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Performance Evaluation Systems for the Korean Central Government Agencies: Self and Specific Evaluations

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[Case study]

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The Korean government has acted to embed performance-based evaluation systems across all levels of public agencies and public institutions after enacting the Government Performance Evaluation Act (GPEA) of 2001. Paralleling the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 in the United States, the GPEA 2001 intended to reform Korean government agencies' capacities and operations in order to improve their efficiency, effectiveness, and responsibility at the national and local levels. Individual central government agency were required to set a 5-year strategic plan and an annual performance plan, evaluate performance based on indicators, report evaluation results, and implement feedback on evaluation. Since individual ministries ran own evaluation standards to assess their performance, it was hard to apply consistent and interconnected implications from results of performance evaluations across central government agencies.

The Korean government substantially revamped the Act of 2001 to integrate various performance evaluation systems in 2006. Thereafter the Act of 2006 has been revised several times, but its foundation framework and contents

have remained the same. The Korean government performance evaluation system has been tightly linked to results-based management in order to utilize evaluation results for policy improvement, budget allocations, organizational management, and so on. Although the Korean government performance evaluation system has become much more realistic by integrating and evolving performance management and evaluation systems since 2006, its operations and implementations are still fragmented, duplicated, and overlapping.

The overall evaluation system of the Korean government is divided into three types of evaluations based on different levels of public provisions depicted in Figure 1: central government evaluation, local government evaluation, and public institution evaluation. This case study focuses on the self-evaluation and specific evaluation systems at the central government level newly proposed in 2016. Self-evaluation is a mandatory performance evaluation to be conducted by individual central government agency evaluation committees, while specific evaluation is a supplemental tool of self-evaluation to be prepared by the Government Performance Evaluation Committee (GPEC) co-chaired by the Prime Minister's Office. Self-evaluation focuses on each agency's performance activities in relation to short-term policies or programs. Specific evaluation assesses each individual agency's performance on mid- to long-term strategies directly linked with prioritized national policies.

| Figure 1 | The Korean Government Performance Evaluation System
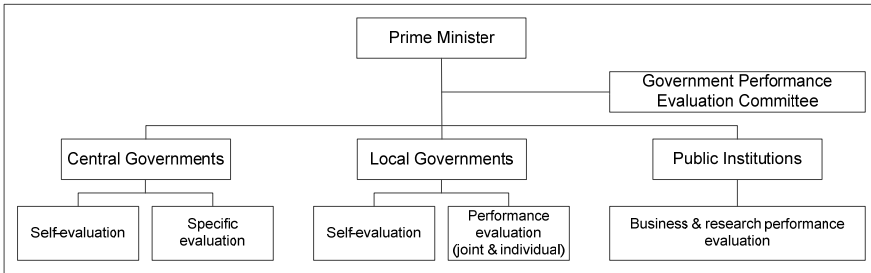
Source: Government Performance Evaluation Committee (2016).

Self-evaluation System

The purpose of self-evaluation as annual internal evaluation is to improve efficiency and accountability of government operations by reflecting evaluation results in policy, budget, organization, personnel, and administrative management. Since self-evaluation aims at policy and program improvement, the results of self-evaluation directly affect decision making to update the agency's existing goals. Practically, each agency's self-evaluation results are integrated into national performance management.

The target subjects in policy, finance, and organizational and administrative management have remained the same, but the categories and names of the subject areas have been slightly changed depending on government priorities overtime. For example, the target areas of self-evaluation in 2015 were subjected in prioritized policies, financial projects, R&D projects, and administrative management capacity, while its target areas in 2016 were prioritized policies, consolidated financial projects, and administrative management capacity. The major change between two time periods was merging the R&D project field into the consolidated financial projects area in 2016.

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As Table 1 shows, the prioritized policies area evaluates all major policies identified by each agency's annual implementation plan of performance management. The consolidated financial projects area includes target projects in general finance, R&D, and local development fields. The administrative management capacity area focuses on management in personnel, organization, and information technology. Unlike the other two areas, financial projects were evaluated at every three-years between 2006 and 2015, but the consolidated financial evaluation will be performed annually from 2016.

| Table 1 | Target Areas of the Self-evaluation System in 2016

Target Area	Direction in Evaluation
Prioritized policies	Major projects designated by the 2016 performance management implementation plan
Consolidated financial projects	General targeted financial projects, R&D projects, local development projects
Administrative management capacity	Organization, human resources, information technology

Source: Prime Minister's Office (2016).

