

연구논문

Developing National Evaluation Capacity in Korea

Difficulties and Challenges

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심광호

미국 미시간주립 대학에서 정치학 박사학위(정책평가 및 방법론 분야)를 취득하고 감사원 감사관을 거쳐 현재 대통령 자문 정부혁신지방분권위원회 혁신분권평가국장 으로 재직하고 있다. 주요 관심 분야는 평가, 공공감사, 방법론, 통신정책 등이다.

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심준섭

미국 뉴욕주립대학에서 행정학 박사학위를 취득하고 현재 중앙대학교 공공정책학부 조교수로 재직하고 있다. 주요 관심분야는 의사결정론, 정책평가론, 협상론 등이다.

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This study focuses on building national evaluation capacity in Korea. For this, it attempts to derive a conceptual framework for evaluation capacity building (ECB) drawing on the evaluation literature. Then, it addresses difficulties the Korean government faces in ECB and then sets forth major strategies for ECB. More specifically, national evaluation capacity would be enhanced by integrating four major elements: i) establishment of evaluation institutions, budget, and law, ii) configuration of evaluation agencies and establishment of evaluation information network, iii) improvement of evaluation infrastructure, and iv) improvement of social awareness and evaluation culture in the society. This Korean experience would be of use to countries attempting to build evaluation capacity at the national level.

Key Words : Evaluation Capacity Building, Evaluation Capacity Management System

1. INTRODUCTION

Evaluation has begun and rapidly expanded in many western countries since there were strong pressures to address the social problems and issues and to improve government performance and accountability. Since 1980s, they have emphasized the importance of and the need for establishing a nationwide evaluation system to foster more

performance-oriented government processes. For instance, the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 placed a strong foundation to embrace “evaluation” as an important means of holding the American government accountable.

Likewise, Korea has been establishing various monitoring and evaluation systems since 1990s. The establishment of Performance Audit by the Board of Audit and Inspection (BAI) of Korea in 1995 strengthened external evaluation. On the other hand, the Basic Law on Government Process Evaluation (BLGPE) of 2001 structured “internal” evaluations of government processes. Unfortunately, however, the BLGPE failed to allow the Korean government to set institutional and structural foundations for building evaluation capacity from a comprehensive perspective (Lee & Kim, 2004).

Since the launch of the “participatory government” in 2003, the landscape of evaluation has changed dramatically in Korea. Manifestation of the government’s commitments to evaluation provided seeds for the expansion of evaluation and, thus, for “mainstreaming evaluation” (Duignam, 2003) throughout the country. Evaluation began to be recognized as an integral part of government reform and evaluators are considered as change agents (Sonnichsen, 1994). At the same time, it was also widely believed that to a large extent lack of national evaluation capacity caused the Korean government and society to undergo major government failures such as foreign exchange crisis of 1997, credit crises of 2002, and logistics crisis of 2003 (Lee, 2003). Under these circumstances, the enhancement of evaluation capacity on a national scale to increase government performance and accountability becomes highlighted as one of the central goals of government reform (Lee, 2004; Lee, 2003; Segerholm, 2003). Despite the needs for ECB, there is no agreement on the framework of ECB among policy researchers and policy makers in Korea.

The purpose of this study is to address difficulties the Korean government faces in building national evaluation capacity and to set forth important strategies for ECB. In doing so, it attempts to clarify the concepts and elements associated with ECB and develop a comprehensive evaluation system at the national level. Thus, this study focuses on discussing important elements that would build the evaluation capacity and exploring a conceptual framework for building evaluation capacity.

2. EVALUATION AND EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING

Before delving into evaluation capacity building efforts in Korea, it is necessary to conceptualize evaluation capacity, thus allowing the development of a conceptual framework for ECB in Korean context.

1) Concepts and Classification of Evaluation

Evaluation has expanded its scope and concept and now become an essential part of government administration and reform. Evaluation is an important output of the policy process and related to the oversight activity (Birkland, 2001). While evaluation includes all efforts to place value on events, things, processes, or people from the broadest definition, it can usually be described as the process of determining whether and to what extent a program is achieving some benefit or achieving its explicit or implicit goals in the public policy context (Birkland, 2001). Although the terms of monitoring and evaluation are often used interchangeably, evaluation would be differentiated from monitoring (Valadez & Bamberger, 1994). While monitoring would focus on examining the input-output process (i.e., implementation),

evaluation focuses on assessing the output-effect (i.e., project results) and effect-impact (i.e., project impacts) processes (Khan, 1998).

Evaluation is conducted in order to help government improve a program, gain knowledge about program effects, provide input to decisions about program funding, structure, or administration, or to respond to political pressures (Rossi, Freeman, & Lipsey, 1999). Taken as public good, evaluation is increasingly integrated in accountability movements and institutionalized systems for governance (Segerholm, 2003).

