



Report of the Sub-Regional Workshop on

COOPERATIVE PRESS AND PUBLICITY

Bangkok (Thailand)

27th April to 6th May 1981

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE

Regional Office & Education Centre for South-East Asia
"Bonow House", 43 Friends' Colony, New Delhi-110065. India



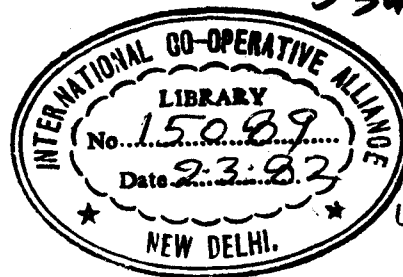
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REPORT OF THE

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Held By

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE
Regional Office & Education Centre
for South-East Asia, Bonow House
43 Friends Colony, New Delhi-110065,
INDIA

In collaboration with

The Cooperative League of Thailand,
4 Pichai Road, Dusit, Bangkok, Thailand

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SUB-REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON COOPERATIVE PRESS AND PUBLICITY,
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R E P O R T

Introduction

A Sub-Regional Workshop on Cooperative Press and Publicity was held in Bangkok, Thailand, by the International Cooperative Alliance Regional Office and Education Centre for South-East Asia in collaboration with the Cooperative League of Thailand from 27th April to 6th May 1981. Fifteen participants from Indonesia, Rep. of Korea, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand attended the workshop. The workshop was inaugurated by Mr. Teerawit Koonsap, Director, Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT). Mr. Taweewat Charoensook, Deputy Director, CLT, welcomed the participants and resource persons attending the workshop. Mr. Lionel Gunawardana, Joint Director (P&PR), ICA ROEC, addressed the inaugural session and thanked the CLT for hosting the workshop and for the hospitality extended to the participants.

The workshop was directed by Mr. Lionel Gunawardana assisted by Mr. A.H. Ganesan, Publications Officer, ICA ROEC. Mr. B.D. Sharma, Director, National Cooperative Union of India, participated in the workshop as a resource person. The benefit of expertise of Dr. Boonlert Supadhiloke, Dean, Faculty of Journalism & Mass Communication, Thammasat University, and Mr. Prachuab In-odd, Manager (PR), Bangkok Bank, were drawn by the workshop.

Objectives

The objectives of the workshop were :

- i. To review the cooperative press and publicity activities carried out by the movement in the participating countries.
- ii. To impart skills to the personnel working in the field of cooperative press and publicity and in the field of journalism to improve the quality of cooperative journals, books and publicity materials.

Study Visits

To give an insight to the participants about the Cooperative Movement of Thailand, study visits to Minburi Agricultural Cooperative Society and Cholburi Fishery Cooperative Society were arranged. The participants were divided into four groups. While two groups interviewed the chairman/manager/some members of the two societies, two groups wrote short write-ups/features on a specific activity undertaken by each of the society visited by them for publication in cooperative journals.

I. Review of present position of press and publicity in the sub-region

Cooperation has been accepted as an important institutional framework for bringing about socio-economic change in the society in the countries of the sub-region. Particularly for the sectors like agriculture, urban consumers, artisans, fisheries, etc. the national governments in the sub-region have got definite policies and programmes for the development of cooperative institutions. In view of this a sizeable financial and other assistance is provided by the governments to the cooperative institutions. However; main limitation which has been faced by the cooperative movements and the agencies connected with the development of cooperative movements within the region is lack of effective media for publicising the achievements of the cooperative institutions and policies thereof. To get over this problem efforts have been made to devise some channel of press and publicity in the cooperative movements of all the countries. A brief review of the present situation of cooperative press and publicity in various countries of the sub-region, as emerged out of the discussions at the workshop, is given below.

