

PREFACE

Although agricultural research has a long history in Korea, the recent introduction of the high-yielding varieties of rice and improved strains of other crops, combined with extensive attention to improved cultivation techniques, pervasive extension services, and better rural infrastructure have helped transform rural Korea within a decade. By any standard, this was a remarkable achievement.

The agricultural research project, for which the United States Government provided \$5 million, was but a modest contribution to Korea's agricultural research capacity, and thus even a more modest contribution to its rural development. As this report demonstrates, agricultural research was one critical element in the change of rural Korea, but not the only causal factor.

The Korean agricultural research project was chosen for an impact evaluation because it seemed to provide lessons relevant for other nations, and because it was a blend of technical assistance, training, and equipment. The impact evaluation team was composed of three AID staff assisted by a Korean rural specialist. During the course of about one month in Korea, the team travelled some 2,700 kilometers and visited all provinces in the nation. No sampling technique for a project nationwide in scope can be scientific within the format of a rapid rural appraisal. The team, however, made a conscious effort to visit remote regions and poorer villages to determine whether the research results were reaching relatively isolated farmers. These site visits were spontaneously selected. Appendices A and B provide notes on the methodology and the team's itinerary.

The team wishes to thank the officials of the Office of Rural Development, both in its headquarters in Suwon and in the provinces, for their assistance and the sharing of their voluminous data. Our thanks also go to the farmers and their wives who often took time from their transplanting to talk with us. The team would also like to thank the U.S. Embassy for making available a vehicle and driver and for other logistical support.