

2nd Training Course on Revitalization of Local Community by Rural Women

Thailand-Japan: 3rd July to 4th August 2012



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**REVITALIZATION OF LOCAL
COMMUNITY BY RURAL WOMEN**

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COURSE REPORT

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**International Cooperative Alliance –
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Report of the
**2nd Training Course on
Revitalization of Local Community by Rural Women
Thailand and Japan
3rd July to 4th August 2012**

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**2nd Training Course on
Revitalization of Local Community by Rural Women
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COURSE REPORT

SECTION-I

Executive Summary

Background

Gender equality is a fundamental factor for the socio-economic well-being of all. It has particular importance in terms of global economic recovery and global development. Yet, despite the gains made so far and the efforts and political commitment of the international community, visible and invisible obstacles continue to persist that prevent rural women from fully exploiting their capabilities. These barriers equally deny them their right to be recognized as the driver and the main actor in rural development.

Rural women face a number of constraints. Rural women have limited or no access to natural, infrastructural, technical and financial resources due to both cultural and legal constraints; rural women are not heard since they have no voice; and rural women mainly work in the informal sector and in subsistence agriculture. As a consequence, their access to education and basic social services is compromised.

The role of rural women is vital. Rural women not only contribute to feeding the world in a safe and sustainable way, but also promoting a true development and contribute to building peaceful and socially cohesive communities.

Introduction

The International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) is an independent non-governmental association which unites, represents and serves cooperatives worldwide. The ICA was founded in London on 18th August 1895 and is now headquartered in Geneva (Switzerland). ICA is a member-based organization with national and international cooperative organizations in more than 92 countries active in all sectors of the economy including agriculture, banking, consumer, fisheries, health, housing, insurance, tourism and worker cooperatives. ICA's four offices in Africa, America, Asia-Pacific and Europe, together, serve more than 274 Member-Organizations from 98 countries, representing over one billion cooperative members around the world.

The ICA-Asia and Pacific Office is operating from New Delhi since 1960, serves 80 national level organizations from 25 countries, representing over 500 million cooperative members.

Training Course

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of the Government of Japan has chosen the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) to implement an umbrella Project on “**Strengthening of Capacity Building in Developing Countries in Asia**” for three years starting from 2011.

Under this Project, the 2nd Training Course on “**Revitalization of Local Community by Rural Women**” was held in **Thailand and Japan**. Part-I of the Training Course was held in Thailand in collaboration with the Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT) from 3rd to 9th July 2012 and Part-II in Japan in collaboration with the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA) from 10th July to 4th August. The Training Course was funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Government of Japan, and implemented by ICA.

Objective

The main objective of the Training Course was to assist fostering women coordinators who play important roles to activate women in agricultural sector and rural community which will contribute in income-generation and poverty reduction in the LDCs of Mekong river countries and the South Asian countries.

Course Participants

Fourteen (14) women participants were selected by ICA-AP for the Training Course from the following ten countries - Cambodia, India, Laos, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. A list of participants is placed at Section-XI.

Home Country Assignments (HCAs)

The selected participants undertook their Home Country Assignments (HCAs) for a period of **one week** (26th June to 2nd July) prior to the actual commencement of the Training Course. They prepared (i) a **Country Report**; and (ii) a draft **Action Plan** for the development of their own organizations including social and economic activities so as to meet the objective of the Training Course.

The draft Action Plan prepared by the participants in their home countries was finalized based on the experience and knowledge gained during the Training Course in Thailand and Japan.

The Training Course was divided into two parts, as has been explained below:

Part-I: Study Visits in Thailand

A one-week study visits program with a focus on observation of the activities of cooperatives and social institutions was held in Thailand from 3rd to 9th July 2012 in collaboration with the Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT) - a member organization of ICA.

Part-II: Training Course in Japan

Part-II of the Training Course, including field study visits, was held in Japan for 26 days (10th July to 4th August 2012). The Training Course was conducted by and located at IDACA. Some of the key subjects covered at IDACA were:

- *Development of Agricultural Cooperatives in Japan;*
- *Women's Associations of Japanese Agricultural Cooperatives;*
- *Rural Women's Entrepreneurship (marketing and local agro-processing);*
- *Women's Participation in the Rural Development;*
- *Finalization and Presentation of Action Plans; and*
- *Reporting and Evaluation.*

Financial Support

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries [MAFF] of the Government of Japan contributed funds to the 1st Training Course on "Revitalization of Local Community by Rural Women" which was followed by a grant for its implementation. The ICA is highly appreciative of the contribution made and grateful to the Government of Japan for this gesture.

Acknowledgements

In the implementation of the 2nd Training Course, the ICA has received full support and cooperation from the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives (JA-ZENCHU); Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries [MAFF] of the Government of Japan; Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia [IDACA] in Japan; Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT) and other ICA member-organisations in the Region. The ICA is grateful to its member-organisations for their support.

Administrative Arrangements

Mr. K. Sethu Madhavan, Manager-Planning & Membership, ICA-AP, was responsible for the conduct of the 2nd Training Course. The entire Training Course was coordinated and implemented by him for its full duration, under the direction of the ICA Regional Director for Asia and Pacific.

Part-II of the training program held in Japan at IDACA was conducted under the direction and guidance of Mr. Keiji Hiraoka, Executive Director of IDACA. Ms. Eiko Oshita of Training Department was designated by the IDACA as the Course Coordinator for this part.

Summary of the Time Table

The following was the summary of the time table:

<i>Home Country Assignments (HCAs)</i>	:	<i>26th June to 2nd July 2012</i>
<i>Arrival of Participants in Bangkok</i>	:	<i>3rd July</i>
<i>Part-I: Field Study Visits in Thailand</i>	:	<i>4th to 9th July</i>
<i>Arrival of Participants in Narita-Japan</i>	:	<i>10th July</i>
<i>Part-II: Training Course in Japan-IDACA</i>	:	<i>11th July to 3rd August</i>
<i>Departure of Participants from Japan</i>	:	<i>4th August</i>

SECTION-II

Inauguration of Part-I of the Training Course in Thailand

The inauguration of Part-I of the 2nd Training Course on “Revitalization of Local Community by Rural Women” was held in the forenoon of 4th July at the premises of Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT). The inaugural session was attended by Dr. Weera Wongsan, 2nd Vice Chairman of CLT; Dr. Suwichai Suparanon, Executive Director of CLT; Mr. Phanuwat Wanraway, Chief of International Affairs Department of CLT; Mr. K. Sethu Madhavan, Manager-Planning & Membership/Program Coordinator, ICA-AP and a number of CLT officers and staff.

Dr. Weera welcomed the participants and the guests on behalf of CLT. He said that the CLT has the honour to organize such an international training program in Thailand. He said that the CLT is intensely involved in the promotion of revitalization of local community which is the theme of the training course.