Depending upon the locus of evaluator, evaluation can be classified into two types: "internal evaluation" and "external evaluation." Evaluation also falls into recognizable three distinct but interrelated categories depending on the object it addresses: "policy evaluation," "project evaluation," and "agency (or organization) evaluation." Further, it can be categorized as "needs evaluation," "process evaluation," and "impact evaluation" according to the time when evaluation is conducted (Nachmias, 1979). Similarly, evaluation typically involves assessment of one or more of five program domains: (i) the need for the program, (ii) the design of the program, (iii) the program implementation and service delivery, (iv) the program impact or outcomes, and (v) program efficiency (Rossi, Freeman, & Lipsey, 1999).

For the convenience of discussion, this study attempts to categorize evaluation systems in Korea into two dimensions, subject and object, and further to divide them into two sectors, public (including semi-public) and private. This resulted in four distinct evaluation areas as presented in Table 1, each of which depicts a different type of evaluation system. For each area, major evaluation systems and their corresponding characteristics are described in detail in Table 2.

Area I includes "public-to-public" evaluation systems. As the major public sector evaluation system in Korea, the Performance Audit by BAI functions as "external evaluation." On the other hand, internal evaluation system includes Government Process Evaluation System

Table 1
Classification of
Evaluation Systems

Subject of Evaluation	Object of Evaluation	
	Public Sector	Private Sector
	Public Sector	Area I
Private Sector	Area III	Area IV

Table 2
Major Evaluation
Systems in the Four
Areas

Area	Evaluation System	Evaluation Agencies	Goal
I	Performance Audit	Board of Audit & Inspection of Korea (BAI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents analysis and improvement measures for issues involving major policies and products in terms of economy, efficiency, effectiveness
I	Government Process Evaluation System	Office for Government Policy Coordination (OGPC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides major policy project evaluation and organizational capacity evaluation as well as performing national surveys on satisfaction levels • Performs evaluations of municipal and local governments
I	Performance Management System	Ministry of Planning & Budget (MPB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets up strategies, performance targets and performance indicators • Evaluates performance levels and reflects results in the budget
I	National Research & Development Project Evaluation	Ministry of Science & Technology (MOST)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjusts the scale of research projects and evaluates the need to link with other projects, the distribution of budget for projects according to priority, etc.
I	Comprehensive University Evaluation Approval System	Korean Council for University Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raises the quality of university education to international standards • Evaluates conditions in universities and classifies them as "approved" or "disapproved"

Table 2
Continued

Area	Evaluation System	Evaluation Agencies	Goal
II	Evaluation on Technological Value, Certification Evaluation of Venture Companies	Ministry of Information & Communication (MIC)	• Evaluates the monetary value of technology
II	Confirmation Evaluation of Venture Companies	Ministry of Science & Technology (MOST)	• Evaluates the technological force and marketability of new technology companies
II	Management Evaluating System	Financial Supervisory Service (FSS)	• Supervises the issuance and distribution of marketable securities and the credit market
III	Environmental Impact Assessment System	Qualified Professional Companies & Private Firms	• Analyzes the impact of projects which generate traffic demand • Conducts environmental impact evaluation and adequacy survey
III	Media-Watch	NGOs	• Examines and assesses TV programs on a quarterly basis.
IV	Corporate Accounting System	companies or accounting entities	• Functions as corporate self-evaluation (auditors, audit committees, internal auditors) and primary external evaluation (accounting firms)
IV	Audit & Disclosure System	Korea Stock Exchange	• Supervises the issuance and distribution of marketable securities and the credit market • Conducts external evaluation on accounting entities, financial institutions, etc.
IV	Credit Rating System	Credit Bureaus, Credit Line Agencies	• Conducts evaluations to reduce business risks • Conducts external evaluation of companies, financial institutions, etc.
IV	Corporate Rating System	civic groups	• Evaluates corporate ethics and social responsibilities

(GPES) by the Office for Government Policy Coordination (OGPC) and the Performance Budgeting System (PBS) by the Ministry of Planning and Budget (MPB). In addition, each government entity operates individual policy evaluation program when jurisdiction requires. Among evaluations in the semi-public sector, the Comprehensive University Evaluation Approval System (CUEAS) by the Korean Council for University Education (KCUE) and the Hospital Standardization Review System (HSRS) by the Korean Hospital Association (KHA) are major examples. It should be noted that most evaluation systems in Area I have their own legal foundations including laws and regulations.

Area II includes “public-to-private” evaluation systems. Specifically, the private sector evaluation systems being operated by the public and semi-public sectors include the Confirmation and Certification Evaluation of Venture Companies and the Evaluation on Value and Impact of Commercial Technologies implemented by the Ministry of Information and Communication (MIC), Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Energy (MOCIE), Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) and Management Evaluating System by the Financial Supervisory Service (FSS). To a large extent, evaluation systems in this area have been established to serve the public interest.

As to Area III, the “private-to-public” evaluation systems, specifically, evaluation systems established by NGOs and research institutes in the private sector that serve the public interest belong to this area. Among them are business organizations’ professional evaluation systems on the impacts of the environment, traffic, or disasters upon society and economy and Media-Watch that evaluates broadcasting programs by NGOs. It should be noted that few efforts have been made to classify and organize all the evaluation systems in this area in Korea.