Indonesia

In Indonesia a two-pronged approach has been adopted to develop cooperative press and publicity. While the general press helps in projecting the achievements of cooperatives, though in a limited way, the cooperative press and publicity in particular, aims at participation of the members in the activities of cooperative institutions by transmitting motivational information through various publications. The

cooperative institutions both at national and provincial level are bringing out some journals in the form of bulletins, newsletters or journals. Besides, the government (Directorate General of Cooperatives) also brings out a few publications from time to time. To ensure a regular flow of information to the cooperative journals a news agency called Pusat Informasi Perkerasian or Cooperative Information Centre has been set up under the control of Indonesian Cooperative Council and the Directorate General of Cooperatives. To build up professional skills in the cooperative journalists and PR personnel, courses on journalism and cooperative publication have been organised. These courses are attended by journalists and editors of cooperative publications.

Republic of Korea

In the Rep. of Korea both the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation (NACF) and the National Federation of Fisheries Cooperatives (NFFC) have got necessary organisation for press and publicity activities. The publicity wing in NACF consists of 3 sections, (i) Public information division; (ii) Publications division; and (iii) Publicity diffusion division. Similarly in NFFC there is a Publicity Department in charge of press and publication activities of the Federation.

Important publications of NACF are Farmers Newspaper (weekly) with one million circulation, and New Farmers Magazine (monthly) with a circulation of 150,000. The main objective of the Farmers Newspaper is to provide farmers with news and information on agriculture and agricultural cooperative activities. Of the total space, 40% is devoted to farming and farm information, 35% to agricultural policies, 15% to rural life and 10% to other aspects. The NACF has got a well defined news collection and newspaper distribution system. To make the paper attuned to the needs of readers and members of NACF, survey of readers opinion is undertaken, based on which contents of the newspaper are planned.

The "New Farmers Magazine" is a priced publication and its subscription rate is 500 Won. The volume and size of the magazine is about 200 pages in double 4x6 block style. Its contents include aspects of farm households and other activities undertaken by the farming community. The objective is to enable the readers to find out the ways and means for increasing his income and improving his living conditions. Besides these publications, the NACF also brings out adhoc publications in the form of news letters, reports, etc.

For general public relations activities the NACF extensively make use of the mass media such as TV, radio and daily newspapers. Specific programmes are regularly broadcast over radio and TV, e.g. cooperative hour programme.

The major publications of NFFC are 'New Fisherman' (monthly) with a circulation of 30,000; 'Monthly Review' with a circulation of 1000 and the Annual Report depicting the activities of the Federation and a bi-annual publication 'Korea's Fishery Cooperatives' with a circulation of 3000. The New Fisherman aims at transmitting information relating to agricultural techniques, news on fisheries industry, government policies, etc. Monthly Review projects broadly progress, problems and programmes of fishery cooperatives. The public relations department of the Federation, in addition to the publications indicated above, also takes up general press and publicity activities.

Malaysia

In Malaysia both the national level organisations, i.e. ANGKASA and Cooperative Union of Malaysia and a few apex level as well as secondary cooperative societies bring out the following publications :

- a) PELANCAR - published monthly by ANGKASA since 1974. Distributed free to members and sold at cost to others.
- b) BERITA KOPERASI POLIS - published monthly by the Police Cooperative Society. Distributed free to members.
- c) BERITA BANK RAKYAT - published by Bank Rakyat Cooperative.
- d) MCIS REVIEW - a quarterly published by the Malaysian Cooperative Insurance Society for its personnel & administrators.

- e) MALAYSIAN COOPERATOR - published by the Cooperative Union of Malaysia for its members and for national and international organisations.
- f) KSM - published half-yearly by the Malaysian Consumer Cooperative Society.
- g) SUARA SHAMELIN - published by the Shamelin Cooperative Society.
- h) SUARA KOPERASI TENTERA - published quarterly by the Malaysian Army Cooperative Society.
- i) KOOTARAVU - published by the National Land Finance Cooperative Society.
- j) BREAKTHROUGH - a bilingual monthly published by the Malaysian Cooperative Insurance Society for its staff, directors and group societies affiliated to it.
- k) SUARA KELUARGA BANK RAKYAT - published by the Bank Rakyat Cooperative for its employees.
- l) BERITA MKM - published by the Cooperative College of Malaysia.
- m) PELADANG JAYA - published by the Farmers' Organisation Authority.
- n) BERITA LPP - published by the Farmers' Organisation Authority; and other publications such as newsletters and annual reports.