He also invited all the participants to join the IYC-2012 and 90th International Cooperative Day Celebration at the premises of CLT on 6th July to be inaugurated by the Hon’ble Minister for Agriculture and Cooperatives, Government of Thailand and the regional conference on “Cooperative Transformation into the Era of ASEAN Economic Community (AEC).

Finally, he wished the 14 participants a comfortable stay and meaningful visits in Thailand. He also conveyed his appreciation to the women groups and the cooperatives that the participants will be visiting during their stay in Thailand. He further said that, “I sincerely wish that this part of the training course can inspire all participants to work towards poverty reduction and rural development and encourage you to actualize the IYC slogan - Cooperative Enterprises Build a Better World”.

Mr. Sethu Madhavan welcomed all the distinguished guests and the participants to the inaugural session. He expressed the gratitude of the ICA to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Government of Japan, for their continued financial support to the program and IDACA for its active collaboration in the implementation of the training program. He also expressed the gratitude of ICA-AP to CLT for making all arrangements for the field visits in Thailand. He also mentioned about some basic discipline to be maintained throughout the training course.

After the inauguration, a presentation on the Cooperative Movement of Thailand was made by Dr. Asanee Ratanamalai, Director of Rasami International School, for the benefit of the participants.

Cooperatives in Thailand are vertically organized in a three-tier system; primary cooperatives at district level and federations at provincial and national level. The primary cooperative consists of individual members while members of provincial and national federations are cooperatives. The members elect the board of directors through the general meeting with maximum number of 15 persons for cooperative development policies formulation. The board of directors, then, appoints a manager and staff to run the cooperative business.

Opening of the Training Course at CLT, Thailand



Study Visits in Thailand







Five or more cooperatives at primary or provincial level can form a provincial or national federation together to undertake joint activities on behalf of their affiliations such as processing and trading of agricultural products.

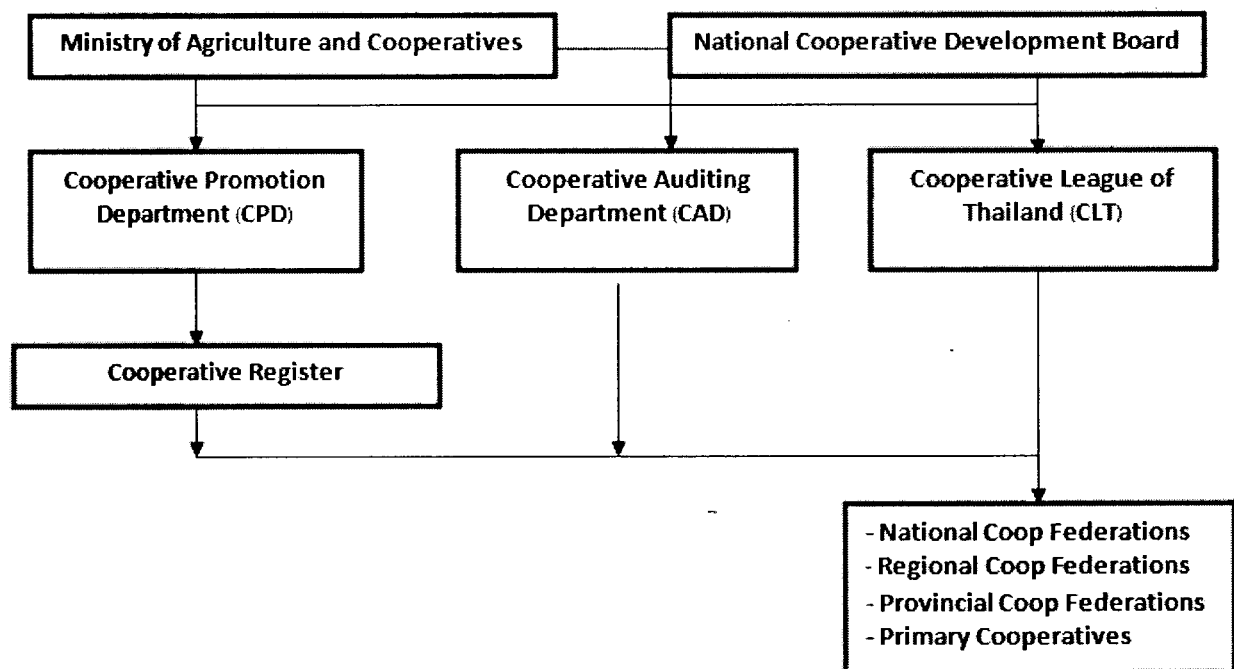
At national level, there is the Agricultural Cooperative Federation of Thailand of which all 76 provincial agricultural cooperative federations are affiliated. There are also the Sugarcane Growers Cooperative Federation of Thailand, Swine Raisers Cooperative Federation of Thailand, Dairy Cooperative Federation of Thailand and Onion Growers Cooperative Federation of Thailand. Thrift and Credit Cooperatives and Consumer Cooperatives are affiliated to a national federation of their own.

All types of cooperatives at all levels, according to the Cooperative Act, A.D. 1999, have to implicitly be affiliated to the Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT). The CLT is functioning as an apex body of the whole cooperative movement. It does not run as a business enterprise, but acts as a facilitator, coordinator and provides educational support in the promotion of all cooperative progress.

At present, the cooperatives in Thailand are officially categorized into seven types, namely:

1. Agricultural Cooperatives
2. Land Settlement Cooperatives
3. Fisheries Cooperatives
4. Consumer Cooperatives
5. Thrift and Credit Cooperatives
6. Service Cooperatives
7. Credit Union Cooperatives

Relationship of Co-operative Organizations in Thailand



SECTION-III

Field Study Visits in Thailand

The field study visits were arranged from 4th to 7th July 2012 in and around Bangkok by the Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT).

The participants visited the following cooperatives in Thailand to get an opportunity to meet some of the progressive women members and observe their participation in the business operations of their agricultural cooperatives.

Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT)

The Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT) was established according to the Cooperative Act (Cooperative Law) on 9th June 1968. It is a non-profit organization functioning as the national apex body of the cooperative movement in Thailand. All cooperatives registered under the Cooperative Act will be automatically affiliated to the CLT.

The main functions of CLT are: (a) Promote cooperative ideology and principles; (b) Provide technical assistance, training and education; (c) Promote business, trading, industry, and services of all cooperatives; (d) Strengthen cooperative networking and relationship locally and internationally; (e) Protect cooperative members' interests and benefits; and (f) Provide cooperation with the government concerned in promotion of cooperatives for genuine and real benefits to cooperatives in general.