In Area IV, compared to Area III, there are a greater number of

“private-to-private” evaluation systems being conducted by private evaluation organizations and accounting firms, each of which has been designed to support managerial purposes. For these areas, the Korean government usually delegates evaluation authorities to the organizations in the public sector. Therefore, most evaluations have their own supporting laws or regulations and, further, are supervised by government agencies or committees. It should be emphasized that despite an agreement that many “private-to-private” evaluation systems may have long-term deep impacts on the society, little attention has been paid to the absence or lack of audits or meta-evaluations by government bodies.

2) Conceptualization of Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB)

Although the term “evaluation capacity” has been widely used, its conceptual definition remains somehow fuzzy and even rarely agreed. For instance, Milstein & Cotton (2000) defined evaluation capacity simply as “the ability to conduct an effective evaluation; i.e., one that meets accepted standards of the discipline.” Stockdill, Baizerman, & Compton (2002) provided a very complicated definition where ECB is defined as “a context-dependent, intentional action system of guided processes and practices for bringing about and sustaining a state of affairs in which quality program evaluation and its appropriate uses are ordinary and ongoing practices within and/or between one or more organizations/programs/sites.”

Despite the conceptual ambiguity, apparently, evaluation capacity building (ECB) or evaluation capacity development (ECD) (Trevisan, 2002) as a concept is now emerging, thus becoming an important research issue among policy researchers and evaluators. As presented in Table 3 below, the evaluation literature indicates that ECB has been approached largely from two different perspectives — national and

organizational — leading to different conceptualization of ECB and its elements.

At the organizational level, Milstein & Cotton (2000) elaborated that evaluation capacity consists of motivational forces, organizational environment, workforce and professional development, resources and supports, and learning from experience (Milstein & Cotton, 2000). On the other hand, in Brazil (1999) and Sonnichsen (1994) studies, five key elements of evaluation capacity could be identified. They are organization policy and culture, adequate staffing and funding, role definition of the evaluators, information capability, and structural location of the evaluation unit. Government Accountability Office (GAO, 2003) provides an alternative definition of evaluation capacity: "the ability to systematically collect, analyze, and use data on program results." GAO identified the key elements of evaluation capacity including a commitment to self-examination, data quality, analytic expertise, and collaborative partnerships and, more importantly, suggested strategies for enhancing evaluation capacity. Arguing that ECB is synonymous with mainstreaming evaluation, Duignam (2003) noted three key elements required to build evaluation capacity in organization: i) to use an appropriate evaluation model, ii) to develop evaluation skills appropriate for each level of an organization, and iii) to use organization or sector level strategizing to identify priority evaluation questions. In a similar vein, Dabelstein (2003) argued that political advocacy, policy support, evaluation institution, legal foundation, independence of evaluation organization, coordination of evaluation programs, and evaluation culture are important elements of ECB.

In comparison with organizational dimension, national level approaches to ECB are relatively rare. Khan (1998) emphasized that the meaningful evolution of evaluation capacities in developing countries would require awareness building of the benefits of evalua-

Table 3
Key Elements of
Evaluation Capacity

Researcher	Context	Key Elements of Evaluation Capacity
Khan (1998)	National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness raising • Developing an agenda of evaluation • Reform of governance • Institution building • Staffing and logistics • Methodological issues • Feedback
Schaumburg-Muller (1996)	Public Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to evaluation systems • Audit • Feedback or learning form policies or programs
Dabelstein (2003)	Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political advocacy and senior management demand • Policy support • Evaluation institution • Legal foundation • Independence of evaluation unit • Evaluation culture • Coordination of evaluation programs
Duignam (2003)	Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using an appropriate evaluation model • Developing evaluation skills • Strategizing about how to prioritize evaluation questions
Milstein & Cotton (2000)	Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivational forces • Organizational environment • Workforce and professional development • Resources and supports • Learning from experience
GAO (2003)	Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation culture • Data quality • Analytic Expertise • Collaborative partnership
Brazil (1999) Sonnichsen (1994)	Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational policy and culture • Adequate staffing and funding • Role definition of the evaluator • Structural location of the evaluation unit • Information capabilities of the organization

tion within the governments and incorporation of evaluation within the governance structures, more as a reform process rather than a stand-alone activity. Further, he identified the key elements that ECB initiatives must consider: awareness building, developing an agenda of evaluation, reform of governance, institution building and institutional location, staffing and logistics, methodological issues, and feedback.

Discussing appropriate relationship between BAI and OGPC, Lee (2004) identified eight elements for improving evaluation systems in Korea including legal foundation and institutions, evaluation budget, feedback of evaluation results, institute for evaluation research, evaluation training, collaborative partnership between academic communities and government, role arrangement among evaluation institutions, and organization culture.

Similarly, Lee (2003) indicated six major elements required to build national evaluation infrastructure in Korea. They were institutional commitment, improvement of evaluation systems, the fostering of national evaluation institution, evaluation resources, information network among evaluation institutions, and evaluation culture.