The publications brought out by ANGKASA and the Cooperative Union of Malaysia are printed in presses owned by cooperatives.

Singapore

The Singapore National Cooperative Union is responsible for press and publicity activities and brings out "The Cooperator" in association with the Registry of Cooperative Societies. It is a quarterly spokesman journal. Besides the national trade union congress fortnightly newspaper "Singaporean" also carries a good amount of cooperative news. Recently another apex organisation of the cooperative movement i.e. Singapore National Cooperative Federation has also been constituted. This organisation is likely to take over most of the press and publicity activities for the cooperative movement. In addition, publicity materials include house journals i.e. March of Incomes, Comfort and Welcome News, brought out by individual cooperative organisations,

periodical pamphlets, newsletters, circulars, etc. There is also a Cooperative Printing Press in Singapore known as the SILO Multipurpose Cooperative Printing Society.

Thailand

In Thailand publishing and public relation functional sections are part and parcel of promotion and extension division of Cooperative League of Thailand - the apex organ of the movement. It brings out a monthly "CLT Bulletin" and a fortnightly "Coop News". The subscribership of these journals is open to both cooperatives and other interested groups. These publications are distributed free to cooperative members while a nominal subscription is charged from others.

To provide necessary guidance and direction to the functionaries responsible for bringing out these publications, there is a Publicity Committee consisting of five members. Other activities undertaken by the CLT to boost up the press and publicity programmes for cooperatives are production of bulletins, leaflets, folders, pamphlets, etc; publication of yearbooks and annual reports; scripts for radio and television programmes; production of films and slides on cooperative activities; organisation of cooperative exhibitions, etc. The Cooperative Promotion Department of Thailand publishes a quarterly "Coop Journal". Its subscription is Baht 25 per annum and it is distributed among cooperative members and others.

II. Problems in the Field of Press and Publicity

The workshop divided the problems under the following heads :

- i. Attitudinal problems,
- ii. Organisational problems,
- iii. Financial problems,
- iv. Subject matter contents problems.

(i) Problems arising from human attitudes

Among problems arising from human attitudes within the movement are lack of enthusiasm among cooperators, personal considerations rather than collective interests and reluctance to improve situations such as overcoming manpower shortage, etc. The needs and priorities towards cooperative press and publicity are still found to be inadequate. When there is not much interest shown by the management to publicity it will fall on the PR man to change the attitude of the management to this important issue in the organisation. He should be able to drive home the point that in the long run the publicity will prove to have been an investment and not just a cost item. This could only be done by the PR man by his own actions in this field. He will have to work extremely hard and display to management the effectiveness of publicity to propagate the success of the organisation and thereby change the attitude of management in his favour.

A few countries in the region face the problem of a large number of people who are illiterate and are unable to read or write and therefore publications have a limited effect. For situations of this nature, the workshop recommends joint reading sessions as practised in the Rep. of Korea. The system of a leader reading the paper and the others listening to it has become very successful in Japan and the Rep. of Korea. Another effective solution in such a situation could be by means of programmes broadcast over radio and television.

The workshop suggested the following to solve the attitudinal problems :

- (a) Generally all leaders of cooperatives should possess idealism and have the conviction in principles of cooperation.
- (b) Wherever practical, professional personnel should be engaged in important aspects of cooperatives, such as the press and publicity.

(ii) Organisational problems

It was generally felt that there was a lack of professional men for publicity work in the cooperatives. The Cooperatives face difficulties in securing skilled managerial and technical personnel to work in the field of cooperative press and publicity due to limited financial resources of the cooperatives.

It was felt that centralised publication of the cooperative journals could prove a more effective system of operation. In some countries journals are produced at all levels - the primary, the secondary and the apex. Sometimes it is found that the same news item or information appears in more than one journal. Thus there is unnecessary duplication of service. For this reason and as well as from the point of view of cost factor the dissemination of news by a central publication is recommended.

In countries where there is only one language for communication it is most appropriate to have a central publication system. This is recommended for ideological and news cum communication type of journals.