Resources and Facilities

1. CLT Training Center with broad services of training, conferences, seminars, meetings, parties, food & beverage, accommodation up to 69 twin sharing rooms serviced to both members and non-members,
2. Publications/Magazines/Newsletters/TV Program and cooperative texts,
3. Training programs and consultations concerning cooperative laws and information,
4. Cooperative Museum and Library,
5. Arrangement for good relationship with cooperative organizations or international cooperative organizations.

Current Number of Cooperatives and Membership Classified by Types

No.	Types of Cooperatives	Number of Cooperatives	
		Cooperatives	Percentage
	Agricultural Cooperatives Sector		
1	Agricultural Cooperatives	4,361	55.60
2	Fisheries Cooperatives	101	1.31
3	Land Settlement Cooperatives	96	1.25
	Non-Agricultural Cooperatives Sector		
4	Saving and Credit Cooperatives	1,452	3.73
5	Consumer Cooperatives	275	13.66
6	Service Cooperatives	1,111	17.82
7	Credit Union Cooperatives	441	6.64
	Total	7,837	100.00

Cooperative Promotion Department

In 1915, a year before the first cooperative was introduced to Thailand the Cooperative Section was established under the Ministry of Finance responsible for cooperative promotion. With an increasing role of cooperatives in the Thai economy, the Cooperative Section was transformed to be Cooperative Department under the Ministry of Commerce in 1920, thus becoming the Ministry of Cooperatives in 1952. The reorganization of the government agencies in 1963 caused the abolishment of Ministry of Cooperatives and the establishment of Ministry of National Development in substitution. Under the new Ministry, there were three newly established departments responsible for all previous cooperative duties as follows - Land Cooperative Department, Cooperative Auditing Department and Trade and Finance Cooperative Department.

Again in 1972, the Ministry of National Development was abolished and replaced by the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives. All cooperative works, except duties under the Cooperative Auditing Department, were merged together under the new department named Cooperative Promotion Department (CPD) and attached to the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives.

In 2002, the internal reorganization of Cooperative Promotion Department took place according to the Regulations of Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives. It resulted in the changes of roles, duties and responsibilities.

Vision: To be the key organization aiming at developing cooperative system to be the main force in developing the country towards a pleasant society.

Mission: (1) to create values and push forward the cooperative system to get involved in establishment of pleasant society based on sufficiency economy philosophy; (2) to strengthen cooperatives and farmer groups, equip them with good governance, being a learning organization, and providing services for members' satisfaction; (3) to encourage cooperatives and farmer groups to carry on businesses with high quality and fair play and to build up the networks among various stakeholders subject to a legal framework; (4) to promote the cooperative and farmer group participation with communities in social and environmental development activity; (5) to improve the personnel cooperation and participation in management and business operation on self-reliance and mutual help basis; (6) to improve the public administrative system and the Cooperative Promotion Department officer competencies through the good governance principles; and (7) to accelerate the land and promote occupation in cooperative settlement areas.

The CPD is responsible for promoting and disseminating the cooperative ideology, principles and methods to cooperative personnel, farmer groups and the public, promoting, supporting and strengthening the cooperative system, improving cooperatives' learning process to increase the capacity of business management as well as the efficiency of their operation, and encouraging cooperatives to upgrade the business linkages to international levels for better living quality of cooperatives members and socio-economic aspects.

The administration of CPD is divided into 2 parts - Central and Provincial ones. Central Administration, which is located in Bangkok, consists of 3 divisions, 1 center and 7 offices. Provincial Administration comprises 75 Provincial Cooperative Offices.

Credit Union League of Thailand (CULT)

History

- In 1965 first Credit Union was established under the name "Soon Klang Thewa Credit Union".
- In 1966 the Catholic Council for Social Development which sponsored credit union organizing and extension approved to establish the Committee of Credit Union in Thailand and responsible for all credit union promotion.
- In 1969 the Credit Union Center of Thailand was established. Its office was in the same building of Soon Klang Thewa Association and its function was to promote organization of credit union chapter in each region that could organize national organization.
- In 1970 the Credit Union Center of Thailand became the associate member of the Asian Confederation of Credit Unions (ACCU).
- In 1971 the representatives from 60 credit unions all over Thailand attended the meeting at Xavier hall in Bangkok, to organize the Credit Union Nation Federation of Thailand or CUNAFT. The Executive Board was selected from the representatives attended.
- In 1973, the Credit Union Center of Thailand was recognized as regular member by ACCU.
- In 1974 the CUNAFT changed its name to the Credit Union League of Thailand Ltd. (CULT). Loan Protection and Life Saving Program from CUNA Mutual were launched in Thailand.
- In 1977 MISEREOR, one of donor agencies in Germany granted the fund for CULT Building. That was the nation league's first office and training center located at Ramkhamhaeng Road, Bangkok.
- In 1978 CULT office was moved from Soon Klang Thewa to new home.
- In 1979 the Credit Union movement in Thailand was legally accepted by the government and registered under the Cooperatives Law and supervised by the Cooperative Promotion Department, the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives.

Vision: Financial institution for excellent one-stop service based on members' needs.

Mission: (a) To develop human resource as a professional; (b) To develop management system in an efficient way; and (c) To develop an excellent one-stop service based on members' needs.

Objectives: (a) Encourage Credit Union members to save; (b) Provide fund and credit services for livelihood and occupational development; (c) Procure raw materials, joint purchasing and selling, supply consuming or processing products and services of members; (d) Coordinate with cooperatives, national federations, Cooperative League of Thailand, community organization, private sector and government agencies to promote and develop cooperatives' businesses; and (e) Enhance knowledge and develop living standard of members and communities as well.

Funding Resources: Shares from affiliated members; Bonding Loan; Deposit from individual credit union and other cooperatives; Loan, Promissory Note and Bond; Reserve and other fund; and Donations.

Nong Jok Agricultural Cooperative Limited

The population of Nong Jok district is only 300,000 and most of them are farmers. Twenty-five saving credit cooperatives were established in Nong Jok district area by Cooperative Promotion Department. This aimed to provide a financial source for their members so that they could get some loans to pay debt, redeem their lands and to invest in their agricultural activities. Afterwards, in 1968 the government enacted the cooperatives act 1968 and declared that all small savings credit cooperatives had to be merged to form a bigger enterprise in district level so that the cooperative could set proper businesses to comprehensively serve its members. As a result, on 1st August 1969 the new cooperative was established and named as "Nong Jok Agricultural Cooperative Limited".

Nong Jok Agricultural Cooperative Limited has been performing since 19th October 1969. It has been gradually growing in size. At the beginning, before having its own office, the cooperative just relied on the National Housing Authority as its temporary office. At the early time, it sold agricultural equipment and general supplies to its members and general people. The members increasingly used services of the cooperative so the area seemed too small at that time. Consequently, board of directors agreed to buy a new spacious office with the price of 488,673.50 baht which has been used until now.