Before 2016, only one-third of national financial projects were subject to evaluation, so that target financial projects were selectively determined based on consultation between each agency and the Ministry of Strategy and Finance. Newly reformed evaluation operations of financial projects are scheduled to evaluate all financial projects incrementally by 2018. Major reforms intend to unify operating evaluation systems and simplify procedures, which are expected to reduce the individual agencies' burden and strengthen agencies' own evaluation of their financial projects. Therefore, the consolidated financial self-evaluation is conducted in two evaluation phases: regular self-evaluation by individual central agencies and meta-evaluation by the Ministry of Strategy and Finance. The meta-evaluation was introduced

to improve quality of the self-evaluation method by reevaluating the results of regular self-evaluations that were prepared by individual central government agencies. In other words, meta-evaluation enables to validate relatability of the self-evaluation process and appropriateness of the self-evaluation results. Projects in each upper 10% and lower 10% after combining all self-evaluation results are only subject to meta-analysis. Then, the Ministry of Strategy and Finance determines either good or unsatisfactory agencies based on the results of meta-analysis. If central government agencies are evaluated as good by meta-analysis, they will get incentives in next year's budget and vice versa. In 2016, six agencies were rated as good, while four agencies were rated as unsatisfactory among the 47 target agencies.

In response to the GPEC's self-evaluation guidelines, central government agencies have to use a set of self-evaluation indicators developed by the GPEC. Each agency is eligible to revise the GPEC's suggested common indicators for the target areas in both financial projects and administrative management capacity. Each agency also constructs its own evaluation criteria to evaluate the prioritized policy area that reflects agency-level goals and organizational environments in consultation with a self-evaluation committee.

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Specific Evaluation System

Specific evaluation intends to align individual agencies' key policies and organizational capacities in order to manage national government affairs under the direction of the Prime Minister. It is much more centralized than the self-evaluation type because GPEC is responsible to develop all specific evaluation procedures and construct a set of evaluation indicators. The target areas for specific evaluation change constantly over time, depending on the emphases of each presidential administration (e.g., economic development or innovation). The authority for evaluation of target areas is largely given to the Prime Minister's Office along with other five supervising ministries that initially assess performance of given projects in the specific areas described in Table 2.

| Table 2 | Target Areas of Specific Evaluation System in 2016

Target Area	Direction in Evaluation	Supervising Agency	Num. of Agencies Evaluated
National affairs tasks	Core reform projects, interagency collaboration	Prime Minister's Office	42
Regulatory reform	Outcomes of regulatory reform	Prime Minister's Office	27
Policy publicity	Promotional efforts and results for policy publicity	Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism	42
Normalization to repair anomalies	Project selection and implementation, impacts of normalization efforts to modify anomalies, dissemination of normalization outcomes	Prime Minister's Office	39

Target Area	Direction in Evaluation	Supervising Agency	Num. of Agencies Evaluated
Agency-wide common matters	Government 3.0	Ministry of the Interior	42
	Performance management	Prime Minister's Office	
	Specific policies in disability employment and products, small and medium business products, R&D projects	Ministry of Employment and Labor, Ministry of Health and Welfare, Ministry of Small and Medium Business Administration	

Source: Prime Minister's Office (2016).

There were five target are as for specific evaluation as external evaluation in 2016: national affairs tasks, regulatory reform, policy publicity, normalization tasks to modify anomalies, and agency-wide common matters. Compared to the target areas in 2015, minor changes were made in the area of agency-wide common matters. In place of the interagency collaboration field, which moved to prioritized policies, performance management was newly included in agency-wide common matters.

The first area, national affairs tasks, is directed to analyze the 140 national government projects from 42 agencies objectively in order to support the successful implementation of national affairs. The national affairs propose five goals that consist of several strategies. Evaluations in core reform projects and interagency collaboration are weighted to improve performance outcomes of national affairs tasks. Table 3 presents details of the national affairs tasks with examples. In the regulatory reform area, the reform outcomes of 27 ministries with more than 30 regulations are subject to be evaluated. The policy

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publicity area evaluates ways to promote citizens' understanding of public policy by dissemination and response activities in 42 agencies. In evaluating the normalization tasks to repair anomalies, 100 core national government projects from 39 agencies are included to correct erroneous practices and corruption. The final area, agency-wide common matters, evaluates the three fields of government 3.0, performance management, and specific policies in 42 agencies.

| Table 3 | Projects of National Affairs Tasks for Specific Evaluation in 2016

Goal	Strategy	Num. of Projects	Example and Lead Agency
Economic growth	Creative economy	22	Business start-up stimulation (Min. of Small and Medium Business Administration)
	Fair economy	6	Consumer protection (Fair Trade Commission)
	Welfare economy	14	Reduced communication cost burden (Min. of Science, ICT and Future Planning)
Citizen happiness	Customized employment service	15	Promotion of youth employment (Min. of Employment and Labor)
	Creative education	8	Simplified university entrance examination (Min. of Education)
	Citizen safety	32	Sexual violence prevention (Min. of Gender Equality and Family & Min. of Justice)
	Social integration	10	Promoting balanced regional development (Min. of Land, Infrastructure and Transportation & Min. of Trade, Industry and Energy)
Culture promotion	Enhancing cultural participation	4	Expansion of cultural participation opportunity and reduce of cultural gap (Min. of Culture, Sports and Tourism [MCST])
	Cultural art promotion	3	Preservation and utilization of cultural heritage (MCST)

