



Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date of Release: 28 August 2025

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Seung-ho Choi, Foreign Press Spokesperson

TEL: +82-44-201-1120

E-mail: csh9731@korea.kr

A Collection of Success Stories of Rural Space Restructuring and Regeneration in the ROK

Sejong, 28 August 2025 — In April 2025, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (MAFRA) published a collection of success cases of rural spatial restructuring and regeneration, which introduces success cases of government policies that contributed to bringing new life into rural areas and improving the quality of life of rural residents in the Republic of Korea.

Among a wide array of success cases of rural spatial restructuring and regeneration having been carried out across the country, 23 cases were selected for the collection of success cases by the criterion of having or not having brought changes to rural spaces in six key areas as in the following: (a) spatial restructuring of rural areas, (b) liveability and habitability, (c) community services, (d) rural economies and jobs, (e) landscapes and the environment, and

(f) a sense of community and vitality. The collection of success cases documents the implementation process, success factors, key achievements, etc.

Here are some picks from the collection.

(1) The Songrim village in Seocheon-gun (the county of Seocheon), Chungcheongnam-do (the province of South Chungcheong) is a rural residential area of 50 or more houses newly redeveloped by means of land re-adjustment (also known as land pooling or land repotting). The Songrim village regeneration was driven by the two purposes. The one was to provide a new place to live in for residents living in the proximity of the now-defunct Janghang Smelter who found their villages had become uninhabitable due to soil contamination, and the other was to improve the living environment of the residents in the Songrim village who were suffering from deteriorating houses and community facilities.

What is noteworthy about the rural redevelopment is that residents actively engaged in the process and drew up community charters, based on their consensus, regarding the design of the village and houses to be built. Also, the Chungnam chapter of the Korean Institute of Female Architects provided residents with pro bono consulting on housing design. All this led to a creation of a pleasant and beautiful village that harmonises with the surrounding “songrim,” a Korean term for pine forests.

(2) The café named SAMESAME (or SAME²) in Jeongeup-si (the city of Jeongeup), Jeollabuk-do (the province of North Jeolla) is a success story of an idle facility in a rural province having been transformed into a popular destination, and creating jobs for young people.

The Jeongeup-si section of the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation (also known as NongHyup) and a public institution for young adults in Jeongeup-si worked together and turned the old grain warehouse of NongHyup into a snazzy farm-to-table dessert café.

Since its opening in 2024, the café has served over 10,000 customers, hired 7 young locals, and produced other job-creating effects, which has significantly contributed to boosting the local economy. The café is also working and growing together with local farmers. For example, it has signed contracts with 65 wheat farms and devised original recipes using locally grown wheat, such as one for a croissant.

(3) The public dormitory for seasonal migrant workers in Hamyang-gun (the county of Hamyang), Gyeongsangnam-do (the province of South Gyeongsang), was remodelled from a defunct motel and is playing a big role in resolving the labor shortages faced by the area. Thirty-five workers are currently living in the dormitory, and they report a high level of satisfaction with living conditions at the dormitory, mostly thanks to the pleasant indoor spaces.

The dormitory also helped improve the landscape of the area by giving a new life to the dilapidated motel building that spoiled the residential environment and by doing so, the dormitory could be completed in a shorter period at less cost.

Other success stories featured in the collection include the following: (a) a community meal programme for the elderly in Yeongdeok-gun, Gyeongsangbuk-do, (b) the Sansuyu (the Korean word for cornelian cherries)

village in Gurye-gun, Jeollanam-do, which has been preserving and continuing the tradition of cornelian cherry farming, and (c) the Gomidang village in Hongseong-gun, Chungcheongnam-do, where residents entered into an agreement for the conservation and management of the village's landscape and, under the agreement, have been working together to develop cultural, historical, and tourism assets centered around the Saun historic house.

The stories featured in the publication have the key drivers of success in common, as in the following: the local governments' efforts to understand problems faced by their jurisdictions and develop ideas for solutions into concrete projects; a clear division of roles among key stakeholders such as residents, administrative officials, and agricultural cooperatives; and the voluntary participation and cooperation of residents.

You can read the full report on the official website of the MAFRA (www.mafra.go.kr).