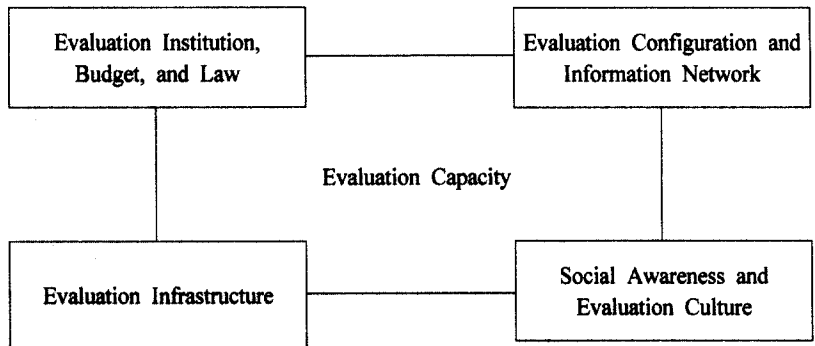
As emphasized above, the purpose of this study is to derive ECB strategies at the national level in Korea. Thus, at the heart of the debates lies how to conceptualize evaluation capacity and ECB in Korean contexts. ECB requires a concrete conceptual and methodological framework for managerial and operational purposes. However, ECB studies reviewed above propose various strategies in developing and improving evaluation capacity from diverse perspectives. To complicate matters, while those strategies help the authors to assess the current situation of national evaluation capacity, they appear somehow alien to the Korean context.

As Milstein & Cotton (2000) noted, capacity is always relative to the task in question and, thus, different profiles of capacity are

required to accomplish different types of evaluation tasks. This study attempted to derive an alternative conceptualization of ECB by drawing and integrating the key elements of evaluation capacity suggested mainly by Lee (2004), Lee (2003), and Khan (1998) that may provide more focused guidance to build national evaluation capacity in Korean context. As a result, the four key elements of evaluation capacity that were more or less apparent across the ECB literature could be identified. More specifically, they include evaluation institution, budget, and law, evaluation configuration and information network, evaluation infrastructure,¹⁾ and social awareness and evaluation culture in the society.

Figure 1 presents a conceptual framework used in this study to assess the current evaluation systems in Korea and, further, to develop strategies that the Korean government may use to build national evaluation capacity.

Figure 1
A Conceptual Framework for Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB) in Korea



3. CURRENT STATUS OF EVALUATION SYSTEMS IN KOREA: DIFFICULTIES

Apparently, no ECB efforts would be successful without systematic diagnosis and analysis of existing evaluation systems with their problems. Focusing on the four elements identified above, a close examination of the current situation of evaluation systems revealed the following difficulties and problems the Korean government has to address.

- Evaluation Institution, Budget, and Law:

Absence of National Evaluation Institution to Manage and Guide Various Evaluation Systems, Evaluation Budget, and a Comprehensive Evaluation Law

Most importantly, it is widely recognized that the most distinct but unfortunate aspect of evaluation systems in Korea is the absence of a “national evaluation institution” (Lee, 2004; Lee, 2003, Mun, 2003; Park, 2003). In order to guide, manage, and monitor a variety of evaluation systems scattered in both the public and private sectors in an effective and comprehensive manner, the Korean government needs to establish a national institution that sets forth comprehensive guidance. Indeed, there is a direct relationship between political support through institutional arrangement and the success of evaluation (Dabelstein, 2003; Khan, 1998).

Sustainable and effective evaluation systems must have an appropriate legal foundation (Dabelstein, 2003). In this regard, although BAI has been conducting performance audits for the past 40 years on the basis of the Board of Audit and Inspection Act (BAIA), its role has not been well defined in relation to other government departments

and agencies (Lee, 2004; Lee, 2003, Mun, 2003). Further, while OGPC evaluates government activities according to the BLGPE of 2001, it not only fails to provide rigorous evaluation on important policies and projects but does not go beyond mere examination of the progress of such projects due to the limited scope of evaluation (Lee, 2003). Furthermore, including the Law on Corporate External Auditing (LCEA), more than 30 specific laws somehow involve evaluation, thus adding complexity to the evaluation.

In addition to the institutional and legal issues, the lack of evaluation budget and funding system at the national level adds another serious burden to the evaluation systems in Korea (Lee, 2004; Lee, 2003; Yun, 2003; Mun, 2003). Lee (2004) pointed out that, in order to maintain and support effective evaluation activities, a sufficient evaluation budget should be allocated. Certainly, the lack of adequate funding becomes an important obstacle to the growth of evaluation and, thus, the enhancement of evaluation capacity.

■ Evaluation Configuration and Information Network:

Inadequate Configuration between "External Evaluations" and "Internal Evaluations"

In Korea, evaluation structure is composed of two major pillars, external and internal evaluations. The Korean government, however, did not prescribe balanced roles and functions between "external evaluations" such as performance audits by BAI, and "internal evaluations" such as GPES by OGPC, Performance Budgeting by the Ministry of Planning and Budget (MPB), and Management by Objective (MBO) by the Ministry of Government Administration & Home Affairs (MOGAHA). Indeed, such lack of delicate balance has blurred evaluation responsibilities among various agencies with different roles and affected both the structure and the conduct of

evaluation.