Goal	Strategy	Num. of Projects	Example and Lead Agency
	Culture and industry integration	3	Supporting Korean contents industry (MCST)
Unification	Strong national security	7	Strengthening future-oriented defense capacity (Min. of National Defense)
	Korean Peninsula Trust Process	3	Preparation for peaceful reunification (Min. of Unification)
	Trust diplomacy	5	Promotion of Northeast East Peace Collaboration and Eurasia Collaboration (Min. of Foreign Affairs)
Government	Trusted government	8	Reforming the public sector (Min. of Strategy and Finance)

Source: Prime Minister's Office (2016). http://pmo.go.kr/pmo/inform/inform01_02a.jsp

Leading Committees of the Performance Evaluation System Government Performance Evaluation Committee (GPEC)

The GPEC is the key organization to implement all national performance evaluations. The primary responsibilities of the GPEC are supervising individual agencies' self-evaluation and conducting specific evaluation. With regard to both types, the GPEC develops general guidelines and measurement standards assisted by the Policy Analysis and Evaluation Office under the Prime Minister's Office. Each agency is entitled to customize the GPEC's set of the original measurement indicators aligning with the agency's performance goals and strategies. The GPEC is also responsible to reevaluate and reapprove the results of agencies' self-evaluation if there is concern about the objectivity and reliability of self-evaluation results.

The GPEC consists of 15 committee members from both inside and outside

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central governments, and the group is co-chaired by the Prime Minister and a university professor. The three members in central government are the Minister of Strategy and Finance, the Minister of the Interior, and the Minister of the Office for Government Policy Coordination. In 2016, the remaining 10 seats were assigned to eight university professors and two professionals at central and local government-funded research institutions. Excluding the four heads of central government agencies, the 11 representatives appointed due to their knowledge of target areas serve a two-year term and can be reappointed for one more consecutive term. In regard to their professional expertise, about one-third of the 11 committee members are in the field of public administration.

Self-evaluation Committee

Each agency determines its own self-evaluation committee's structure, functions, and operating rules independently, in compliance with the GPEC's self-evaluation guideline and annual evaluation schedule. A self-evaluation committee appointed by a head of the agency consists of ten to thirty members who typically serve a two-year term and can be reappointed for a consecutive term. The committee members are divided into three functional areas: policies, financial performance, and administrative capacities. Within a self-evaluation committee, several sub-committees are often organized depending on the need for particular expertise. Sub-committees and their responsibilities are also determined during the first committee meeting. In addition, each agency has to arrange a self-evaluation support team internally in order to assist the self-evaluation committee.

The GPEC and the Prime Minister's Office broadly require agencies to follow basic structural rules of self-committees that are at least one internal

member and no more than 60% of external experts from one profession. For example, the number of university faculty cannot be over 60% of the total external experts to avoid a dominated opinion from one group. The majority of committee members tend to be external experts in order to validate the objectivity and expertise of evaluations. External experts primarily participate in policy process evaluation, while internal public administrators mainly take a liaison role between the agency and the self-evaluation committee. A proportion of internal and external members is determined autonomously by each agency, so the formation of self-evaluation looks quite different across agencies. For example, the Rural Development Administration appointed 26 members (9 internal and 17 external members), while the South Korea Meteorological Administration assigned 30 members (2 internal and 28 external members) in 2016. The largest group of external committee members are college or university faculty and the next largest is researchers. A small number of committee members (about 10%) are selected from nonprofit and private sectors. One or two journalists are included in both self-evaluation and specific evaluation committees.

