ANATOMY OF A TIGER

HOW LAND REFORM HELPED ASIA’S TIGER ECONOMIES TAKE SHAPE

THREE CRITICAL POLICIES PROPELLED ASIA’S TIGER ECONOMIES

Favor small family farms, especially by strengthening their land rights, to grow employment and agricultural output.

Use the proceeds from agriculture surpluses to jump-start manufacturing for export.

Encourage financial sector to channel capital to family farming and export-focused manufacturing.
JAPAN

In the decade after land reform provided secure land rights to small family farmers, agricultural production increased by 50%.

Manufacturing and mining output increased more than tenfold in two decades.

SOUTH KOREA

In the 20 years after land reform secured land rights for small family farmers, rice paddy yields nearly doubled.

Exports rose an average of 40% a year in the 1960s and 25% a year in the '70s.

TAIWAN

In the decade after land reform provided secure land rights to small family farmers, rice yields increased by 60% per hectare.

The value of exports climbed from 9% of GDP in 1952 to 50% by 1979.

Broadly-distributed and secure rights to land for small family farms was a powerful engine driving each of these economic miracles.

For more information about the strategies that helped the Asia tigers succeed, read How Asia Works by Joe Studwell and One Billion Rising by Roy Prosterman.