It can be said that Nong Jok Agricultural Cooperative has consistently followed the ancestor's will. All 42 years Nong Jok Agricultural Cooperative gained sufficient experience to continuously develop itself to walk forward. Now it is the reliable financial institution which serves its members and general people.

Nong Jok Agricultural Cooperative Limited provides variety of businesses to its members and general people. These are savings, loans, a petrol station, agricultural products purchasing, and a central agricultural market. Moreover, it also creates other kinds of services such as a radio station, rental conference rooms and mass media service. It has dedicated itself to strengthen Thai cooperative network through community services.

The cooperative has got 15 board of directors out of which one is a woman. It has got 1,980 members and 30 staff members are working in the cooperative. It has got two types of savings - regular savings with an interest rate of 3% and fixed savings with an interest rate of 5% per year. The payment of income tax is exempted for the cooperatives in Thailand. The cooperative has got two types of loans - short-term loan for one year and mid-term loan for three years and both the loans carry an interest rate of 10 per cent per year.

The cooperative is also doing an apartment service with 54 rooms which can be used by members and non-members. At the moment, most of the rooms are used by students staying in this area.

Kam Lang Jai Group

After Bird Flu crisis in Thailand in 2004, Mrs Sudjai was one of those who were affected by the crisis. Her butcher's shop could not be continued with poor selling. Finally, she lost her job.

Being jobless made her create new job at home that was making Thai dessert from coconut which was abundant in her area. The idea that any part of coconut should not be wasted inspired her to make use of coconut shell. At first, she began to make a tea pot cover. After she had trialed for a while, her attempt was successful. Until 2005, she could form people in the area who were free from their main jobs. They produced varieties of products from coconuts such as tea set, tea pot cover, saving box, etc. Now their products are very well-known and they are always invited to join a lot of local products exhibitions. The remarkable idea of 'zero waste' of their products brings pride to the group.

Members of the Group: There are 15 members (10 women and 5 men) who all live in the area. Most of them are farmers and they come to join the group when they are free from their main jobs. Women would be responsible for making coconut desert. At the same time, men will produce coconut products because it needs physical strength.

The most outstanding product of the Group is tea pot cover. Other products are watch, saving box, flower holder, tissue box, toothpick box, lighter cover, jar, vase, and desert.

Phothong Agricultural Cooperative Limited

Phothong Agricultural Cooperative Limited was established by merging of three cooperatives, namely, Land Settlement Cooperative Limited, Phothong Rice Supply Cooperative Limited, and Phothong Fund Mobilization Cooperative Limited. It was legally registered on 1st May 1985 with a group of 83 people and an inception fund of 33,900 baht. At present, the cooperative has 4,911 members and 343,775,452 baht as share capital.

The assets of the cooperative are as follows: A two floor building; a rice central market (branch 1) which spreads out about 7.6 acres including 3.6 acres of rice drying area; a computerized weighing apparatus with capacity of 40 tons; two paddy barns and three wheel loaders; rice central market (branch 2) which spreads out about 6 acres including 1.6 acres rice drying area,; a computerized weighing apparatus with capacity of 4 tons and two paddy barns; petrol station located in rice central market (branch 2); and a two floor building in rice central market.

The cooperative has promoted Bang Jhao Cha Women Group whose members are from women in Phothong area and also the members of the cooperative. Phothong Agricultural Cooperative had encouraged the group to produce bamboo products such as basketry bags, baskets and cone-shaped covers. Until now the products of the group has become well-known and hold a good market.

Bang Jhao Cha Women Group

Bang Jhao Cha Women Group was established in 1996 and is located in Phothong district in which its local people are skillful in weaving especially bamboo basketry. Formerly, people produced goods just for their own utilization, until Mrs. Renoo Thong-ngam, a local woman who is proficient in bamboo basketry weaving had the idea to gather local skillful people. It was then that Bang Jhao Cha Women Group was formed. The main objectives of the group are to conserve the local skills and to create jobs for housewives in the district. The group continuously develops its products until now they become well-known and can be sold in both domestic and international market. The most outstanding product is Bamboo Basketry Bag. The other products are basket, cone-shaped cover, etc. The raw materials used are bamboo, natural and chemical pigment.

In the beginning, there were 15 members only. Now there are 150 members who are mostly housewives. They come to join the group when they are free from their household work. On an average one member earns 3,000 to 5,000 Baht per month. The members are paid as per the number of pieces produced by them.

At the initial stage the Cooperative Promotion Department gave a subsidy of 40,000 Baht to the Group. The Group takes 10 per cent to meet the charges of electricity, water, etc.

Baan Dhammakul Handicraft Group

Baan Dhammakul Handicraft Group belongs to Meung Suphan Buri Agricultural Cooperative Limited. The Group applies the pattern of mural painting to the art of utensils which can create the harmony of modern goods and local wisdom. At the same times, the Group is able to raise awareness of young people in the area to protect and conserve local culture and wisdom. Also, more income can be generated to members and community.

The Group was established by Mr. Nukul Pomsakul on 20th September 2001 in Dhammakul community where abounds in beautiful temples. He has been living in Dhammakul Community since he was born. After graduation from Suphan Buri College of Fine Art, he came up with an idea of how to bring out the art of mural painting in the community for public and to raise local people's awareness of their local art.

Nowadays, the Group continuously develops itself and creates new products. Consequently, it was awarded as the best innovative product at the provincial level which led the community to win the best Handicraft Community Award in 2003.

Most members are farmers who lack of jobs during off-season farming. The Group works together according to division of labour and also each member gets paid by its own ability. At present there are 31 members who approximately receive 3,000 Baht per month.

The most outstanding product is pottery products. The raw materials used are clay, palm leaf, water hyacinth. The other products made are wooden products and palm leaf products. The items are sold in domestic and international markets.

Rice Mill

The rice mill of Meung Suphan Buri Agricultural Cooperative was constructed in 1982. This is the biggest traditional rice mill in Thailand. The entire mill runs on stream and not on electricity. Its total area is 6,800 square meters. The total working capital was 30 million Baht. The milling capacity per day is 100 tons. The production of paddy in six months was 7,500 tons. Normally 6,000 farmers bring their paddy to the rice mill. The net profit from the rice mill for 2011 was 5.5 million Baht. 19 persons are working for the rice mill. The cooperative has also got agricultural central market, gas station and dairy farm. The net profit of the cooperative for 2011 was 20 million Baht.

SECTION-IV

Inauguration of Part-II of the Training Course in Japan

The inaugural session of Part-II of the Training Course was held on 11th July 2012 in the Conference Hall of IDACA. Keiji Hiraoka, Executive Director of the Institute for Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA) and Mr. K. Sethu Madhavan, Manager-Planning & Membership, ICA-AP addressed the inaugural session. Mr. Hiroshi Suzuki, Manager (General Affairs Department) and other senior officers of IDACA were also present.