Self-evaluation at an agency level must follow the GPEC guidelines for performance evaluation plans and operations, but the relationship between the GPEC and a self-evaluation committee is not formally hierarchical. However, the GPEC can ask an agency to conduct a re-evaluation of the agency's self-evaluation if the Prime Minister's Office finds that the agency's self-evaluation is not satisfactory in terms of objectivity and credibility of evaluation results.
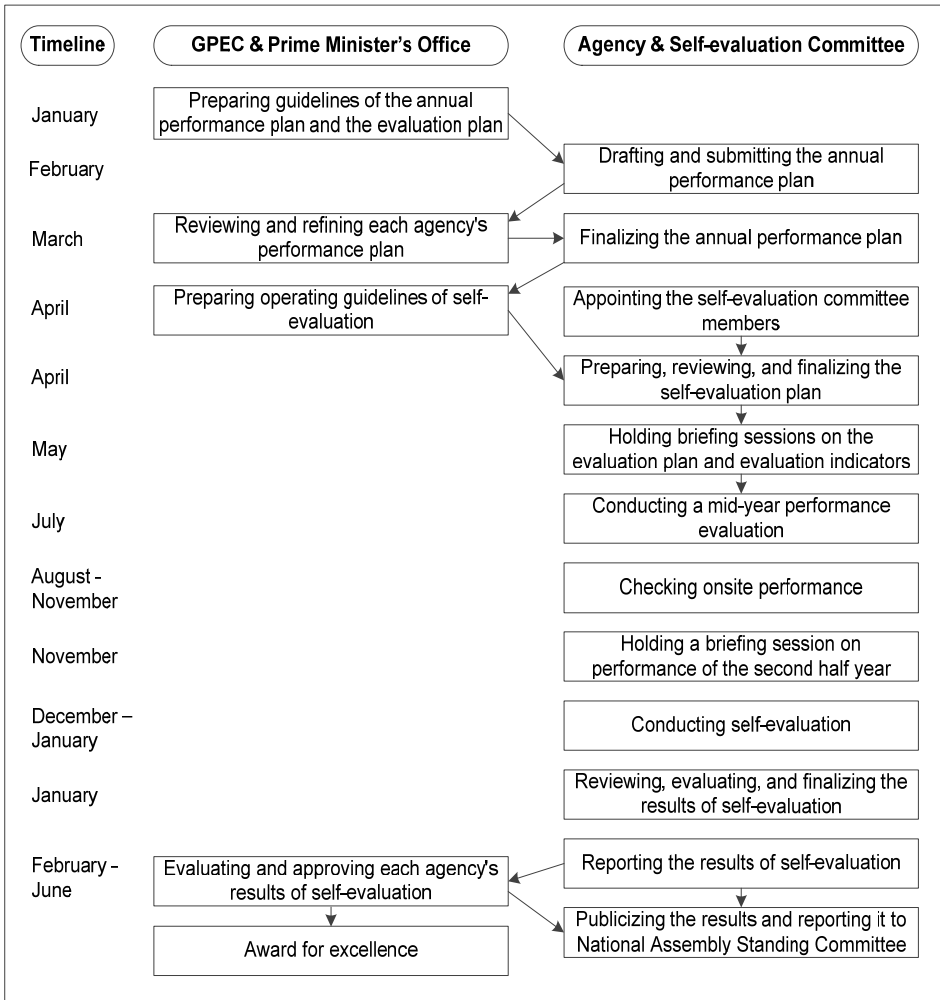
Operations of Self and Specific Evaluations

The evaluation operation of self-evaluation is administered by both GPEC

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and central agencies as presented in Figure 2. As the study conducted by Hur in 2013 detailed, the evaluation cycle is highly routinized. On the GPEC and Prime Minister's Office end, an entire evaluation cycle takes one and a half years to complete, from January to June of the next year. Their evaluation responsibilities can be divided into two parts: (1) preparation of guidelines for an annual performance plan and an operational performance evaluation plan during January to March, and (2) evaluation of each agency's self-evaluation activities from January to June of the next year.

In the first step of self-evaluation, the GPEC works with the Policy Analysis and Evaluation Office to prepare guidelines for both annual performance and performance evaluation plans in the beginning of the fiscal year. Their second task is to review and refine each agency's annual performance plan by March, once each agency has submitted a draft of the performance plan to the Prime Minister's Office. The next task is to prepare operational guidelines for self-evaluation by March. After the first round of tasks, the GPEC evaluates each agency's self-evaluation results from February to May of the next year depending on target areas. In June, high-performing central agencies receive rewards from the Prime Minister's Office and budget incentives in the following year from the Ministry of Strategy and Finance.

