

# South Korea's Airline Levy Journey

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# The Genesis of Korea's Innovative Financing : From a Late Starter to an Asia-Pacific Pioneer

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## Launch of the "Korea Initiative for African Development" (2006)

- S. Korea pledged to bridge the gap in ODA (only 0.09% of GNI at the time).
- Introduction of the **Air-ticket Solidarity Levy** in 2007 as a flagship Innovative Development Financing (IDF) mechanism.

## A "Micro-Contribution" with Macro Impact

- A modest levy of 1,000 KRW (approx. \$0.75) per international departure.
- Symbolizing the "1,000 KRW Miracle" for global health equity.

## Strategic Alignment

- Bridging the gap between traditional ODA and the urgent needs of the MDGs.



# Civil Society as a Guardian of the Levy

## : Advocacy for Identity and Institutionalization

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### Defending the ODA Identity (2014-2015)

- Countering inter-ministerial shifts: CSOs (led by KCOC) successfully advocated for the levy to remain under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) to preserve its international development focus.
- Joint statements by 140+ NGOs emphasized "Global Solidarity" over domestic health administrative needs.

### From "Contribution" to "National Fund" (2017)

- Successful transition to the **"Global Disease Eradication Fund (GDEF)" Act.**
- Securing a **permanent legal basis for predictable financing.**
- Secured CSO participation in the Fund Management Committee

### The Power of Collective Voice

- Moving beyond being mere "implementers" to becoming "policy shapers."



# Impact Through Partnership: The GDEF Model

## : Integrating Government, NGOs, and International Agencies

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### The Three Pillars of GDEF Strategy

1. **Strengthening Infectious Disease Systems:** Early detection and rapid response.
2. **Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs):** Prevention and elimination in sub-Saharan Africa.
3. **Global Health Security:** Knowledge sharing and capacity building.

### The Diagonal Approach

- Combining disease-specific interventions with health system strengthening (HSS).
- **Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration**
  - Synergies between **KOICA**, **Global Health Organizations**, and **CSO field expertise**.



# Impact in Numbers: GDEF's Contribution to Global Health : Leveraging Innovative Finance for Global Solidarity

## A Scalable Source for Global Health

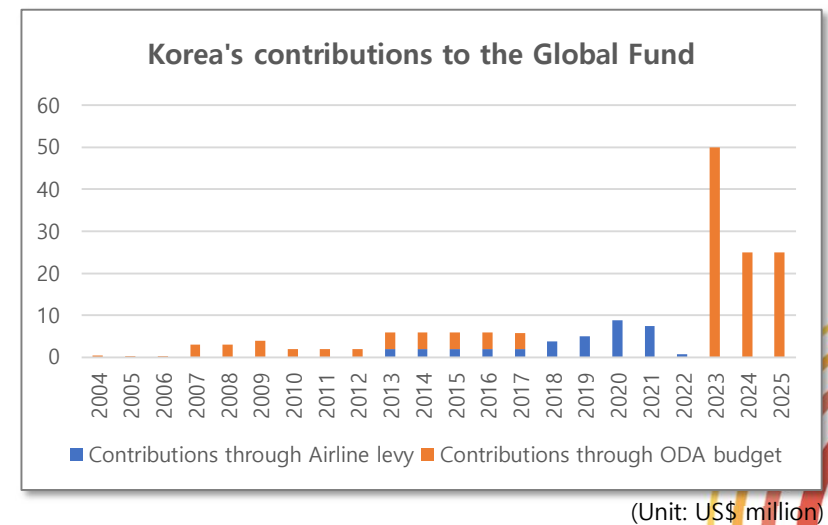
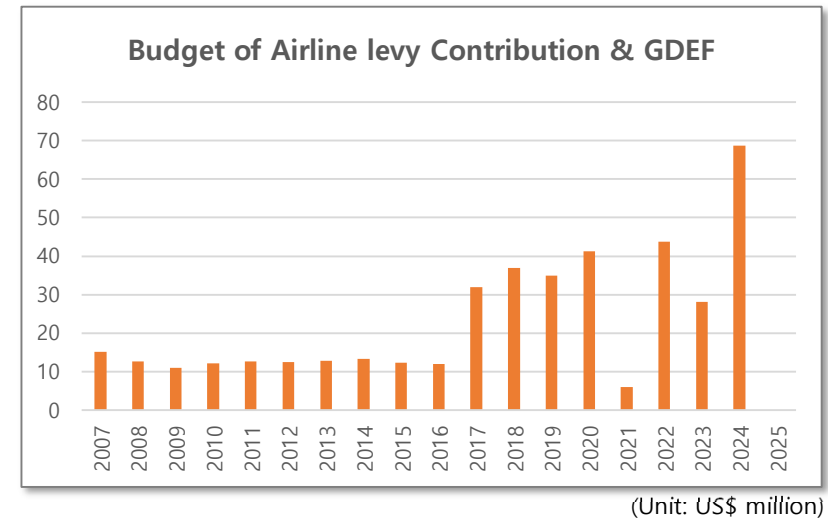
- The GDEF has served as a **predictable and additional** revenue stream alongside the growing national ODA budget.

## Fulfilling Global Commitments

- The fund has been the primary vehicle for multi-year pledges to major global health initiatives.

## Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- **Global Fund:** Significant scaling up of contributions through GDEF. (Total contribution \$162.49 million)
- **Unitaid:** Consistent long-term partnership since the inception of the levy in 2007. (Total contribution \$131 million)
- **Gavi:** Commenced partnership in 2010 as the first Asian donor country. (Total contribution \$338.8 million)



# The 2024 Transition & CSO Resistance

## : Protecting Global Solidarity in the Face of Policy Change

### The Policy Shift: Abolition of the "Quasi-Tax"

- **Government Decision:** The 1,000 KRW levy was redefined as a "**Quasi-Tax**" (Shadow Tax) that increases citizen burden.
- **Reform:** GDEF Act repealed (effective Jan 2025); funding transitioned to the **National General Budget**.

### CSO Powerhouse: "Solidarity is Not a Burden!"

- **Unified Resistance:** A coalition of major NGOs strongly opposed the abolition.
- **Active Advocacy:** Launched nationwide signature campaigns and press conferences to demand the withdrawal of the decision.
- **Core Argument:** The levy is a **vital symbol of national responsibility** and international solidarity, not a mere financial burden.

### Moving Forward: Ensuring Accountability

- **CSO Demand:** Establishment of a **dedicated "Global Health Security" line item** to protect funding from future political cuts.



# Conclusion & Call to Action

## : Lessons for the Asia-Pacific Region

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### Key Takeaways

- The levy is not just about the money; it's about **political will** and **public solidarity**.
- CSOs are the "watchdogs" that ensure funding remains targeted and effective.

### Future Outlook

- Transitioning from "Quantity of Funding" to "Quality of Impact" through innovative PPPs.

### Call to Action

- Leverage the Korean experience to strengthen regional advocacy for health financing.
- **"Solidarity remains, even if the mechanism evolves."**