The following solutions were suggested :

- a) Setting up some form of a committee (agency) within the movement to be responsible for publications.
- b) Conduct seminars, etc. for members and leaders of primary societies to convince them of the importance and necessity of cooperative press and publicity.
- c) Conduct study tours, seminars or workshops for cooperative journalists to widen their expertise in the field.
- d) Encourage teaching of cooperation in schools in order to imbibe cooperative ideas in the minds of the young.
- e) Provide on-the-job training facilities for cooperative journalists and pay them according to their training.
- f) Where possible, frequent meetings of cooperative journalists should be held with their counterparts in the private sector to encourage healthy relationship among them.

(iii) Financial problems

The lack of adequate funds to manage cooperative publications is a major obstacle. Poor income from sales and advertisements affects the financial viability of a journal.

The workshop was of the opinion that the PR system in cooperatives should eventually be self-reliant in terms of resources and should be independent in order to be able to project the image of the cooperative movement of the country. Although initially there may be government subsidy with the growth of the movement it should set apart funds to make the system independent of dependence on outside support.

To overcome these problems the following solutions could be tried :

- (a) To make the journal a viable cooperative enterprise, at least 40% of the space should be devoted to advertisements.
- (b) In addition to advertisements space could be sold to cooperative societies which may like to highlight their activities.

(iv) Subject matter contents

The contents of cooperative journals, magazines and other publications were found to be inadequate to attract the reading public both within and outside the movement. This situation is mainly attributable due to lack of adequate man power. There are cooperative journals produced by a single person. The workshop suggested that the journals may have the following framework of contents :

- a) Editorial
- b) Articles on topical importance.
- c) Reports on cooperative seminars and conferences and other events organised by the government and the cooperative movement.
- d) Reports on symposium/debate on current issues concerning the cooperative movement in which the views of eminent cooperators, academicians, cooperative employees, etc. may be published.
- e) From the states/provinces : In this column what happens in the cooperative movement in various states may be highlighted.

- f) A column such as "Face to Face" carrying interviews of eminent cooperators, ministers, government functionaries on the current problems of the cooperative movement may be published.
- g) Success stories of cooperative institutions. These stories should highlight the achievements and performance of the cooperative movement in various spheres.
- h) Coop News from abroad.
- i) On important occasions a special numbers of journals may be brought out.

III. Collection of News for Cooperative Journals

Collection of news for the cooperative journals is a major problem. Unless effective measures are adopted to involve cooperatives at all levels in the press activities by feeding the cooperative journals with news the usefulness of the journals would be minimal.

Measures for improving the contents of the cooperative journals.

1. The national organisations should impress upon its membership the need to nominate a competent person to be responsible for supplying news of importance to them. The secretaries/presidents of the societies should take personal interest and see that the news about their activities are sent to the national level organisations regularly. The apex organisation should constantly remind the cooperatives which are not sending news the need to do so.
2. Establish a Central Cooperative News Pool which may act as clearing house for transmitting information to various journals. This news pool may either be the responsibility of the National Cooperative Union or an independent Cooperative News Agency established and owned by various cooperative publishing agencies.
3. In case of house journals material is to be collected from within the organisation itself. Therefore editor should be in a position to establish necessary coordination with other departments to ensure continuous flow of information.

4. The cooperative organisations should be grouped area-wise and each area may organise a cooperative information or news centre charged with the responsibility of collecting news of cooperatives and community interest. These centres can also involve local, civic, religious and business sectors to contribute news items of interest in their respective groups or areas.
- 5.9 Collection of news from its source itself : Staff of journals and publicity men of cooperatives should regularly visit hamlets, villages and cooperative organisations to obtain news.
6. Initiate an exchange of writings, journals, bulletins and pamphlets amongst cooperative organisations and also with non-cooperative or business organisations to cultivate a better understanding of the cooperative activities by the business organisations.
7. The national union or any apex organisation could set up an information collecting centre to take care of collecting publicity materials. They should issue press releases to all cooperative journals after an important event takes place within the country.
8. University professors and teaching staff in cooperative colleges and training centres should be approached to act as correspondents/ liaison officers for contributing news/articles on cooperation.
9. An advance planning of production of journals should be done and continuous efforts should be made to collect news/articles, etc. by proper follow up with the people concerned.
10. Free lance contributions from the readers of the journals could be invited and a small fee or honorarium could be paid to make the invitation more attractive.
11. Essay/competitions on cooperation could be conducted and the best ones could be published in the journals.
12. Successful cooperatives should be persuaded to share their experience.