On the agency and its self-evaluation committee end, the evaluation procedures are grouped into three stages: (1) planning self-evaluation by July, (2) evaluating mid-point progress in July, and (3) evaluating the agency's performance by January of the next year as presented in Figure 2. After self-evaluation, an initial reporting process begins with individual public officials who prepare their self-evaluation reports and submit them to their division or subdivision managers. Thereafter, the division managers are responsible to report the collected individual evaluation reports to the self-evaluation task force that submits those reports to the self-evaluation committee.
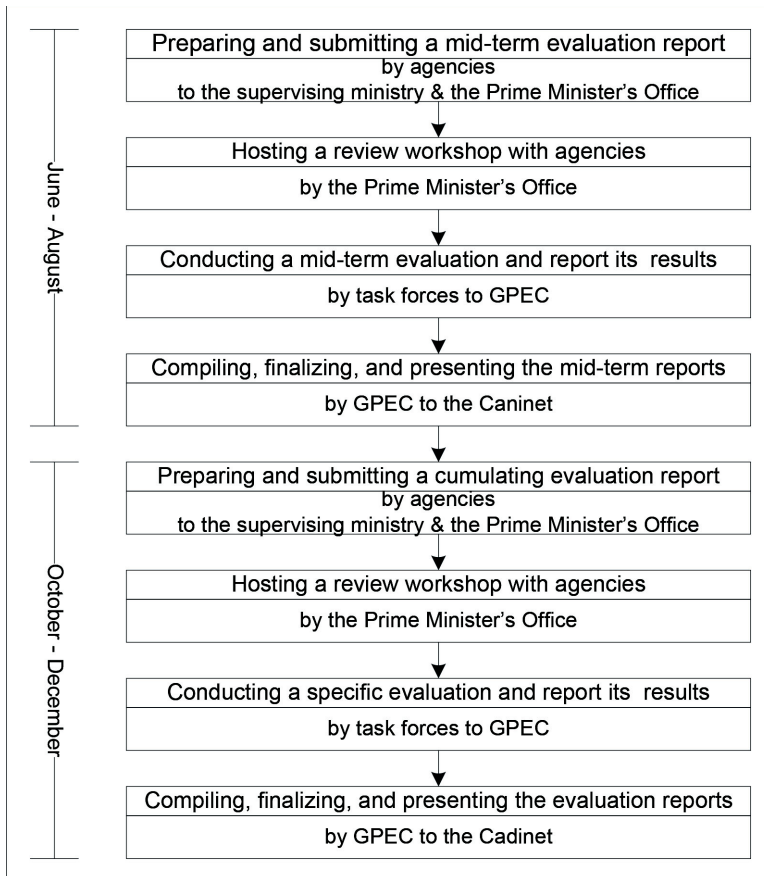
| Figure 2 | Procedures of Self-evaluation

Timeline	GPEC & Prime Minister's Office	Agency & Self-evaluation Committee
January	Preparing guidelines of the annual performance plan and the evaluation plan	
February		Drafting and submitting the annual performance plan
March	Reviewing and refining each agency's performance plan	Finalizing the annual performance plan
April	Preparing operating guidelines of self-evaluation	Appointing the self-evaluation committee members
April		Preparing, reviewing, and finalizing the self-evaluation plan
May		Holding briefing sessions on the evaluation plan and evaluation indicators
July		Conducting a mid-year performance evaluation
August - November		Checking onsite performance
November		Holding a briefing session on performance of the second half year
December – January		Conducting self-evaluation
January		Reviewing, evaluating, and finalizing the results of self-evaluation
February – June	Evaluating and approving each agency's results of self-evaluation	Reporting the results of self-evaluation
	Award for excellence	Publicizing the results and reporting it to National Assembly Standing Committee

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The members of the self-evaluation committee assign evaluation scores to individual programs and the sub-committees review and revise the scores, if necessary. After confirming the evaluation scores by the sub-committees, the self-evaluation committee finalizes the scores as a whole. Submission schedules for the self-evaluation results to the GPEC are different depending on target areas. In 2016, the evaluation results of the prioritized policies area were due at the end of January, while the results for the administration management capacity area were to be submitted by March. For the financial projects, the report of each agency's self-evaluation was due in May. After submitting the results of self-evaluation to the GPEC, the results are also reported to the National Assembly Standing Committee and publicized on the agency's website within one month.

Figure 3 presents the specific evaluation process classified into two phases. Specific evaluation as top-down evaluation is directly operated by the GPEC to conduct evaluation of national policies in the target areas and approve the results of the performance evaluations. However, projects in one target area and four subfields are initially evaluated by the five supervising ministries noted in Table 2. The GPEC organizes several task forces to initially evaluate central agencies' projects in each target area except policy publicity, which is supervised by task forces created by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. A task force consists of members of the supervising ministries and experts from non-governmental sectors such as academia, research institutes, and private organizations.

| Figure 3 | Procedures of Specific Evaluation

June - August	Preparing and submitting a mid-term evaluation report by agencies to the supervising ministry & the Prime Minister's Office
	Hosting a review workshop with agencies by the Prime Minister's Office
	Conducting a mid-term evaluation and report its results by task forces to GPEC
	Compiling, finalizing, and presenting the mid-term reports by GPEC to the Caninet
October - December	Preparing and submitting a cumulating evaluation report by agencies to the supervising ministry & the Prime Minister's Office
	Hosting a review workshop with agencies by the Prime Minister's Office
	Conducting a specific evaluation and report its results by task forces to GPEC
	Compiling, finalizing, and presenting the evaluation reports by GPEC to the Cadinet