More specifically, three important problems arise due to the inadequate configuration of evaluation systems: i) overlapping evaluations that add additional burden to the organizations being evaluated (Lee, 2004; Lee & Kim, 2004; Lee, 2003; Yun, 2003), ii) difficulty in identifying responsibilities of evaluation agencies and institutions (Lee, 2004), and iii) lack of feedback of evaluation results for planning and budget (Lee & Kim, 2004; Lee, 2003; Yun, 2003).

The issue of inadequate configuration between “external evaluations” and “internal evaluations” is also closely associated with the issue of vertical and horizontal coordination among various evaluation systems. Currently, although many departments and agencies have their own evaluation systems that seem to have identical or at least similar functions, evaluation information is not adequately shared or channeled among them due to the lack of a coordination mechanism (Yun, 2003).

The same applies to the evaluation of local governments where identical or at least similar evaluations are conducted simultaneously without policy coordination (Lee & Kim, 2004). For instance, the central government departments’ evaluations on policies and projects carried out by local governments, MOGAHA’s Joint Evaluation on local governments, and local governments’ self-evaluation are viewed as almost identical evaluation systems. In Korea, linking local governments’ evaluations to the national evaluation system appears very difficult due to the sheer number of local evaluation systems and their diversity. Nevertheless, regional evaluations become more useful if they are based on a coordinated approach linked to a national evaluation system, particularly with respect to methodological and data needs (Dabelstein, 2003).

Indeed, the absence of a horizontal coordination mechanism among diverse evaluations by central government departments and agencies

and a vertical coordination mechanism among self-evaluation systems by local governments causes an important problem. That is, it is difficult to locate all the evaluation systems that exist throughout the public and private sectors and across different levels of government, thereby failing to prevent duplication of evaluation activities. In this regard, Lee & Kim (2004) emphasized that ambiguous or duplicative arrangement among evaluation institutions becomes an important factor that often prevents effective evaluation.

■ Evaluation Configuration and Information Network:

Lack of Adequate Feedback Arrangement and Incomplete Utilization of Evaluation Results

Adequate utilization of evaluation findings and results is one of the most important goals of evaluation. For evaluation to be successful, an effective feedback mechanism that links evaluation to the policy process is essential (Khan, 1998). However, many (Lee & Kim, 2004; Kim, 2003; Park, 2003; Yun, 2003; Kim, 2002) agree that evaluation findings and results are not fully utilized for administrative improvement and accountability. Further, the acceptability of evaluation results by the target agencies under evaluation appears pretty low (Lee & Kim, 2004). Furthermore, evaluation results often fail to provide the fact-based concrete evidence that can support managerial or policy improvement. To a large extent, these stem from the limitation of the current centralized evaluation system that focuses on policy output rather than policy outcome and performance (Lee & Kim, 2004; Kim, 2003), low quality evaluation resources including evaluation methodologies that guide the evaluation activities including theories, models, guidelines, and indicators (Kim, 2003; Yun, 2003), rank-oriented and control-oriented approaches in evaluation (Lee & Kim, 2004, and incomplete linkage of evaluation findings and the budget

(Lee, 2004; Lee, 2003, Yun, 2003).

Nevertheless, major laws concerning evaluation including BLGPE of 2001 fail to enforce adequate utilization and feedback of evaluation results. Under these circumstances, the validity and reliability of the evaluation have been questioned. More importantly, no efforts have been made at the national level or the organizational level either to detect underlying causes of the incomplete utilization of evaluation results or to find a way to increase the efficacy of the evaluation results.

- Evaluation Configuration and Information Network:
“Blind Spot” in Meta-Evaluation

Despite their huge effects on the government and society, many important program and project evaluations in Areas III and IV such as Corporate Accounting System (CAS), Audit and Disclosure System (ADS) by the Korea Stock Exchange, Credit Rating System (CRS) by private credit bureaus, and Environmental Impact Assessment System (EIES) by qualified firms are outside the scope of meta-evaluation.

It is true that the “private-to-public” or “private-to-private” evaluations listed above, in particular, have so substantial impacts on the government and society that it is highly difficult to recover from the damages once they break down. It is believed that, for instance, due to the absence of meta-evaluation of CAS and CRS, Korea had to suffer the foreign exchange crisis in 1997 and the personal credit crisis in 2002, respectively. Although these evaluation systems have been entrusted to and are being carried out by organizations in the market, they are based on the laws and regulations under the jurisdiction of government departments that have responsibility as well as authority to supervise those evaluation systems.

1) Evaluation Infrastructure:

Lack of Workforce and Methodological Resources

Another important issue is the lack of professional workforce with the competency to take full charge of evaluation of each policy area (Yun, 2003; Kim, 2003; Lee, 2003; Park, 2002). Institutional and methodological capacities affect the quality of evaluation findings and, consequently, their credibility (Khan, 1998). Nevertheless, no national evaluation workforce recruitment and management system like the evaluator pool and no evaluation support system for evaluation research and evaluator training have been established.

To complicate matters, most evaluation systems fall short of “methodological resources” (Milstein & Cotton, 2000) that evaluators use to guide evaluation activities such as theories, models, frameworks, standards, and checklists. This would result in insufficient provision of valid and reliable evaluation information and data and, more importantly, sharp increase in social distrust of evaluation.