Welcoming Mr. Hiraoka and other senior officers of IDACA, **Mr. Sethu Madhavan** congratulated the participants for successfully completing the Part-I of the training course in Thailand and for coming to attend the Part-II of the training course in Japan. He conveyed the sincere gratitude of the ICA to MAFF, Government of Japan, for their valuable financial support for the development of women's activities in Asia. He mentioned about the longstanding collaboration between ICA, JA-ZENCHU and IDACA. He also spoke about ICA and the UN International Year of Cooperatives-2012.

Mr. Hiraoka extended a warm welcome to all the participants to Japan on behalf of IDACA. He extended his sincere appreciation to Mr. Sethu Madhavan of ICA-AP for successfully handling the training course. He said that this project got materialised due to unified cooperation and support of MAFF and JA ZENCHU. He further said that the women's training course was started in 1991 and going on for the last 20 years with the financial support of MAFF and from last year onwards a new phase has started with emphasis on strong Action Plan by the participants.

He extended his deep appreciation to the cooperatives for the assistance provided for the 11th March earthquake and tsunami and said that the reconstruction work is going on well. He also said that the participants will have a chance to visit Fukushima Prefecture for study visits where they can have a view of the actual situation.

He said that IDACA was established in 1963 with funds contributed by all Japanese agricultural cooperatives. More than 49 years history of IDACA, around 5,600 participants, mainly from Asia, have been trained from 112 countries.

He hoped that the training course will be useful to the participants. He said that during the stay of the participants at IDACA, there would be exchange of experience and knowledge. He hoped that the participants would enjoy the life and a comfortable and fruitful stay at IDACA.

Inauguration of the Training Course at IDACA



Study Visits in Japan





Conclusion of the Course at IDACA



SECTION-V

Lectures at IDACA

The following lectures were delivered by the resource persons at IDACA in Tokyo during the training course.

Society, Economy and Culture in Japan

by Ms. Eiko Oshita, Program Coordinator, IDACA

Under this topic, brief basic information of Japan was given. She also explained about the following overall characteristics of Japan - land and climate; its four major islands (Kyushu, Shikoku, Honshu and Hokkaido); its four distinct seasons (spring, summer, autumn and winter); its population (127 million); its density; literacy rate and language; laws for women's rights; labour force; its economy after World War-II; policies; agriculture; housing; education system; religion; clothing; cuisine; household economy; living conditions and environment; and social security system.

Organization and Business Activities of JA (Japan Agricultural Coops)

by Mr. Yukio Abe, Senior Coordinator, IDACA

Under this topic, the resource person explained about the different stages of development of agricultural cooperatives in Japan. He covered the following subjects - characteristics of cooperatives; what is agricultural cooperative; unique features of agricultural cooperatives in Japan; structure of agricultural cooperatives; trends of age formation of members of JA; various types of agricultural cooperatives; JA group organisations; farm guidance activities; better living guidance; diversified and unique marketing methods; marketing business system of JA; and facilities of JA (A coop store, gasoline station, country elevator, collection and shipment centre, funeral ceremony halls, etc.). He also gave an account of salient features and some relevant reasons for the fast development of agricultural cooperatives and agriculture in Japan and the problems being faced by agricultural cooperatives at the moment. Moreover, he shed a light on how the cooperatives can be run and strengthened effectively and also on the main factors responsible for the development of cooperatives citing some examples of the Philippines, India and Thailand cooperatives.

Organization and Activities of JA Women's Association

by Ms. Ariko Hotta, Better Living Promotion Department of JA ZENCHU

The resource person explained the objectives of the JA Women's Association which were: (a) Cooperate with each other to protect women's rights and improve social and economical status of rural women; (b) Promote participation of women in JA's activities so as to reflect the voices of women; and (c) Create comfortable local communities with affluence, keep close contact with each other and promote mutual help through cooperative activities involving women. She also covered the following subjects - history of JA women's association; significance of activities of JA women's association; present activities of JA women's associations; problems and action of JA women's associations; and activities for supporting disaster stricken area.

Employment Creation via Women's Entrepreneurial Activities and Livelihood Improvement
by Ms. Kazuko Kano, President, Pan-Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association

The resource person explained about the definition of Rural Women's Entrepreneurial Activities - Rural women are main persons and are engaged in entrepreneurial activities in the fields of agriculture, fisheries and forestry by using mainly local materials and responsible for its management and additional income generation. She explained about six patterns of entrepreneurial activities (agricultural production including school lunch; food processing; non-food processing; distribution, sales; exchange between rural and urban areas, green tourism, agricultural experience and services). She covered about the brief history of livelihood improvement; establishment of Home Life Improvement Extension Service (HLIES); and development of HLIES through the period of high economic growth. She further explained that the Ministry of Agriculture is pursuing the diversification of the management of agriculture, forestry and fishery sectors by promoting the integration of production, processing and marketing - 6th industries (rokuji-ka). She also explained through case studies about the rural community empowerment through exploring local resources.

Ways to Establish Direct Sales Shop by JA Women's Association in Japan and Case Study on Entrepreneurial Activities by Rural Women in Thailand
by Ms. Tetsu Takahashi, Director, JA Iwate Hanamaki.

Under this topic, the resource person covered the following: (a) The Way to Establish Direct Sales Shop by JA Women's Association (present situation of JA Iwate Hanamaki; activities of JA Hanamaki women's association; details of establishment of direct sales shop; introduction of main direct sales shops; and achievements brought to farmers by direct sales business); and (b) Case Study of Women's Entrepreneurial Activities by Rural Women in Thailand (community leader development project for agricultural cooperatives; better living activities; marketing support for vocational group; and introduction of different groups - food processing; textiles, dyeing; handicrafts; and herb products). She also made a brief presentation about the great earthquake and tsunami that hit Iwate Prefecture on 11th March 2011 and the relief activities undertaken by JAs and the Women Associations in Japan.

Assertive Training for Smooth Human Communication
by Ms. Shiomi Morita, Executive Director, Assertive Japan

Under this topic, the resource person explained about the usefulness of the assertiveness. She said assertiveness is a behaviour which helps us to communicate clearly and confidently our needs, wants and feelings to other people without abusing in any way their human rights. Assertiveness consists of three parts - what we communicate; how we communicate; and on which basis we communicate. She said that there are six basic assertiveness techniques - be specific (avoid generalisation); keep to the point; self-disclosure (say how you feel); understand the other person's feelings; offer a compromise (try to find the best solution); and be aware of your body language. She also said that there are 12 rights mentioned in the book "A Woman in Your Own Right" written by Anne Dickson in 1980. Interesting and useful role plays were also performed by the participants at the end.