Methods and Indicators for Self-evaluation

The self-evaluation committee first assigns evaluation scores to individual programs based on the 100-point system and then coverts the results of the evaluations into a percentile ranking in order to make different programs comparable as a whole within each central government agency. This comparative ranking system is applied to promote usability of evaluation results for other purposes, such as policy improvement, organizational

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management, and individual performance evaluation. Although the evaluation scores of individual programs are slightly diverse across central government agencies, this relative ranking approach makes variability of raw scores even. Self-evaluation uses different evaluation ranking systems depending on the target areas. For example, the prioritized policies area uses the seven tiers of a relative rating system to compare the results of individual programs. In addition to the quantitative evaluation, narrative analysis as a qualitative approach is also required to justify the causes of underperformance and suggest alternatives to improve performance in prioritized policies.

For prioritized policies, the Prime Minister's Office provides a distribution standard of evaluation ranking: 1st tier (excellent) within top 5%, 2nd tier (good) ranging from top 5% to 20%, 3rd tier (somewhat good) ranging from 20% to 35%, 4th tier (average) ranging from top 35% to 65%, 5th tier (somewhat unsatisfactory) ranging from top 65% to 80%, 6th tier (dissatisfied) ranging from 80% to 95%, and 7th tier (extremely unsatisfactory) ranging from below 95%. If 20 programs are self-evaluated in a central government agency, only the first place program is included in the first tier. This forced ranking technique has benefits to make individual programs comparable across different agencies, but also has drawbacks to place excellent or mediocre agencies into normalized categories of percentiles for performance.

| Table 4 | Self-evaluation Indicators for Prioritized Policies

Fields	Indicators	Sub-indicators	Points
Performance achievement	Goal accomplishment of performance indicator	goal achievement of performance indicators	20
	Relevance of performance indicator	a level of representation level of setting target values	5
	Characteristics of a task	difficulty, importance, creativity	5
Policy planning	Reliability of pre-survey and consulting	reviewing statistical data and cases and consulting with experts	5
	Appropriateness of policy analysis	analysis of policy effects and pros and cons and preparation of complementary issues	5
Policy implementation	On-time progress and timely response	timely progress of evaluation schedules timely, appropriate response to situational change	5
	Linkage with relevant agencies' policies	collaborative system-building with relevant other agencies for collaborative tasks * extra points for the best collaborative project	5 (+2)
	Efforts to participate in self-evaluation	agency's active involvement in the overall evaluation process	5
	Communication for policy improvement and implementation of feedback	necessary information provided, on-site visit offer, and explanation by the self-evaluation committee implementation of last year's feedback for policy improvement	5

Fields	Indicators	Sub-indicators	Points
Policy effect	Degree of policy impact	desirable outcome long-term impact major public values and indirect outcome citizen satisfaction	20 5 5 5
Total			100 *(+2)

Source: Rural Development Administration (2016).

Individual agencies decide their own evaluation techniques with in-house developed indicators and rating scales to fit with their organizational characteristics and the nature of their tasks. Based on 100 points, each agency assigns points differently on evaluation indicators. In other word, same or similar indicators can be weighted differently depending on agencies' decisions. When individual agencies develop their own evaluation indicators, they consult with the self-evaluation committee and external experts. Agencies have to construct a valid measurement method to avoid generous self-evaluation and reserve discriminating power of evaluation results. Agencies can also use a weighting approach that reflects the difficulty and importance of projects.

A set of evaluation indicators strongly reflects four major aspects (i.e., performance achievement, appropriateness of policy planning, appropriateness of policy implementation, and policy effect) in a majority of central government agencies. In 2016, the Rural Development Administration developed self-evaluation indicators referring to the four fields detailed in Table 4. The performance achievement and policy effect fields took equally large portions (35%) of the evaluation. In particular, the aspect of policy effect has been continuously increased to measure prioritized policies across central government agencies.

For the consolidated financial evaluation in 2016, individual agencies evaluated their projects based on a relative rating system in three categories: good, average, and poor. The number of the self-evaluation indicators is also reduced from 11 in the three stages of planning, management and feedback to 4 in two stages of management and results. While some customized indicators developed by individual agencies have been unified under the new operational direction of self-evaluation in 2016, agencies are encouraged to use their own specialized indicators.

