

KANGKANGEE ARTS VILLAGE PROJECT (KAV) : THE HEART OF THE MODERN SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT AND FASCINATING STORIES OF PEOPLE WHO BRAVED THE SEAS



DEVELOPMENT **EMPOWERMENT** RESILIENCE
ATTRACTIVENESS **BOTTOM-UP** COOPERATION
REGENERATION **IDENTITY** HERITAGE **ARTS**

1. Context

Busan is South Korea's second largest city and busiest port. Kangkangee Village, located in Yeongdo-gu, or Yeongdo District of Busan Metropolitan City, is situated across Jagalchi Market, an extensive wholesale fish market, and near a gateway to Yeongdodaegyo Bridge, both of which are famous local landmarks.

Korea's first motorized ship was created in Kangkangee Village in the late 19th century. The village flourished with ship-repairing business up until the 1980s, and today, visitors can find remnants of Korea's industrialization, such as eight repair shipyards, vessel parts companies, and other shipbuilding-related firms. The long-term economic recession and decline of the shipbuilding industry caused rapid depopulation and accelerated the deterioration of the village. The final blow came in during the 1997 Asian financial crisis after which basic infrastructure facilities such as banks, medical clinics and a police station stopped or moved their operation, accelerating the degeneration of the neighbourhood: dilapidated houses accounted for 71.9% of the buildings in the area, population influx decreased by 47.7% and the population declined five years in a row.

2. Busan and culture

Busan metropolitan government has been relying on cultural content as an important means to facilitate urban regeneration and stimulate the creative economy, providing citizens with public support to foster their voluntary participation in cultural activities, and developing various kinds of cultural content to boost local tourism.

In 2015, the city carried out the Imagination Arts Village Initiative, a competition scheme whose winner would be awarded the fund to carry out an urban regeneration project by means of arts and culture. Kangkangee Village, whose name originates from kangkang, the sound of a hammer hitting the rusty surface of an old ship, won the bid, thanks to its rich historical and cultural heritage sites that exhibited Busan's identity of a great port city.

BUSAN'S CULTURAL POLICY AIMS DIRECTLY TO CREATE "A CITY THRIVING WITH TALENT, TECHNOLOGY, AND CULTURE EVERYDAY".

3. Goals and project implementation

1.1. Main aim and specific goals

The Kangkangee Arts Village Project aims to restore the original authenticity of Busan, South Korea's greatest port city, to create a village brimming with arts and culture.

The specific goals of the project include:

- Identifying a new urban regeneration policy wherein the maritime culture is revisited and considered from a different perspective;
- Preserving and making good use of industrial heritage sites of the late modern period through regeneration policies;
- Establishing a community around creative arts and culture, where residents and artists build a communication network and are actively involved.

1.2. Development of the project

Main actions carried out

The project's preparatory phase included the establishment of the village information centre and the ship-repair museum, where guests can engage in hands-on learning programs on the restoration of a damaged ship. To house this museum, the city government bought a building from the early 1900s built in Japanese colonial architectural style. The renovation work of the building is under way to recreate the colonial atmosphere while preserving historical features.



A series of actions have been carried out along the three actions plans of the regeneration project: Sea, regeneration and community.

1) Sea

The Yeongdo Ferry Restoration Project, expected to be completed in 2018 (budget of EUR 120 000), includes the following components:

- Re-establish a ferry service between the city mainland and Yeongdo Island;
- Build a ferry terminal with cargo containers;
- Build a coastal floating garden.

2) Regeneration

The Public Art Project consists in integrating landmark objects, art benches garden alleys, as well as sound, light, kinetic and painting urban installations (EUR 450 000 budget) into the village environment. In total, 88 pieces of artwork created by 29 artists were installed throughout the village.

The Village Museum project (EUR 540 000 budget) also contributed to surveying and archiving the intangible maritime lifestyles of citizens, as well as to set up cultural exchange programs with foreign cities, and to develop a guided tour of the village. Historical content on the village and shipbuilding industry was recorded, exhibited, and reproduced in various formats (books, videos, graphic novels, and musical pieces).

PROGRESSIVELY, AS KANGKANGEE ARTS VILLAGE IS GAINING PUBLIC ATTENTION FROM HOME AND ABROAD, THE CITY GOVERNMENT IS WATCHING OUT FOR A POTENTIAL INCREASE IN LAND VALUES AND RENTS, WHICH COULD POTENTIALLY FORCE CURRENT, ESTABLISHED RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES TO RELOCATE.

3) Community

The Cultural Sarangbang Program is an on-going programme aimed at providing educational programs, creating workshop space for artists and establishing a venue for hands-on learning. Residents participate in the maintaining and cleaning of the physical living environment on one hand, and on the other hand through art performances, such as music, dancing or writing.

A Public Arts Festival was organised in October 2017, that hosted visual art projects and cultural performances (EUR 120 000 budget).

In addition, through the Kangkangee Creative Project, a website and brand identity for the village were built and developed by the residents themselves, as well as a series of souvenir items, and a village newspaper was published (EUR 120 000 budget).

The whole project was implemented under the responsibility of a Task Force Team, with its own secretariat (EUR 320 000 budget). The Task Force includes civic organizations such as “Creative Plan b”, an artists’ cooperative, and the Yeongdo Cultural Center. Two members of the team also participate in round-table talks with the residents’ association, the government, and a group of experts from the private sector, to evaluate the implementation process and make appropriate recommendations.