2) Social Awareness and Evaluation Culture:

Absence of Social Awareness of the Importance of Evaluation

Although important problems mentioned above should be addressed, more importantly, underlying the problems of Korean evaluation system are public indifference and distrust to evaluation (Lee, 2003). The lack of evaluation demand for accountability becomes an important barrier that causes evaluation institutions to have little impact on policy decisions (Dabelstein, 2003). Therefore, intensive efforts are required to make the government and public aware of the importance of evaluation and needs for “evaluation culture” (Dabelstein, 2003). In this regard, as Khan (1998) emphasized, mechanisms of evaluation feedback should not be limited to

bureaucratic channels only, but must also consider options that inform the public at large. As public aware of evaluation increases, the linkage between evaluation findings and governmental decision process would be strengthened.

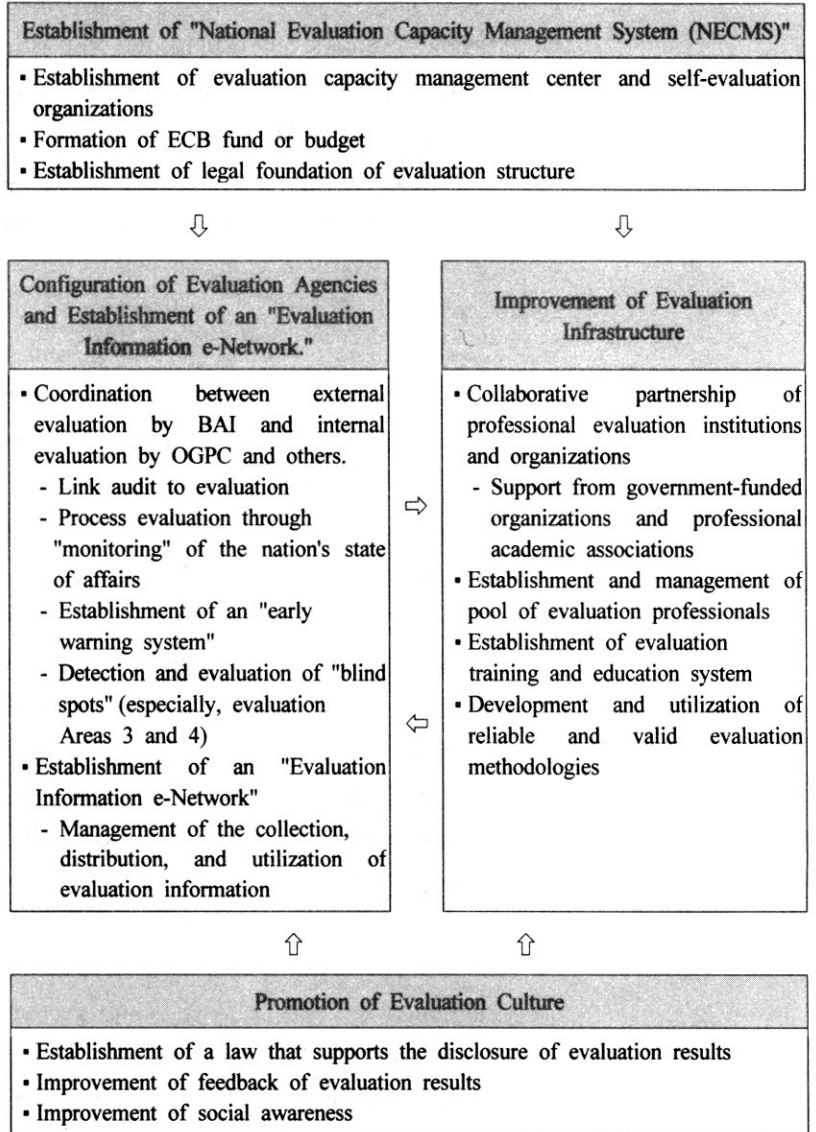
4. BUILDING NATIONAL EVALUATION CAPACITY IN KOREA: CHALLENGES

The overview of current evaluation systems highlights many problems and issues as discussed above. To solve the problems, it is necessary to build national evaluation capacity in Korea. For this, this study derived a conceptual framework for building evaluation capacity in Korean context and identified important strategies to guide ECB, thereby capturing a “big picture” of ECB.

Drawing the conceptual framework of ECB presented in Figure 1, Figure 2 below summarizes an alternative strategy for building evaluation capacity in Korea. For Korea, more specifically, evaluation capacity building needs to focus on i) building a National Evaluation Capacity Management System (NECMS) and establishing a comprehensive law to support NECMS, ii) improving evaluation infrastructure, iii) structuring an evaluation information network, and finally iv) promoting evaluation culture. The four Key elements of ECB are discussed in detail the following sections.