After individual agencies' self-evaluation of financial fields, both meta-evaluations per field and per agency are conducted by the meta-evaluation committee that consists of the Ministry of Strategy and Finance, the Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning, the Presidential Committee on Regional Development, the Korea Institute of Public Finance, and the National Information Society Agency. For meta-evaluation, there are six indicators in three categories of relevance of evaluation processes, appropriateness of evaluation results, and appropriateness of spending structures (see Table 5). In addition to the six indicators, one additional indicator is used only for the R&D subject.

| Table 5 | Meta-evaluation Indicators for Financial Projects

Fields	Indicators
Evaluation process	- relevance of organizing self-evaluation committee and operational planning - relevance of the self-evaluation committee's operations
Evaluation result	- implementation of evaluation based on the performance plan - compliance of with a relative rating evaluation - validity of the best project selection (only for R&D projects)

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Fields	Indicators
Adjustment of spending structure	- achievement of adjusting spending structures - appropriateness of contents of adjusting spending structures

Source: Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning (2016).

The last self-evaluation of administrative management capacity assesses performance in organization, personnel, and information technology management, using five standardized indicators across agencies. Table 6 shows the self-evaluation indicators of administrative capacity developed by the Rural Development Administration for 2016 evaluation. All three fields are equally weighted. Each indicator is detailed with three or four sub-indicators to assess each management capacity.

| **Table 6** | Self-evaluation Indicators for Administrative Management Capacity

Fields	Indicators	Points
Organization	efficient uses of organizational and human resources (3 sub-indicators)	18
	collaboration with other agencies and communication with citizens (4 sub-indicators)	17
Personnel	efficient operation of personnel (5 sub-indicators)	30
Information technology	accessible e-government (3 sub-indicators)	18
	cyber security (3 sub-indicators)	17
Total		100

Source: Rural Development Administration (2016).

The GPEC oversees the operational practice of agencies' self-evaluation activities to minimize evaluation bias and make self-evaluation results realistic in February of the next year after completing each agency's evaluation. The typical monitoring tools are on-site visit, interview with agents in charge, and document evaluation. Before conducting reviews of an operational

practice of agencies' self-evaluation activities, the Prime Minister's Office provides guidelines with review indicators to individual agencies. The review focuses on two fields scheduled in 2017: operational relevance and appropriate feedback. The operational relevance field has two indicators that assess the agency's efforts to improve organizational capacity and validity of the evaluation analysis. The appropriate feedback field estimates whether evaluation results are likely to improve existing policy and projects. Detailed sub-indicators will be developed after consulting with external experts and individual agencies during 2016. The results of the review are used for selecting and publicizing the best practice. Agencies with severe problems in relevance of operation and validity of evaluation results will be re-evaluated.

Use of the Evaluation Results

The evaluation results of both self-evaluation and specific evaluation are used at the institutional and individual levels. The heads of central government agencies have to reflect the results of self-evaluation in their organizational operations, budget, personnel, and incentive pay practices. The evaluation results should be also incorporate in the next year's budget proposal prepared by the Minister of Strategy and Finance.

At the institutional level, the evaluation results are used to improve policy, allocate budget, and manage the organization. If a prioritized policy is evaluated unsatisfactory by self-evaluation and reviews of the self-evaluation results, a head of the agency requests to take corrective action or to have a policy audit until the status of the policy is improved. The results of complementary action should be reported to the GPEC. For an excellent policy case, the agency and public officials associated with the specific policy will receive awards, incentive pay, or a promotion. With regard to the results

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of administrative management capacity, best practice cases will be shared with all central agencies for benchmarking. Like other target areas, an agency that has made unsatisfactory progress has to prepare an action plan to improve its evaluations.

However, the interviews with central government officials and experts, which were conducted by the Korea Institute of Public Administration in 2015, reported that individual agencies were often difficult to prepare a reform plan because recommendations from the GPEC were broad and abstract. For example, a recommendation after self-evaluation is expressed in a simple sentence like improving a citizen complaint procedure. Without specific standards suggested by the GPEC, performance of reforming actions for improving a citizen complaint procedure may be not much changed in consequent years. Public officials also addressed that the results of qualitative evaluation were not often provided to individual agencies and the justifications of the qualitative results were not sufficiently explained to correct unsatisfactory progress.

For linking evaluation results with budget allocation, a project will be rewarded or penalized based on the compiled results of both the agency's self-evaluation and oversight review by the Minister of Strategy and Finance. A project with an excellent rating will be given a budget increase next year, while a project that is unsatisfactory or below will have its budget reduced by 10% or be abolished. The unsatisfactory project has to provide corrective efforts and ongoing oversight review until its evaluation rating is upgraded. If a budget cut is not feasible due to the nature of the project, alternatives to reform its operations should be implemented. If a project is not underperforming but has not objectively proved sufficient performance, no budget increase is allowed in the next budget cycle. In addition, agencies can be granted differently to manage their organization in new hiring or

adjusting the number of personnel per rank. An agency awarded for best practice will get incentives that lower a percentage of the unsatisfying category next year. On the other hand, an underperforming agency will be penalized that raises a percentage of the unsatisfying category and cut its next year operating budget.

