

# GYEONGJU REPUBLIC OF KOREA

## ALIVE YANGDONG PROJECTS – EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE TRADITIONAL VILLAGE MAKING

### URBAN RESILIENCE – ENHANCING URBAN RESILIENCE THROUGH LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE-SHARING

IDENTIFICATION

<b>SIZE OF THE CITY:</b>	270 000 inhabitants	800 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>SIZE OF THE INSCRIBED PROPERTY:</b>	309 inhabitants	600 ha Buffer zone : 885 ha

<b>TYPOLOGY OF THE CITY:</b>	Medium-size city
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### WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

#### HISTORIC VILLAGES OF KOREA: HAHOE AND YANGDONG

Inscription	2010	Founded in the 14th-15th centuries, Hahoe and Yangdong are seen as the two most representative historic clan villages in the Republic of Korea. Their layout and location - sheltered by forested mountains and facing out onto a river and open agricultural fields – reflect the distinctive aristocratic Confucian culture of the early part of the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910). The villages were located to provide both physical and spiritual nourishment from their surrounding landscapes. They include residences of the head families, together with substantial timber framed houses of other clan members, also pavilions, study halls, Confucian academies for learning, and clusters of one story mud-walled, thatched-roofed houses, formerly for commoners. The landscapes of mountains, trees and water around the village, framed in views from pavilions and retreats, were celebrated for their beauty by 17th and 18th century poets.
Criteria	(iii)(iv)	
Area	142 ha	

**Criterion (iii):** Hahoe and Yangdong are two of the best preserved and representative examples of clan villages, a type of settlement characterizing the early part of the Joseon Dynasty. In their siting, planning and building traditions the two villages are an exceptional testimony to the Confucianism of the Joseon dynasty, which produced settlements that followed strict Confucian ideals over a period of some five hundred years.

**Criterion (iv):** The village ensembles of Hahoe and Yangdong reflect the impact of the Joseon Dynasty that profoundly influenced the development of the Korean peninsula over some five centuries. The villages, and particularly the ensemble of yangban and commoners’ houses, and their overall and individual planning, reflect the precepts of this Dynasty in terms of its social structures and cultural traditions as well as its power and influence and its literary, and philosophical traditions.

**NAME OF THE PROJECT**

Alive Yangdong Projects – Education for Sustainable Traditional Village Making

**NATURE OF THE MAIN HAZARDS TO WHICH THE CITY IS EXPOSED**

The growing proportion of elderly people is directly linked to the decline of resilience of traditional community in Yangdong Village. Residents aged 60 or older have increased from 116 in 2010 to 125 in 2015, although the number of people who live in Yangdong declined; 364 to 309. It means 40% of the people living in Yangdong village are older than the age of 60. If the situation continues, in 2025, more than 60% of the population will be identified as elderly people. Furthermore, it is difficult to even keep up the vitality and resilience of the community.

In the traditional farming village, lack of labor force should be seen as a serious socio-economic crisis since it makes a vicious circle of decline.

Finally, the value which elderly population cherish cannot be passed down to the young generation due to the rapid aging community. Intangible value of the village is in a great danger of losing the resilience because of the rapid aging of the village.

**THE PROJECT**

Over the last four decades, Korea's elderly population has grown at the fastest pace — by four times, more than double the OECD average of 1.6 times, according to a study released last week by the Korea Institute for Industrial Economics and Trade. The proportion of elderly people in the country is forecast to exceed 20 percent by 2026.

When it comes to Yangdong Village, the situation is more serious with 125 residences that are older than 65 years old among total 364 people. It is obvious that the village is struggling with a labor shortage, preservation of the tradition of the village, and excessively conservative trends dominating the village. The number of empty houses is almost 30 which is about 25% of the whole village. Moreover, the only elementary school is in the danger of shutting down due to the shortage of students, and the situation is forecasted to deteriorate if we do not take a serious action to cope with this situation.

Alive Yangdong Projects aims to provide the village with more vigor and vitality by revitalizing the school next to Yangdong Village in order to induce the inflow of more young population such as families with elementary students and teachers.

The Gyeongju city government modified the curriculum of the Yangdong Elementary school focusing more on Korean tradition such as generosity, living together with nature, and noblesse oblige. The head families and elderly people are going to actively participate in the new curriculum and new teachers who can conduct extra activities are going to live in the empty houses in the village for rent free. Given the surrounding landscapes of the school, it is promising place for parents who try to give their children less competitive, spiritually rich life.

In this way, this project will substantially contribute to the revival of Yangdong elementary school and ultimately, it leads to the inflow of young couples who seek alternative ways of raising children and teachers who have to conduct the new extra curriculums. It will open the path toward creating a positive atmosphere of the village, through which the current tendencies of aging society and the demographic exhaustion of the village can be reversed. It will also break the wall between generations of local populations which prevent them from creating a powerful social bond and passing down the intangible value of Yangdong village properly.

**LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE-SHARING**

The assignments which the historic city is facing in Korea having entered the aging society involve the continued maintenance & development of urban vitality, coping with global environmental issues, and all sorts of challenges. The project aims to make strong back-up and ground for the resilience of Yangdong Village and Gyeongju. Resilience is not only about disaster management and accident management but also building socio-economical background that can manage social changes and economic changes. By regenerating the elementary education near Yangdong village and involving the head families of the village, we can naturally pass down the knowledge and it leads to the sociological resilience.

**GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS OR TOOLKITS**

Education for Sustainable Development Toolkit.

Youth Peer Education Toolkit

Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future Published by KNCU

## THE PROJECT DRIVERS

Gyeongju municipal government.

## THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Gyeongju municipal government, Yangdong elementary school, Yangdong village head families, civil society of Yangdong village.

## CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

School and Experts of Gyeongju city will be the main bodies of implementation of the project by planning, educating, promoting the society.

The residents of the Yangdong village are the supporting the project by being a spiritual environment itself and also beneficiary of the project by participating in the project as a teacher and mentors and nourishment to the children.

Local Media such as newspaper and TV stations are also important supporters by promoting the curriculum and the new direction of the Yangdong elementary school.

International Organizations such as OWHC, UNESCO will support the project with the expertise and know-how..

## FINANCIAL SET-UP

Gyeongju municipal government provides financial support for the project

## DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION

Start  
April 2015

THE PROJECT IS STILL ON-GOING

## RELATION BETWEEN THE PROJECT AND THE MANAGEMENT OF THE HERITAGE PROPERTY

By conducting the process, it enhances the resilience of Yangdong Village and we can expand this result to the Gyeongju city.



*During the experts meeting for the strategy*



*During the public hearing of the project*

The main expected outcome is considered to be the increase of young population and revitalization of the village. This will lead to the formation of a sustainable

tool for confronting the aging society and other potential risks of the village.

### AN INNOVATIVE STEP OF URBAN RESILIENCE

It is a very rare concept that give vigor to the village by regenerating a school in front of it, and also it can give

a hint of what we should do when we confront the aging society.

### THE BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT FOR OTHER WORLD HERITAGE CITIES

Historic towns and small traditional villages have a same problem with Yangdong village. It is not possible to secure the resilience of the city without vitality. In particular, sudden disasters can easily break the chain

of traditional value. With the case of Yangdong village, we expect other World Heritage cities to learn how to make more vibrant and vigorous community which do not collapse by the external influence.

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