What is Marketing and Marketing of One Village One Product (OVOP)
by Ms. Kaz Yamamoto, President, Japan Agricultural Marketing Institute

The resource person tried to explain about "What is Marketing and Marketing of One Village One Product (OVOP)". The definition of OVOP is development of value (preciousness) based on local available resources by local people. She further explained about the selling concept and the marketing concept; achievements of OVOP in Oita prefecture where it got initiated first; outcome from OVOP in Japan; 3 principles of OVOP (local yet global; self-reliance and creativity; and human resource development); how to make profit from OVOP; branding under OVOP; entrepreneurial activities by Kaizen groups as the core of OVOP; international cooperation scheme for OVOP campaign; 6 keys for the success of OVOP (people's awareness, exploring the unrealized potential of each village, continuous trials and enduring efforts, seeking higher added-value in products, developing markets and distribution channels, and nurturing people's talents); how to establish collaboration between LDC and Japan; 4 steps towards the goal of the OVOP campaign (people's awareness in LDC, introducing relevant policies and nurturing talented people of LDC, finding, selecting and improving products to create 'indigenous treasures', and marketing nationwide/to the world); and some examples of OVOP products in Japan and overseas.

SECTION-VI

Field Study Visits in Japan

During Part-II of the Training Course in Japan, study visits were arranged in Fukushima Prefecture. The participants visited Fukushima Prefecture from 24th to 26th July to get them acquainted with the organizational structure and business activities of prefectural and primary level agricultural cooperatives, and also to observe the organization and functioning of women's associations. The participants were briefed about the outline of Fukushima Prefecture and visited the following institutions during their study visits.

Fukushima Prefecture

Fukushima Prefecture is located in the Tohoku region of Honshu Island. It was established in 1876 through the amalgamation of three other prefectures. It is composed of 10 main cities and 80 townships and villages. The capital of the prefecture is Fukushima city. The total area of the Prefecture is 5,321.47 square miles (3rd rank). The total population as of 2010 was 2.029 million (17th rank) and the density is 154 persons per square kilometer. It has got 13 districts and 59 municipalities. It lies within 200 kilometers from Tokyo. Because of its nearness to Tokyo and as a result of an upgraded rapid transportation network, Fukushima Prefecture is seeing a remarkable growth in the number of corporations established.

The coastal region traditionally specializes in fishing and seafood industries, and is notable for its electric and particularly nuclear power-generating industry, while the upland regions are more focused on agriculture. As of March 2011, the prefecture produced 20.6% of Japan's peaches and 8.7% of cucumbers. The capital region has a strong industry in software and electronics.

The 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, the tsunami that followed, and the Fukushima-1 Nuclear Power Plant disaster caused significant damage to the prefecture.

Agriculture in Fukushima Prefecture

Fukushima Prefecture is Japan's 4th largest farmland area. Because of the favourable climate, many of the agricultural products grown in Japan, including rice, are produced in Fukushima. The prefecture ranks among the top producers of fruits (peaches, apples and pears - thus the prefecture is known as the kingdom of fruits in Japan); vegetables (tomato and cucumber); as well as tobacco and raw silk. Livestock farming is also active. The Prefecture seeks to ensure the continuing productivity of its agricultural and fishery industries at the same time working to conserve the natural environment.

Although agriculture remains the prefecture's major industry, the number of people engaged in full-time farming decreases every year. The rise in the number of elderly farmers and increasing competition among agricultural producers poses a serious problem. To counteract these problems, the prefecture is striving to improve farming techniques in order to develop more high quality agricultural products. It is also making efforts to grow new products by using such leading-edge technologies as biotechnology and to develop an advanced information system for agriculture.

Fukushima's agriculture largely differs according to regions, due to the Prefecture's three region's distinct geographical and climatic features.

Hama-dori region is the site of the prefecture's fishing and seafood processing industry. Most of the fishing is done offshore, while in certain areas shellfish, salmon and seaweed are cultivated. Today, the region actively promotes resource control fishery which emphasizes the incubation and cultivation of fish and shellfish.

The climate in Naka-dori region is suitable for fruits and vegetables. Naka-dori's fruits growers have become one of the nation's major fruits producers. Vegetables are grown in the southern part of the region and after the opening of Fukushima airport makes direct links possible between producers and markets throughout the nation

The fertile Aizu Basin is the prefecture's major granary. In the surrounding mountains, with their high altitude and cold climate, vegetables and flowers are cultivated.

The major crops grown in Fukushima Prefecture are rice, peach, pear, apple, persimmon, string bean, garden peas, cucumber, broccoli, and tomato.

JA Fukushima Prefectural Union

JA Fukushima Prefectural Union acts as a spokesman and is a supervisory organization at the prefectural level. It was established in December 1952 to promote development of JA in the prefecture based on the Agricultural Cooperative Law. Its members are currently 17 primary agricultural cooperatives (JAs) in the prefecture. The main activities of the Union are farm guidance and better living activities; management guidance (auditing); agricultural policy legislative activities (lobbying); planning and promoting computer system (establishment of efficient information system and introduction of information technology which are both supportive for the renovation of JAs); public relations activities (provide more accurate information which is useful in farm management and daily life); and education activities (foster personnel who shoulder future JA Group).

As of February 2009, it has got a total of 248,812 members (151,548 regular and 97,794 associate). Over the last few years, the number of regular members has been downward trends, while the number of associate members is on the increase as in other prefectures. Its business turnovers are as follows: savings-1,243.14 billion yen; loans-368.84 billion yen; long-term mutual insurance-9,239.74 billion yen; marketing-88.34 billion yen; and purchasing-60.68 billion yen. The surplus for the last year stood at 3.6 billion yen. The Union has got an elected board consisting of 19 directors from the 17 JAs mentioned above.

Fukushima Prefectural Council of JA Women's Association

The establishment of women's associations started since 1947 in Japan. Its main objective during 1960-1970 was to improve the living standard of rural women. It can be said that the relationship between the JA and the Women's Association is complementary to each other.

The Fukushima Prefectural Council of JA Women's Association was established in December 1952 based on connection and cooperation of each woman's association with the purpose of protecting women's rights, improving their social and economic status, and creating a comfortable local community with good rapport and mutual aid through cooperative activities. It is a prefectural level organization consisting of 17 JA women's associations in the prefecture

with 18,392 members in 2010. However, the Association has got 14,522 members now. Because due to last year's earthquake and the ensuing nuclear power plant meltdown about 3,000 members have suspended their activities. Members of each woman's association consist of housewives of JA member households and residents in the community. The main roles of the organization are enlightenment and consultation for solidarity and interchange among JA women's associations. On top of this, it plays a very important role in reinvigorating the business and operation of JAs. The better living advisors take care of women's association's activities as secretariat for their activities.

Each woman's association implements various group activities such as education on food and agriculture; agricultural products processing; direct sales shop; joint purchasing and cultural activities.