The link between evaluation results and budget allocation makes agencies being highly sensitive to evaluation itself. As a result, agencies tend to set a low threshold for goal achievement, which takes the highest point among the evaluation indicators shown in Table 4, so they can have a better chance to receive a high evaluation score. With regard to goal achievement, the interviews with individual agencies in 2015 aforementioned were also likely to assign high weights to sub-indicators that were relatively easy to be accomplished. The interviewees pointed out that raising the bar for goal achievement at 90% is somewhat difficult since 90% of goal achievement is already high enough to delivery their services. Nevertheless, the current evaluation system placed those agencies with 90% at a low-tier ranking. No matter how well agencies are satisfied, the fact remains that the agencies do not reach 100% of goal achievement. In addition, mandating a number of percentage increase compared to last year may not be realistic to set an achievable threshold for agencies.

At the individual level, the self-evaluation results are supposed to influence promotions and incentive pay in conjunction with individual performance. The report conducted by Yoo and his colleagues in 2012 summarized that public officials in central government highly agreed with the direct use of the evaluation results for either a pay raise or incentive pay by 88.7% or 80.6% relatively. 77.5% of the interviewees responded that the evaluation results were timely released to be rewarded for incentive pay. While individual agencies had reflected the evaluation results in the personnel management

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system, it is not clear to what extent each agency actually reflects the results in its incentive system. In contrast, the interviewees disagreed with the direct use of the evaluation results for personnel management or promotion by 41.9% or 43.5% respectively. Overall, the interviewees perceived a positive impact of the evaluation results on pay but not much on promotion.

Another interesting survey, which focused on the use of the self-evaluation results of administrative management capacity conducted by Lee in 2014, reported that incentive pay was not consistently applied across individual agencies, unlike the case of the prioritized policies field that was directly corresponded to a pay raise or incentive pay. The interviewees addressed that a kind of monetary incentives for those who were in charge of preparing evaluation of administrative management capacity should be guaranteed to motivate them. They also pointed out that 65% of the self-evaluation results in the administrative management capacity field was incorporated to evaluate individual performance. The survey report informed that the self-evaluation results of administrative management capacity were somewhat helpful for the internal performance evaluation.

Potential Implications and Issues

Korean performance evaluation systems for central agencies have been evolving to improve their structures and operations by reflecting lessons from prior practice. The evaluation systems are structured to conduct evaluation throughout the entire process of policy activities and thus provide detailed information to the National Assembly and external stakeholders of government about the agency's goals, objectives, and results. Its operations and evaluation methods can also be internally utilized for the agency's own purposes. The evaluation systems include interest in collaboration across

agencies, which is expected to stimulate desirable outcomes of national policies.

The evaluation systems are not exclusively focused on the evaluation of agencies' activities but also on giving effective feedback for learning to move the next level. Thus, individual public officials can train themselves to identify problematic issues related to their tasks and search for alternatives to resolve the issues. However, there is not a practical opportunity for public officials to be part of conducting evaluations, which isolates them from the actual evaluation. Public officials are overwhelmed by the amount of work the evaluations require but their roles are limited to conduct actual evaluations. In this context, are public officials being responsive to the self-evaluation committee? Are the public officials accountable for the evaluation results? To what extent are agencies complying with the evaluation results? The current feedback mechanism of performance evaluation is tightly linked with the incentive scheme, so this relationship somewhat misleads critical roles of evaluation as learning opportunities and skews agency time toward the tasks covered on the target fields and indicators to avoid penalties. This is similar to "teaching to the test." How well do the evaluation indicators represent the nature of the agency's tasks and unique characteristics? Meaningful use and implications of the evaluation results seem to be limited for resolving problems and improving the quality of the agency's tasks.

The evaluation systems for central government agencies tend to integrate various evaluation activities and authorities with the intention of leading and supervising evaluation operations, but the systems are still fragmented and unrealistic in certain aspects. In the case of self-evaluation, three target areas are supervised by different authorities such as the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Strategy and Finance. Specific evaluation is much more complicated than self-evaluation, although the GPEC in conjunction

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with the Prime Minister's Office is responsible to direct the operations of specific evaluations. Supervising ministries in the five target areas conduct evaluation activities independently with their own committees and schedules. The GPEC is the leading institution for both self-evaluation and specific evaluation but does not have the enumerated power to connect the evaluation results with the budget. The GPEC is also run by part-time members with a two-year term, so their understanding of the systems and projects may be limited. Have meaningful consultations been given to direct agencies in these contexts? How can the members of the GPEC be effectively involved in the evaluation process? Are the self-evaluation committee and its agency consulting effectively with the GPEC and the supervising ministries? There are still questions that have to be addressed to make the evaluation systems feasible and approachable to internal and external stakeholders.

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