13. Failures of cooperatives with their causes should also be analysed for the benefit of other cooperatives.
14. A panel of reviewers for reviewing books could be maintained with the journal.
15. Cooperative leaders and experts in the field should be requested to share their experiences by writing informative and research oriented articles.
16. Editorials on current problems/new developments could be included.
17. Features for special interest groups like women, youth and children could be included.
18. Publish interviews with prominent cooperators.
19. Letters to the editor/travelogues and cooperative advertisements should also be encouraged.

One way of solving this problem of obtaining good articles could be by giving financial incentives for contributing articles. In the present day commercial journalism it may be difficult to attract good articles from specialists and experts who know the subject well, unless a payment is made. This point becomes all the more relevant as they have alternate sources to send their articles, even when they pertain to cooperation, where from they can get payment.

IV. Role of Cooperative Journals in Image Building

The cooperative journals can play a vital role in disseminating information of the cooperatives to members and general public to create a good image of cooperatives. When the cooperative journal gives a good account of the activities of the movement in a clear manner it can project a good picture of the movement in the minds of the readers and thus can create a good image of the movement in the eyes of the people at large.

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The objective of image building in the private and the cooperative is different. While the private sector is concerned with profiteering, the cooperative is mainly concerned with service for its members and the improvement of the general well being of all the members of the movement. The cooperative journal should highlight its objectives to bring about mass support for the organisation.

The cooperative journal is also an educational tool in propagating the news, the new ideas and new activities that the movement can embark for the betterment of the people.

The cooperative journals have a definite purpose and motive. Their objectives are create new ideas, educate members and the general public, convince people to join the cooperative organisation, involve them in the activities of the movement and thereby improve their standard of living. The journals may also cater for other needs of the society, such as, social or recreational or charitable activities.

V. Production and Sale of Cooperative Journals

A cooperative journal is the printed medium to convey cooperative message to internal and external public. According to its purposes as communicative, motivative, educative and informative tool, cooperative journals must be eye-catching, understandable, acceptable and enjoyable to the readers. Its publication involves three main activities - Editorial, Production and Marketing. These activities, though interrelated with each other, are distinct from each other and require a high level of professional skills. The workshop, therefore, deliberated on each of these aspects.

(a) EDITORIAL

The workshop felt that there is no alternative to a skilful editor, if the journal is to be made an effective communication instrument to project the image of the cooperative movement. In order to enable the editor to do his job efficiently it is necessary that he should be provided adequate support, both administrative and academic.

Setting out an Editorial Policy

Every journal should have an editorial policy regarding its approach and contents. It should also define the limits under which the editor should function. The editorial policy may be drawn up by editorial boards or publication sub-committees in line with the objectives of the organisation publishing the journals. Once the editorial policy has been defined, the editor should be left free to operate within the framework of that policy and there should not be any interference from any where else.

(b) PRODUCTION

To make journal more attractive following steps may be adopted :

Cover : Cover should be colourful and attractive.

Headlines : Headlines should be short (to the point) and simple.

Headlines should be indicative of information given in the article and may highlight important aspects.

LAYOUT

Content : It should be well planned and the following should be kept in mind :

i. Magazine Placing of articles, index of contents.

Placing articles in the right place (according to the importance of the articles).

Language in simple and understandable form; as far as possible serialisation of articles should be avoided.

ii. Newspaper Editorial should be on a current issue, written in simple but forceful language.

Photographic and other illustration in first page and other illustrations whenever applicable may be included.

Contents should include other articles e.g. sports, short story, entertainment, children, women column, youth problems, market trends, quotations, etc.

