would like to understand it as a way of thinking that we should support the efforts to cope with all kinds of danger depressing human dignity and should comprehensively eliminate them".²⁾ AmartyaSen urges that practical engagement is required to secure human existence, daily life, and dignity.

Why should we discuss the security of migrants from the above perspective? It is because migrants' existence, life, and dignity are threatened under the national security. According to the perspective of ObuchiKeizo regarding the human security, most of migrants in South Korea live under dangerous threats. Especially, undocumented migrant workers suffer from threat to existence, unstable life, and infringement of human rights. A practical engagement is necessary to promote their human security. Let us take a look at the current situation of migrants in South Korea first for practical engagement.

Generally, infringements of migrant workers' human rights can be classified into various categories including infringement of labor rights and basic rights. Specific descriptions are as follows; unstable legal status, poor and discriminative labor environment (long working hours, low wage, industrial injuries, verbal abuse, assault, contempt, etc), difficulty in adjustment due to exclusionism, lack of social welfare service, inhumane crackdown and expulsion, etc.⁴⁾ Especially, undocumented migrant workers suffer from more severe infringement of human rights. In the fire incident at Yeosu Detention Center, 10 migrants were dead and 17 were injured. Crackdown on undocumented migrant workers is very similar to human hunting, even ignoring the Miranda principle. Pregnant women were deported and one undocumented worker fell from the building while avoiding crackdown. Immigration Office personnel rushed even into the church for crackdown. They also arrested targeted workers who served at migrant workers' union and deported him. The above mentioned cases provided the momentum to request the government to take more fundamental measures to improve migrant workers' human rights and poor detention center facilities.

Human rights issues of women migrants have different aspects from general migrant human rights issues. The Platform for Action pronounced at the UN World Conference on Women at Beijing definitely includes articles mentioning labor rights, human rights, educational rights of women migrant workers. However, the South Korean government did not take any consideration of women migrant workers in its policy. Recently, a Thai female migrant worker attempted to commit suicide in fear of expulsion after sexual assault (rape) by the employer. It shows the current situation on women migrant workers' human rights. When it comes to marriage migrant women, their number increases more than 10% every year. Many government ministries have established various policies for them because they regard marriage migrants as potential Korean nationals (or candidates for a Korean citizenship). However, most of government policies are intended for social integration of marriage migrants into the Korean family culture where wives are expected to be obedient to husbands. This endangers marriage migrants' human rights and even their existence. The homicide of Mrs. Huan Mai in May unveiled the miserable situation regarding human rights of marriage migrants in South Korea. Most of marriage migrants suffer from diverse types of violence such as verbal abuse, cultural violence, and sexual abuse. According to the investigation in 2010 by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family, 47.3% of marriage migrant women had experiences of domestic violence.

4. Activities of Korean NGOs for Migrant women's Human Rights and Security

- Focusing on Women Migrant Human Rights Center of Korea-

Reviewing the situation of migrants' human rights in Korea, ensuring human rights of migrants is inextricably linked to improving migrants' security. Therefore migrants' security should be reinforced by endeavoring to eliminate all kinds of risks, promote and protect migrants' existence, daily life and human dignity. It should especially proceed from the understanding of gender-based conditions of marriage migration. The prevailing immigration laws isolate women because women marriage

immigrants' assimilation into Korean families curtails their physical and social mobility. Marriage immigrants often work as a domestic worker without pay and their movement is restricted by the husband, family members and society.

Right now migrants' organizations and civil society organizations endeavor to improve the rights and interest of migrants. Their advocacy include the following activities: providing Korean language classes, and Korean culture classes to protect their human rights at least, and migrants' shelters for those who suffer from industrial accident, advocating for changing the clause which restricts workers to change their work place and the employer-centered policy, ensuring the right to health care including compensation for industrial accidents, urging to legalize undocumented migrant workers, stop crackdown on undocumented migrant workers and to ensure the right to education and right to live of children of undocumented migrant workers, and supporting to protect human rights of women marriage migrants and campaigning to establish social security net.

The Women Migrant Human Rights Center of Korea established in 2001 and work with 6 branches over the country in perspective of gender.

a) Women migrant organizations have engaged in and have been engaging in the following campaigns:⁷

- to abolish modern slavery system, Industrial Trainee System
- to legalize undocumented migrant workers
- to stop or end gender and racial prejudiced and discriminative promotion for international marriage
- against match-making farmers and fishermen by local government
- for 'migrant women are our neighbors'
- against mandatory social integration courses
- to save migrant women who murdered husband due to domestic violence
- against sex and racial discrimination
- to ensure the right to education for children of migrant workers and marriage migrants
- to enact anti-trafficking law and anti-discrimination law
- against violence on migrant women
- to ensure migrant women are not killed or fall victim in domestic violence

b) Empowering migrant women as citizens

The center requests the government to enact a policy that will present migrant women as subjects of rights and to reinforce their capacity as Korean citizens and providing them with women empowerment programs.