One of the great causes for the Association is the progress of aging of its members. Therefore, it has established a special group (fresh Ms. Group) or young wives groups to attract new members below 45 years.

Nme-be Farmers' Market

With the aging of farmers increasing in the area, they have difficulty in engaging fully in joint marketing business requiring bulk products demanded in the wholesale market, JA embarked on operation of the farmers' market intended for the elderly farmers and farming women to facilitate sale of even small volume of the products and meet a wide variety. They bring the products and can determine the prices by themselves, which is totally different from wholesale market-oriented business which adopts an auction system.

The Nme-be farmers' market under JA Dabe-Mirai was established in July 2010. It has got a total land area of 10,000 square meters and a floor area of 977 square meters. The total construction cost was 350 million which was borne solely by the JA. Although 690 farmers are registered with the farmers' market, but 250 farmers bring their produce on average daily. Around 500 customers visit the market daily. It has got a total of 21 part-time employees. The sales turnover in FY-2011 was 300 million yen and the target for 2012 is 400 million yen. The JA charges 20% of the sales as commission for using the facilities of the farmers' market. The market operates from 09:00 hours to 17:00 hours except 1-5 January. All the products at the farmers' market are insured by the JA out of the commission received.

The members bring their products on their own and display them in the market. When some products remain unsold, they either try to sell them off by reducing prices or bring them back to home. As mentioned above, the prices are to be decided by the members. They are responsible for ensuring the quality and safety of the products. The details regarding the relevant information of all members are registered with JA. The sales proceeds are instantly credited to farmers' account which they keep with their JA.

This kind of farmers market is now gaining its popularity in Japan from both consumers and producers as an emerging new sales outlet different from sales by conventional wholesale market system. There were 13,000 farmers' markets in Japan as of 2009 and all is linked directly with the prevalent concept of "local consumption from local production", a concept being promoted by MAFF. The main problem faced by the farmers' market is that all members not using its facility.

The Nakayoshi-Kai Group - one of the women's entrepreneur activities of JA Date-Mirai Women's Association - was established in January 2010 (6 months before the opening of the farmers' market) by a Group of 13 members in Nme-be farmers' market. However, it has now decreased to only 8 members working on a rotational basis. Despite the decrease of number of members, they could manage to operate effectively as they became adept in their work over the years. The literal meaning of Nme-be is delicious in local dialect. Its main food processing activities are side dishes and lunch boxes. The business of lunch boxes started in September 2010. The lunch boxes are prepared according to the order received from the nursing care homes. In future they hope to sell the lunch boxes to the nearby two towns.

The members bring their agricultural produce everyday and cook and sell the dishes at the market which is very popular among the local people. Their key word is "home-made" which distinguishes their products from the ones sold at super markets. The sales turnover in 2011 was 20 million yen. There is no surplus - just break even only.

JA Soma

The JA Soma has got a total of 20,991 members (15,968 regular and 5,023 associate) as of February 2010. Its main business turnovers as of February 2012 are as follows: share capital-3.2 billion yen; savings-91 billion yen; loans-28.6 billion yen; purchasing-4.4 billion yen; marketing-8.7 billion yen; ordinary profit-260 million yen; and current surplus-47 million yen. The JA has got 38 officials (full time-5 and part time-33) and 441 employees (regular staff-302 and part time staff-139).

The participants also had a precious opportunity to visit some of the tsunami (March 2011) affected areas of JA Soma where great damages to the agriculture land of members and their households were caused. The reconstruction work is underway smoothly, but it will take time. The participants were amazed at the fact that the recovery time made so fast on it that they got so impressed by the team work spirits of the Japanese people.

Day Care Center "Kirara" of JA Tamura

The JA Tamura has got a total of 15,749 members (9,626 regular and 6,123 associate) as of February 2012. Its main business turnovers as of February 2012 are as follows: savings-102.1 billion yen; loans-21.3 billion yen; long-term mutual insurance-569.1 billion yen; purchasing-4.5 billion yen; marketing-2.7 billion yen; and owned capital-6.2 billion yen. The JA has got 21 officials (full time-3 and part time-18) and 339 employees (regular staff-294 and part time staff-45).

The Day Care Center "Kirara" was established in 2005 by JA Tamura. The entire construction cost of the Center was borne by JA out of its own funds. The literal meaning of Kirara is 'brilliant' in local dialect. It aims to help the elderly to live in independence and also to create the community that guarantees a secured life to all the people. This facility could be used by anybody. In fact the day care system is a government run scheme and any entities including JA can embark on this activity. All the details are provided in the Nursing Care Act which came into force in 2001. This is heavily subsidized by the government in view of the arrival of ageing society in Japan. This nursing care insurance system is a public insured system whose

management entity is municipality. Insurers are divided into two categories, namely, those over 65 years old who need to get nursing care support and those whose age are from 40 to 65.

A total of 20 volunteers are working at the center. The volunteers are paid a nominal amount. This service is available for persons whose age is 65 and above. The center can accommodate a maximum of 40 persons to be divided into five categories as per the health condition of the persons. Large subsidy is provided to the insured persons depending of the magnitude of nursing care required. They are provided the following services: picking-up from homes and dropping back; physical exercises; bathing; lunch; rehabilitation training; and gardening, etc. The working hours of the Center are from 09:15 to 16:30 hours (Monday to Saturday). It is closed from 31st December to 3rd January every year. The insured person pays only 20% of the cost involved and the balance is met by the government. Sick people are not admitted in the center. A medical check-up is done at the center for the members once in a week.

There are two other centers in operation nearby. In the light of the fact that aged people have made a great contribution to the development of agriculture and rural areas, the center gives a priority to them in screening the candidates for the nursing care services. More diversified activities are being planned by the center on a small scale in future.

Farmers' Market "Hatakenbo" of JA Sukagawa

The JA Sukagawa Iwase has got a total of 10,744 members (7,364 regular and 3,380 associate) as of February 2012. Its main business turnovers as of February 2012 are as follows: share capital-2.9 billion yen; savings-63.5 billion yen; loans-15 billion yen; purchasing-1.6 billion yen; and marketing-4.3 billion yen. The JA has got 33 officials and 203 employees.

The Hatakenbo Farmers' Market was started in July 2003. It is operated by JA Agri Sukagawa affiliated cooperative company, but the running of the market is carried out on a self-financial basis. The total invested capital was 10 million yen. The entire amount was invested by JA Sukagawa Iwase. The able manager of the farmers market is deputed by the JA. The main businesses of the market are: direct sale of agricultural products; sale and repair of agricultural machinery; and delivery of food ingredients.

Around 750 farmers are registered as member of the market. However, as in the case of the previous Nme-be farmers' market, only 350 farmers constantly supply their products to the market. The farmers set the prices of their products by themselves and pay the commission (15% for fruits and vegetables and 20% for handicrafts) to the market out of their sale proceeds for using its facilities. The market is operated from 09:00 to 18:00 hours. The market is closed on 1st Wednesday of every month. 31st August of every year is celebrated as "vegetable day" in all over Japan.