In order to solve the problems discussed above, most importantly, ECB needs to focus on building NECMS and its corresponding institution at the national level. The NECMS that guides and organizes various but fragmented public and private evaluation systems in an integrative framework should be established first. In terms of institutional arrangements, for this, a central evaluation institution,

Figure 2
Building National
Evaluation Capacity
in Korea



Source: Establishment of "National Evaluation Capacity Management System (NECMS)," Fund for ECB, and Legal Foundation of Evaluation Structures.

called “National Evaluation Capacity Management Center (NECMC),” could be built to initiate and manage the NECMS.²⁾ More specifically, NECMC may plan major policy evaluations, provide evaluation guidance, tune the roles and responsibilities among evaluation agencies, promote external evaluations on major policies and projects, conduct meta-evaluations of evaluation systems, develop and distribute evaluation methodologies, build a network among evaluation organizations, foster qualified workforce and organizations in the field of evaluation, support evaluation research and training, initiate and manage evaluation development fund, and promote evaluation culture.

There still remains, however, a very critical issue: who is the winner? Noting responsibility sharing among different evaluation agencies, in this regard, Khan (1998) indicated that evaluation responsibilities can be distributed among various agencies with different evaluation roles. In Korea, evaluation responsibilities could be distributed among major departments including BAI, MPB, and OGPC. For example, NECMC can be installed in BAI to manage overall NECMS at the national level, while the “NEC Program Centers” direct ECB in each sector including OPC and MPB for the public sector, legal entities for the semi-public sector, Fair Trade Commission (FTC) and Financial Supervisory Service (FSS) for the private sector.³⁾ They also guide and manage evaluation functions among evaluation organizations and institutes in each sector.

In addition, Korea needs to take into account a way to bring in sufficient national budget for NECMS on a continuous basis. To enhance evaluation capacity, the government may either create new funds specifically designated for ECB, for instance, termed “Evaluation Development Fund (EDF)” as in France or allocate regular budget as in Norway.⁴⁾ Under the current situation, however, the budgeting standards of the Ministry of Planning and Budget (MPB) are revised, as a tentative solution, such that the evaluation budgets could

be at least appropriated in the government's budget (i.e., install a new item titled "Evaluation Expenses").

The legal framework surrounding evaluation institutions may influence the quality of evaluations (Dabelstein, 2003; Khan, 1998). In Korea, many (Lee, 2004; Lee, 2003) indicated that evaluation laws should be revised and rearranged in order to improve the efficacy of evaluations. As to the legal framework for NECMS, it is preferred that NECMS is established through legislation, called "Law on Public Evaluation" such that stable political support from the government could be assured. Evaluation institutions created through legislation appear to acquire greater permanency and stability than those created through executive action or orders (Khan, 1998).

1) Institutional Arrangements among Evaluation Agencies and Establishment of "Evaluation Information e-Network"

Evaluation functions among major agencies including BAI, OGPC, and MPB need to be rearranged for the purpose of clearly defining their evaluation roles and responsibilities, thus reducing the possibility of overlapping evaluations and improving the sharing of evaluation results (Lee & Kim, 2004; Yun, 2003; Kim, 1997). As noted above, NECMC in BAI manages NECMS at the national level and directs external evaluations, while OGPC and MPB focus on internal evaluations. More specifically, NECMC plays a vital role in arranging different evaluation functions and responsibilities and eliminating "overlaps" and "blind spots" in evaluations of programs and local governments.

For adequate utilization and sharing of evaluation findings, effective feedback mechanisms that link "audits" to "evaluation" should be structured (Lee, 2004). Certainly, the scopes of national-level performance evaluation and performance auditing systems are moving

closer to each other, although the choice of approach depend on factors such as political commitment, the legal framework, and institutional capabilities (Dabelstein, 2003). Lee (2004) indicated that, in order to improve the efficacy of evaluation systems, organizational culture supporting interorganizational collaboration between OGPC and BAI should be established. Further, it is necessary to design a feedback mechanism where evaluation results are fully conveyed for policy or administrative feedback in connection with the budget (Lee, 2004; Lee & Kim, 2004).

Standardized evaluation methodologies and computerized network system, called "Evaluation Information e-Network (EIEN)," are essential for the joint collection, management, and distribution of evaluation information and data among relevant organizations, thus promoting feedback and sharing of evaluation information.

In addition, more efforts are required to prevent the recurrence of national and social risks and crises such as the foreign exchange crisis in 1997 and the personal credit crisis of 2002. This is closely related to the development of an early warning system at the national level that emphasizes "national risk prediction index." For each policy area, this system would detect symptoms of national risks and send signals to the government through continuous process evaluation. By providing evaluation information to the National Assembly, the President, and the heads of relevant government agencies, a systematic preparation and management can be made against risk factors at the national level.

2) Improvement of National Evaluation Infrastructure

In order to enhance national evaluation capacity in Korea, it is necessary to foster and support the research institutions, government bodies, NGOs, and academic associations both in the public and

private sectors as expert groups on evaluation (Lee, 2004; Lee, 2003). For instance, government-funded research institutes can function as evaluation centers covering different policy areas, thus avoiding any overlaps. In addition, a method of bringing NGOs evaluation capacities into evaluation activities could be considered. As Khan (1998) noted, collaboration between the government and NGOs is a key element to the success of building effective evaluation system. In particular, NGOs' participation in evaluation areas that the government cannot cover could be stressed. A third important group in the evaluation workforce are academic associations. By actively supporting various academic associations such as the Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM) and the Korean Association of Public Administration (KAPA), their evaluation expertise can be brought into the evaluation activities (Lee, 2004).