- Migrant women empowerment program
- Korean language, culture, information literacy classes, developing leadership, supporting co-national community

c) Activities that Support Promotion of Migrant Women's Human Rights

- 1) Counselling and education programs: counselling for survivors of domestic violence and legal advice service / Program for psychological treatment and rehabilitation.
- 2) Shelter to protect victims of domestic violence, provision of legal advice, medical and psychological treatment
- 3) Postnatal care for undocumented migrant women, education on the care of the newborn infant and

⁷*These campaigns are conducted by the network composing organizations concerning migrant women issues.

related medical support.

4) Policy Research and publication

Periodical Symposium on Promotion of Migrant Women's Rights and Interests and Institution Improvement, International Conference on Asian migrant women and Consolidation of Solidarity, Launching Campaigns for improvement of public consensus and institution, Monitoring government policy related to migrant women, Research Team on migrant women related policy and networking of migrant women

d) Monitoring government policy

(1) Monitoring government policy related to migrant women and suggests opinion on them.

(2) Suggesting migrant women related policies such as outlined below:

- to the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family to conduct programs for women migrant
- to revise the Act on preventing domestic violence for migrant women
- to provide shelters for migrant women victims of domestic violence
- to establish Migrant Women's Hotline for migrant women victims of domestic violence
- to establish migrant women support center
- to implement bi-lingual policy
- to provide free nursery facilities for children of marriage immigrants
- to allow marriage migrant women to apply for divorce in marriage situations where women are not at fault.
- to introduce confirmation letter of officially designated civil organizations for women's rights as an evidence of domestic violence to prove migrant women's innocence upon divorce
- to regulate international marriage agencies
- to achieve recommendations to Korean government by UN as submitting NGOs report to UN

e) Solidarity Activities⁸

e.1. Solidarity in the elimination of xenophobia.

The number of migrant women in South Korea as of the end of 2011 is about 350,000 - about 140,000 women migrant workers including undocumented migrants, about 200,000 female marriage immigrants and about 10,000 migrant women working in the sex industry .They are living under triple discriminations of xenophobia, class origin from developing countries and gender. We have struggled with two tasks to eliminate discrimination and share life, peace and equality with migrant women. One is protecting human rights of migrant women and the other is empowering activities for migrant women to get power. As doing these activities, the importance of solidarity activities is raised, which are national and international solidarity.

'International marriage migrant women support project' was initiated in 2005, which was commissioned by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family.(this is the first official project for marriage migrant women launched by the government, suggested by our center). The project was conducted in solidarity with 6 other local women organizations. If our center itself worked for it, such attainment could not come out and the issues of international marriage women migrants could not be raised nationally. Thereafter some of those organizations became local branch centers. Through this experience, we have learned the power of solidarity and sisterhood from the women sharing same values with us. Thus solidarity is very necessary not only with individual solidarity with the ones who are interested in advocating for migrant women also national organizations to improve and establish systems and laws.

e.2. Solidarity in common campaigns for policy changes

⁸This chapter is reconstructed based on "Dreaming of Asian Solidarity for Sharing Equality, Peace, Life with Migrant Women" at East Asia NGOs Solidarity Movement Forum by Seonam Forum presented on December 13, 2006.

Also it is a good way to reduce expendability and achieve more productive effect because national organizations do not have to compete on same agenda with each other rather they can work within a network or build solidarity. Specifically 70 organizations over the country conducted campaign against "mandatory social integration courses" which the Ministry of Justice introduced that marriage immigrants must complete 250 hours of education program of Korean language and Korean society to be entitled to acquire nationality. As a result of campaign, it changed this from mandatory into optional. There are successful examples to make the government introduce or change its policy through solidarity with migrant women organizations; campaign and promotion against sex and racial discrimination for international marriage, campaign to save migrant women who murdered husband due to domestic violence, campaign against violence on migrant women. Recently, a campaign was launched to ensure the right of marriage migrants to settle in the country.