“Creative Plan b” also took part in the planning phase of the KAV Project. After the Project was launched, Creative Plan b kept conducting research, collecting relevant data, and running educational programs designed for residents. In parallel, the Yeongdo Cultural Center acts as a link to enhance communication among various governmental organizations, civil society organizations, and residents.

Other partners from governmental entities include Busan Metropolitan Government, which provides general administrative support and financial resources for the whole project (total budget of EUR 2 800 000), and pursues detailed action plans in cooperation with participating organizations and Yeongdo-gu Office. In addition, the district government of Yeongdo-gu is responsible for the actual implementation, including purchasing land and buildings and renovating the purchased properties.

To prevent the possible negative effects of gentrification in the village, the government has employed proactive measures:

- Establishing a Council on Regional Collaborative Private-Public Cooperation to protect small businesses;
- Introducing long-term loans with low interest rates for small business owners to purchase stores and offices;
- Setting up a legal support team for the established residents and businesses;
- Establishing a municipal ordinance on gentrification prevention.

THE PROJECT INNOVATED THE WAY IN WHICH ARTISTS AND CITIZENS PARTICIPATE IN A PUBLIC PROJECT : BROADENED SCOPE OF CREATIVE SUBJECT MATTERS ; ONGOING INTERACTION ; BRING A FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON THE IMPORTANCE AND WORTH OF THE CITY THROUGH VARIOUS CREATIVE ARTS ACTIVITIES.

4. Impacts

1.1. Direct impacts

Impacts on the local government

The KAV Project is a breakthrough initiative for local governments that strive to deliver better public services. In the past, previous municipal policies regarding culture were top-down decision-making processes, including administrative support for artists and performers, governmental support limited to individual art projects, and policies to help citizens gain greater access to arts and cultural events by providing them with gift vouchers to be used at museums, theaters or concert halls.

On the contrary, the Kangkangee Arts Village Project adopted a system of good governance in which artists, civil society organisations and government worked in equal partnership.



Impact on culture and on local cultural actors

Throughout this project, the importance of artists' role in urban planning was highlighted, which made government and artists treat each other as partners on equal terms: intangible regeneration of the village, i.e. performances, exhibitions, and archiving, was mainly taken on by the private organizations. In this sense, the KAV Project was the first successful case of public-private governance in South Korea wherein both sectors forged equal partnership.

In addition, the project was a turning point in the collection and preservation of tangible and intangible assets concerning industrial heritage and maritime lifestyle in Busan.

Impact on the territory and population

The village, once labelled as a disintegrated industrial area, reinvented itself as a uniquely valuable place to showcase the true identity of Busan. Local residents are both the main beneficiaries and the main actors of the project. A resident association was originally founded in the 1950s, and later re-organized in the 1980s to provide support for social service organizations. It was involved in the early

phase of the KAV Project, and in 2017, they participated in the Cultural Sarangbang Program, which consisted in providing various arts and cultural lessons at a community center.

1.2. Evaluation

Last year, while Busan Metropolitan Government evaluated the use of collaborative municipal governance in city-sponsored projects, the Kangkangee Arts Village Project received a grade S, corresponding to highest quality performance. The evaluation was based on several indicators:

- Cooperation capacity (40%), including governance structure (20%) - the diversity of participating entities, and whether a partner understands the joint objectives or goals; and the feasibility and implementation of collaborative activities (20%).
- Outcomes (60%), including how much the output contributed to regional development (20%); the capacity to overpass difficulties (20%); whether and how effectively objectives or goals were achieved (20%).

1.3. Key factors

- The project proved sustainable because it was implemented through art and cultural means, which successfully increased the added value of the area, and differentiated the village from others. Art and cultural means also proved to be more cost-effective than redevelopment or reconstruction approaches.
- The stakeholders' participation through collaborative partnerships, and the education and empowerment of residents to play a crucial role in the implementation of the action plan, were instrumental to address the challenges the village was facing.
- The participatory procedures, with decision-making taking being made by the Promotion Council involving all relevant stakeholders, and the participation of external experts, served as an underlying basis of horizontal governance, transparency and feasibility.

1.4. Continuity

The government, artists, and residents have been making great efforts to improve the continuity and sustainability of the Kangkangee Arts Village Project, in particular by establishing a dedicated Urban Regeneration Task Force Team, which ensures constant monitoring, supervision, and support.

The Task Force has been working hard to attract governmental funding and corporate sponsorship so as to preserve installed artworks and continuously provide citizens with arts and cultural programs. In 2018, the Task Force secured funding from the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism in addition to the already allotted budget.

Recently, the residents association founded a community enterprise to carry out profitable projects, including a village tour and a ferry service. Revenue generated by the community enterprise will be saved up in a special fund for the village.

5. Further information

Busan was a candidate for the third "UCLG Mexico City – Culture 21 International Award" (November 2017 – May 2018). The jury for the award drew up its final report in June of 2016, and requested that the Committee on Culture promote this project as one of the good practices to be implemented through Agenda 21 for culture.

This article was written by Oh JaeMun, Assistant Director, Busan Metropolitan City

Contact: tomoojm@korea.kr

Website: <http://english.busan.go.kr>