Furthermore, another key element in building national evaluation capacity is the management of pools of expert evaluators for each policy area. The EIEN should be adequately designed such that it helps connect evaluation experts to proper evaluation areas. Emphasizing the importance of evaluators' collective capacity, Leviton (2001) indicated that by strengthening the relationships among evaluators themselves for mutual support, information, collaboration, and sharing, such collective capacity can be improved. Further, institutionalization of evaluator training and education system could be considered at the national level. Such system would focus on "workforce and professional development" that refers to the knowledge, skills, and abilities that professionals bring to the evaluation activities (Milstein & Cotton, 2000).

Another important issue to be considered is evaluation resources as described above. Thus, the development and utilization of reliable and valid evaluation methodologies is an important task. In part, public distrust to evaluations is attributable to the lack of validity and

reliability in evaluation methods, standards, and indicators. To solve the problems, a evaluation research institute can be established to develop and improve evaluation resources at the national level (Lee, 2004). In this regard, one possibility is to utilize NECMC to direct and guide the development of evaluation methodologies.

3) Promotion of Evaluation Culture

Another prerequisite for ECB is the promotion of evaluation climate and culture in the government and society. In Korea, one of the most urgent agendas in the establishment of NECMS is to raise national and social awareness of the value and usefulness of evaluations. Until recently, there had been a lack of wide support from the government and society. Even the previous presidents seemed to have a relatively limited understanding of evaluation. One idea can be drawn that, in order to promote public awareness, a method of disseminating evaluation information through press and internet releases can be taken into account.

Most of all, however, it is necessary to publicize the results and findings of evaluation and to introduce innovative feedback system that obliges the utilization of evaluation results. In addition, it is required to improve understanding and acceptability of evaluations by the target agencies or department being evaluated (Lee, 2004). For this, their suggestions and opinions about evaluation should be taken into account (Lee, 2004).

5. CONCLUSION

It is believed that developing national evaluation capacity is one of the first steps in promoting government performance and accountability (Khan, 1998). Emphasizing the need for developing national evaluation capacity in Korea, this study discussed difficulties and challenges Korea faces in developing national evaluation capacity. This study analyzed the ECB literature to capture important factors that appear to affect ECB and to derive a conceptual framework for developing NECMS in Korea. More specifically, four major factors were addressed in the present study: i) evaluation institution, budget, and law, ii) evaluation configuration and information network, iii) evaluation infrastructure, and iv) social awareness and evaluation culture in the society. Drawing on these factors, this study assessed the current evaluation systems in Korea. Indeed, building evaluation capacity at the national level requires coordinated and comprehensive approaches, but the current situation features severe fragmentation. Focusing on the problem, this study made important suggestions for improving ECB in Korea.

Despite important suggestions for ECB, two important limitations deserve more discussion. First of all, this study is exploratory in nature such that the arguments and suggestions made in this study should be treated as tentative. The other limitation involves the lack of empirical evidence. This study focused on drawing a big picture of NECMS such that discussions remain more or less at the conceptual level. It should be noted, therefore, that ECB strategies and methods suggested in this study need rigorous and objective assessments in future research.

We believe that this Korean experience would be helpful for evaluation researchers and policy makers who attempt to increase

knowledge on ECB and for the government that initiates evaluation capacity building in other contexts and settings.

■ NOTES

- 1) For the present study, evaluation infrastructure includes evaluation workforce and methodological resources as discussed below.
- 2) Similarly, Lee (2003) emphasized that a national center to support structuring of national evaluation infrastructure in a comprehensive manner should be established.
- 3) For more detailed discussions of responsibility sharing among evaluation institutions in Korea, see Lee & Kim (2004), Lee (2004), Lee (2003), and Yun (2003).
- 4) While France operates "Evaluation Development National Fund" in order to support evaluation activities, Norway supports those activities through regular budget (Lee, 2004).

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13. 한국의 국가적 평가역량 발전

심광호 · 심준섭

이 연구는 우리나라의 국가적 평가역량형성 (*Evaluation Capacity Building: ECB*)에 탐색적 논의의 초점을 맞춘다. 이를 위해 한국적 ECB 전략에 필요한 개념적 틀을 개발한다. 이 틀을 토대로 한국정부가 ECB 과정에서 직면하는 문제점들을 분석하고 이를 해결하기 위한 주요 대안적 전략들을 제시한다. 구체적으로 한국의 국가적 평가역량은 ① 평가기관, 예산, 및 법령의 구축, ② 평가정보네트워크의 구축, ③ 평가인프라의 개선, ④ 평가에 대한 사회적 인식과 평가문화의 개선 등 4가지 요소들을 통합함으로써 강화될 수 있을 것이다.

주제어 : 평가역량, 평가역량형성, 평가인프라, 평가기관 및 제도