In order to humanize the plight of migrant women, it is important to expand sisterhood and networking to women's organizations and international organizations in Asia besides domestic NGOs because the efforts of individuals or NGOs in receiving countries are insufficient. It is necessary to work with individuals or NGOs of women marriage migrants' sending countries together. Especially, feminization of migration lies on the border between human trafficking and migration issues. In order to seek the solution, it is necessary to build sisterhood and network with women's organizations in more than 10 sending countries. A good example is the campaign against 'human trafficking and marriage migration' by women's organizations of Vietnam and South Korea in the summer of 2006. One daily newspaper carried the article which seemed to promote human trafficking marriage migration. The association of Vietnamese students in Korea, named 'I and We', started a mass protest and Korean women's organizations joined in and launched a national campaign against the advertisement of sexual/racial discriminative international marriage broker business. The close cooperation and solidarity of civil society in both countries brought this issue to public attention in Korea and Vietnam. As a result, Korean people became alert on 'human trafficking marriage migration' and it eventually provoked the policy shift.⁹

e.3. Solidarity to resolve feminization of migration in Asia

Women Migrants Human Rights Center of Korea has been networking with MFA through Joint Committee with Migrants in Korea (JCMK), a member of MFA. In order to draw attention to feminization of migration and migrant women's human rights, our center suggested through JCMK to MFA to discuss feminization of migration at the Regional Conference on Migration held in Korea in 2004. In the end, migrant women workers' human rights, health, development, re-integration were discussed under the agenda of 'feminization of migration, development, and migration', 'feminization process', 'development', and 'migration' at the 4th RCM in Korea.

I made a presentation on the current status of migrant women workers of Korea at the workshop about 'women and feminization issues in migration'. With her initiative, Asian female social activists proposed together to MFA to compose a team dealing with feminization of migration. Accordingly, MFA agreed to form 'Gender Task Force' by female representatives from Asian countries and held the forum about this topic in Korea in 2005. As decided by the General Conference of MFA in 2004, female social activists from 13 Asian countries got together in Korea and held 'Asia Women's Forum on Migration' from September 12-28, 2005. The forum programs included a keynote presentation, 4 issue presentations, and country reports by participants. The keynote presentation was about 'Feminization of Migration and Women Migrants Human Rights' and the issue presentations dealt with 'Trafficking Process in Migration', 'Health Issues on Women Migration', 'WTO-GATS Mode 4', and 'Marriage and Family in Migration', respectively. The participants agreed to cope with feminization of migration in Asia together. Actually, later in anti WTO-GATS demonstration in Hong Kong in 2006, one staff member of our center participated together with Gender Task Force team members.

⁹Women Migrants Human Rights Center of Korea collaborates with Migrant Forum in Asia and Asian women organizations as international solidarity activities.

Further on, the forum on 'migration and development of women', got into a preliminary discussion for the conference on 'development and migration' held in Philippine in 2008. The Gender Task Force team actively participated and JCMK also collected, educated, and sent female participants to this forum. Currently, Executive DirectorKukyomHan is working as the coordinator of Gender Task Force team and she is making an effort to highlight international marriage as an important issue regarding feminization of migration because MFA is mainly focusing on labor issues.

e.2. Solidarity with Asian women's organizations to prevent human trafficking marriage migration

Although MFA is the association of Asian NGOs in migration sector, it is rather weak in dealing with marriage migration because the majority of members work on labor issues. Therefore, our center organized the forum titled 'Asian Women Migrants' Strategy Discussion for Protection and Prevention of Human Tracking in International Marriage' and invited women's organizations and social activists from six major migrant labor and marriage migrants sending countries including China, Vietnam, Mongol, Japan, Taiwan, and Philippine. In this forum, participants presented country reports, shared the current status of human trafficking international marriage, and discussed the strategy to solve the problem. In general discussion of the forum, participants declared 'Seoul Statement' by which they agreed to exchange information, share the situation of policy making, and enhance sisterhood and solidarity among participating countries. It is also agreed to hold a biennial forum in rotation among participating countries. However it could not be continued because of financial problems.

However, the Women Migrants Human Rights Center of Korea visited Vietnam and Cambodia in 2007 and the Philippines in 2010 to research on the situation of returnee migrant women. Also we visited some international organizations and shared the seriousness of human trafficking originating in international marriages. In fact, the phenomenon of international marriages is categorized neither as migration issue nor human trafficking issue in Asia because prostitution and child prostitution are too serious in the region. While visiting those countries, we promised to collaborate to prevent human trafficking innate in international marriage. Meanwhile, our solidarity work has developed to build a solidarity platform with other organizations. Our center heads the Korean cooperative organization of the Asia Regional School operated by ARENA and seeks to realize the goals and address the challenges of marriage migration with the organizations in Taiwan, the Philippines, Vietnam, Mongolia, China, Hong Kong, and Japan.