The production activity in the publication of a journal involves standardisation of sizes, typography, layout, photographic reproduction, proof reading, printing, etc. To attract the reader and to create an interest in him to read the journal, it is necessary that its get up, lay out and material should be attractive enough. Every organisation which publishes a journal should have adequate staff to ensure quality production.

To ensure availability of quality paper at reasonable prices estimates of the annual requirements of printing paper for entire cooperative journals should be made. Based on these estimates the government may be approached to issue necessary quota to the cooperative sector.

Wherever cooperative printing units have been set up, efforts should be made to equip them with modern machinery. The International Cooperative Alliance, therefore, may consider to take appropriate steps in exploring the possibilities of international assistance to modernise the cooperative printing presses in the cooperative sector of the region.

(c) FINANCE

The independence of cooperative journals should be the ultimate aim of cooperative organisations producing such journals. In the initial stages it could depend on the funds or grants from the government. Slowly cooperatives should build up their own funds to run their journals. This could be done by obtaining advertisements for the journals, by selling space in the journal to societies that wish to have some publicity for their new ventures and by selling the journals at price which enable the recovery of cost of production.

(d) MARKETING

A cooperative publishing organisation should have a sound and effective marketing system so as to ensure organised sale and distribution of cooperative publications and journals.

VI. Conclusion

The workshop urged upon the participating countries to take appropriate steps for implementation of the recommendations and prepare suitable projects, keeping in view the local situations particularly in regard to the following :

- (a) Creation of a central news pool.
- (b) Initiating centralisation of publication of cooperative journals.
- (c) Establishment of new cooperative printing presses and modernisation of the cooperative printing presses where they are already existing.

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SEMINAR PROGRAMME

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|------------------------|---|
| <u>26th April Sun.</u> | Arrival of participants in Bangkok |
| <u>27th April Mon.</u> | |
| 0900-0930 | Inauguration |
| 0930-1000 | Tea break |
| 1000-1030 | Working methods |
| 1030-1230 | Present position of press and publicity activities - presentation by participants. |
| 1230-1330 | Lunch break |
| 1330-1600 | Present position of press and publicity activities - presentation by participants. |
| <u>28th April Tue.</u> | |
| 0900-1230 | Session No.1 : Problems of Coöperative Journals - Introduction and Group Discussion (Introduction by Mr. Lionel Gunawardana). |
| 1230-1330 | Lunch break |
| 1330-1600 | Session No.1 (contd.) |
| <u>29th April Wed.</u> | |
| 0900-1030 | Session No.2 : Role of Cooperative Journals in image building of cooperatives by Mr.B.D. Sharma. |
| 1030-1100 | Tea break |
| 1100-1230 | Session No.3 : Collection of news for cooperative journals by Mr. A.H. Ganesan. |
| 1230-1330 | Lunch break. |
| 1330-1600 | Group work on session Nos.2 & 3. |
| <u>30th April Thu.</u> | |
| 0900-1030 | Session No.4 : Production and sale of cooperative journals by Mr. Prachuab In-odd & Mr.B.D. Sharma. |
| 1030-1100 | Tea break |
| 1100-1230 | Plenary on session Nos.1, 2 & 3. |
| 1230-1330 | Lunch break |
| 1330-1600 | Group work on session No.4 |

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| <u>1st May Fri. & 2nd May Sat.</u> | Study visits |
| <u>3rd May Sun.</u> | F r e e |
| <u>4th May Mon.</u> | |
| 0900-1030 | Session No.5 : External and Internal Public Relations in Cooperatives by Dr. Boonlert Supadiloke |
| 1030-1100 | Tea break |
| 1100-1230 | Plenary on session No.4 |
| 1230-1330 | Lunch break |
| 1330-1600 | Group assignments based on study visits and preparation of the report. |
| <u>5th May Tue.</u> | Final Report Evaluation Closing of the Workshop |
| <u>6th May Wed.</u> | Visit to cooperative organisations in Bangkok |
| <u>7th May Thu.</u> | Departure of participants |
| <hr/> | |
| Afternoon tea break : 1430-1500 | |

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