5. Limitations and challenges of civil organizations

a) Problems of multi-cultural discourses

The Korean government has established the foreign labour policy instead of immigration policy as an instrument for supplying laborers at "3D" (dirty, difficult and dangerous) job sectors and resolving problems of low birthrate and aging society. The discourses should be formed based on features of globalized age in which people move freely, but government has been driven with practical and easy way out. It is the role of civil society organizations(CSOs) to get into discourses against instrumental and practical policy and to assert the making of a healthy society. Although civil organizations performed that role the current level of CSOs performance is not entirely satisfactory; while migration related civil society organizations led the activities such as the abolition Industrial Trainee System, making efforts to ensure human rights and security of migrant workers and refugees residing in Korea, raising human rights issues and enacting laws and policies as increasing multi-cultural family, the influence and political power of civil organizations has faded because they have been co-opted and commissioned by government agencies and have become inward looking institutionalized sector that respond to the need of government rather than monitoring newly established policies. They are busy resolving urgent problems, and could not point out a better direction for Korean society in a globalized age. They still remain within the boundaries of the national government's interests.

Raising the voices of migrants themselves and asserting their rights as the subject of multi-culture society, is important in multi-cultural age. Therefore Korean civil society organizations should make efforts to present and advocate that migrants are citizens and raise their own voices. Migrants empowered capability is to be basis of civil society organizations, however it is hard to realize. Many migrants have no experiences of civil society organizations influenced by socialism and lack the knowledge of it. They are not united and their voices are not raised and cannot lead in discourses in multi-cultural society. Language is another real barrier. To listen to migrant women's voices, there is no way to force them to learn Korean as empowered migrants and as citizens. Proficiency in Korean language is linked to capability for survival and a standard of career. How can it be differentiated as a tool for adaptation and as means of empowerment? These are dilemma and practical concerns.

b) Crisis in civil society organizations occur because of their stances as government friendly or conservative civil organizations

How can the vision of civil organizations be performed by central or local government? Civil society organizations or civil society have let the shift in central government's policies pass them by, but these, in the truest sense have not been grounded in local community. The identity of civil society organizations has been challenged because it relies on governmental financial support rather than being independent. To be a healthy civil society organization, it should lead to change government policies based on participation and mobilization of citizens at all levels but it is more difficult in local community.

Another challenge is the CSOs stances that appear to be government friendly civil society organizations and are not exempt from xenophobic orientation which mirrors the conservative society. One of social ills has been the government's adoption of programs on multi-cultural society and provided multi-cultural projects with which some CSOs have participated in and helped in spreading government-driven multi-cultural discourse. These organizations were not genuinely interested in the making of a multi-cultural society, but perform multi-cultural related projects supported by government and jump in the bandwagon. As society gets conservative, xenophobic CSOs raised their voices loudly.

According to World Value Survey, racial discrimination in Korean is very serious. Korean ranks 31st out of 33 with the question, "I like foreign neighbors" and 33rd of 34 with the question "Do you want to have a neighbor with different racial background?" Although multi-cultural society in Korea has been well articulated, the myth that Korea is a homogeneous nation allows the strong repulsion on foreigners.¹⁰

Recently there organizations that encouraged these values have come up. There are civil society organizations against migrants and are openly advocating against the very concept of a multi-cultural society such as the Committee on Expulsion Foreigners, Association of International marriage victims, Committee Against Multi-culture, National committee on loving Korean Culture, Korean Veterans Association, Vietnam War Veterans Association. These are broad extreme right wing organizations that have built a solidarity platform and set out the logic of patriotism and national interest. Also their growing influence and government friendly multi-cultural discourses threaten human rights and security of migrants.

c) Dilemma and possibility of international solidarity

Promoting a multi-cultural society and improving human rights and security of migrants is not just linked to individual migrant's security. For example, there was a case arising from the conflict

¹⁰The Article of Daily Newspaper DONG-A(donga.com) on 14 August, 2012.

between Korean and Vietnamese government on infringing of human rights of Vietnamese women marriage immigrants. Two years ago, Vietnamese students in Korea were angry at the article which contents sexual and racial discrimination on Vietnamese women who got married to Korean men. The Vietnamese government requested the Korean government to apologize on demeaning public advertisement on arranging marriage with Vietnamese women. Also, the incident at Yeo-su Foreigner Detention Center, where detention cells burned down, tension between Chinese and Korean governments arose because many Chinese migrant workers were injured and some died of suffocation. Another tension arose with governments of Bangladesh and Pakistan, because the Korean government stopped the visa-waiver program with the two countries because of the increasing number of undocumented migrant workers from these countries. Consequently, the incidents brought friendly relationships with labor origin countries to protect migrants' the right to live and take steps to ease their daily discomfort and uphold dignity, in other words it contributed to the building of security and peace between countries.

Meanwhile taking human rights issues of migrants at the forefront would never destroy relationships between sending country and receiving countries, although both prioritize the economic aspects of migration than human rights of migrants. Labor sending countries want as many as possible of their nationals to go overseas to get more remittance, on the other hand, receiving countries deal with human rights of migrants in reference to the position of sending countries. Therefore civil organizations or researchers who advocate for migrants human rights and human security should endeavor to exert pressure to its own government to ensure human rights and security of migrants. If these efforts ensure the right to a decent livelihood of migrants, ease daily discomfort and recover their dignity, these will ensure human security and further contribute to world peace. Human security is linked to promoting peace because human security defines all factors harming peace as security threat.

As discussion on multi-cultural society has inevitable links to migration issues in a globalized age, international solidarity is necessary for civil society organizations.

Firstly, making round table discussion is difficult because most of Asian countries have the same position, sending countries, being different from Western societies. Generally the government of migrants' country of origin tries not to displease government of destination countries, on the other hand, civil organizations of the former mainly request and the latter listen to these requests. Such difference between civil organizations makes solidarity difficult. To build solidarity platform in equal position is not dispensational one but should be based on 'a citizen of the world' which is characteristically a transnational civic consciousness. This is not an easy task to evolve this kind of consciousness.

Secondly, Korean civil organizations have unstable financial basis so that they cannot afford to shoulder the cost for solidarity work as destination country. Migrant organizations find it difficult to perform international solidarity even though they have strong will because they are not financially independent.

Thirdly, UN centered international solidarity should be enhanced in the efforts of establishing migrant human rights and security friendly policy in Korea. The United Nations recommendations influence Korean government strongly, so using UN mechanism is very important. To cite some examples, the recommendations of UN CEDAW (the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women) and CERD (The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination) led to changes in foreign migrant workers policy. In order to use UN mechanism, cooperation with other international organizations is necessary. In advocating the UN CEDAW in 2011, we cooperated with some international organizations such as Amnesty International, Migrant Forum in Asia, and APWLD (Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development). But it has challenges such as budgetary constraints and language barrier, English.

Fourthly language is the challenge for smooth communication for international solidarity. Most migrant women come from mono-lingual countries not having English as official language. The third party who is neither a migrant nor an activists but a fluent English speaker often presents issues and concerns about migration in his/her own opinion, so the presentation creates a gap between migrant experiences and scholar's opinion and does not reflect migrants' own story.

One sided and single-handed efforts of either migrants' destination or county of origin cannot comprehensively deal with issues of "Feminization of Migration". In recognizing the necessity of close cooperation between migrants' countries of origin and destination that solidarity platform can have meaning and power.

"If you dream alone, it is just a dream. If you dream together, it becomes a reality"

"One voice is not enough. Two voices are not enough, either.

When we get together and raise our voices, it will set the repressed free."

Concluding remarks

A marriage migrant woman from Vietnam delivered a closing remarks at mass convention for International Women's Day on March, saying "Do not call us multi-culture, multi-culture. Why do you call us multi-culture, as Korean society is not multi-cultural society." A marriage migrant woman who had worked for our center changed her work. She has her own name, "Boyan" but she introduced herself "multi-culture" A boy of multi-cultural family burned few houses due to anger at discrimination and ignorance of Korean society. The press called him "multi-culture". Migrants are confined in the term multi-culture rather than being respected as a human being. What kind of world do we expect?

The 3rd Migrant Workers Film Festival was held on 8 August, 2008 with the dream of migrant workers live as human being, The festival presented the reason of product, "I dream the world which the question "Where are you from?" is not necessary when people meet strange face and unique accent. Migrant workers, migrants, and native Koreans all live in the same age and same planet."

Is it impossible that migrants and natives protect each other's human rights as global citizens and have the festival dreams? Today, some people talk about global citizenship in a globalized age. At this point in time, paradigm shift is necessary. For a true multi-cultural society to be realized, it is necessary to change the perception, one that accepts migrants, the subject of multi-culture, as brothers and sisters not strangers. Civil society organizationsexist to open our society in order to recognize and respect differences and not to discriminate.