The JA Agri Sukagawa affiliated cooperative company has got a total of 50 employees. Out of this, 30 employees work at the farmers market. On an average 300 farmers bring their produce to the market daily. Around 1,500 customers visit the market daily. The sales turnover for the year 2011 was 967 million yen.

The unique characters and success of this farmers' market are as follows: many events are held in a year to attract more customers; closer to the local community; over 1 billion yen turnover in 2006 which was number one in this prefecture; establishment of R&D team consisting of 23 presidents of different companies operating in the area for promotion of the local production for

local consumption campaign and various other initiatives for sales promotion; providing dietary education; and having an active and energetic manager with new ideas, most of all, his thinking of the best approaches led to the success of the farmers' market. His ultimate goal is to revitalize rural community with the farmers' market as the key station.

Shirakawa Kosei General Hospital

After the world war-II, multi-purpose cooperatives, which were permitted to conduct credit business under the Agricultural Cooperative Law (enacted in 1947), were organized throughout Japan. Fukushima Prefecture Welfare Federation of Agricultural Coops was born in 1948.

During the period of Industrial Cooperatives, farmers were tormented in poverty and sickness. So the cooperatives launched the campaign for improvement of rural health that developed into establishment of Shirakawa Kosei General Hospital or Shirakawa Cooperative General Hospital in 1944. At that time, the hospital had got an area of 1,650 square meters with 93 beds and was run with medical doctors invited from School of Medicine of Tohoku Imperial University.

At present the JA Fukushima Prefecture Welfare Federation is running six hospitals and it has got a total of 1,500 employees. For reference, the Japan's JAs are also running about 117 hospitals and 64 clinics as of March 2009.

Since its establishment in 1944, the Shirakawa Kosei General Hospital has played an important role for providing medical service in the areas covering southern part of Fukushima and northern part of Tochigi Prefectures. The main objective of the hospital is to promote health care to the rural people. For this purpose, mobile clinics equipped with same facilities are used.

The hospital moved to its present premises in 2007. At present 600 employees and 70 doctors are working in the hospital. The treatment is provided to all people irrespective of members or non-members at the hospital. However, the members enjoy 5-10 per cent discount compared to non-members. JA Shirakawa is also running a canteen in the hospital where the local JA products are served. The hospital is also running a nursing school (3 year course) for 30 persons per year. The hospital has got latest equipments like PET scan for detection of cancer at the early stage.

SECTION-VII

Concluding Session of the Training Course in Japan & Award of Certificates of Participation

The concluding session of the Training Course was held at IDACA on 3rd August 2011. The session was attended by Mr. Masahito Iwahana, Deputy Director, International Cooperation Division, International Affairs Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Government of Japan; Keiji Hiraoka, Executive Director of IDACA; Mr. K. Sethu Madhavan, Manager-Planning & Membership, ICA - Asia and Pacific; and other senior officers of IDACA.

In his address, **Mr. Sethu Madhavan** congratulated the participants for their cooperation; and IDACA for the successful completion of the Training Course. He also expressed the gratitude and appreciation of the ICA to the Japanese Government, especially MAFF (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) for the financial support extended in the conduct of this Training Course. He hoped that the MAFF will continue to support this training course in the future also since this course was very relevant for the women leaders of agricultural cooperatives in Asia. He requested the participants to make use of the experiences gained in Thailand and Japan and implement their action plans. He wished the participants a safe journey back home and a happy re-union with their families.

Addressing the session, **Mr. Iwahana** expressed hearty congratulations to the participants on successful completion of the training course. He expressed his gratitude on behalf of MAFF to ICA-AP and IDACA for conducting the course successfully. He was happy to find the participants hale and hearty in spite of different climate. He hoped that the experiences gained by the participants while in Thailand Japan would be useful upon their return to their home countries.

He further said "I think it was very hard for you mentally and physically to learn in Japan about the revitalization of local community by rural women, because of the differences from your home countries, such as, climate, foods, culture, observance and so on. I believe that your knowledge gained from this course will be the step leading to forward activities and your activities would also be a significant milestone of the poverty reduction or enhancement of rural women's business activities in your countries.

Now let me touch upon the action plan which each participant made in this training course. I hope your action plan will be implemented as much as possible in future. A few years from now, we will conduct a survey to inquire about the progress of implementation of your action plan. The result of the survey is very important for us to measure the outcome of the training course and to consider the future plan. So, if you are asked to cooperate in conducting the survey, please help us in a positive manner".

Mr. Hiraoka extended congratulations to the participants on successful completion of the training course. He said that in IDACA part of the course, efforts were made to introduce the activities of JA group; the agricultural cooperative movement of Japan and the women's associations. He further said "Education is fundamentally important for our cooperative movement. In addition, I was very impressed with the words of Mr. Murakami, Vice President of JA ZENCHU, the day before yesterday. Basically, education of cooperative movement is to enhance each other, that is

to say 'I teach you and your teach me' relationship. The relation between the teacher and student is not changeable in the education of cooperative movement. In other words, today I am a teacher, you are a student, tomorrow you will be a teacher, I will be a student. It means that the relationship among co-operators is equitable, fair and unique. I sincerely hope that you will work hard for the development of your organizations and revitalization of rural communities in your respective countries by applying what you gained in this training course".

He further requested the participants to make use of their experiences gained in Thailand and Japan to develop some institutional support for women and improve their rural life in their own countries.

The '**Certificate of Participation**' was awarded to the participants at the end of the concluding session by the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA).

Ms. Mariyam Simla (Maldives) spoke on behalf of all the participants. She expressed the participants' gratitude to the ICA and IDACA for organizing the training course from 3rd July to 4th August 2012 in Thailand and Japan. She specially thanked Mr. K. Sethu Madhavan of ICA-AP and Ms. Eiko Oshita of IDACA for excellently handling the course. The participants felt that the training course was very relevant for the women leaders of agricultural cooperatives in Asia and hence it should be continued. She also expressed the greatest appreciation of the participants to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Government of Japan for providing financial support for this Training Course. She hoped that the MAFF would continue to support this training program in the future also for the development of rural women in the developing countries.

She further said "We are grateful to all the lecturers and facilitators who have shared their knowledge and experiences with us. We have learned a lot from them. The lectures combined with study visits to Hachioji, Fukushima and Yamanashi prefectures had shown us that if we really try hard we can achieve anything. You can see that it has been a year after the tsunami and Japan is showing very fast recovery. It is as if nothing had happened. This shows the dedication of the Japanese people.

During the training course we have also learned why Japanese cooperatives are so successful and advanced compared to other countries. The significant role played by JA with the collaboration of government and farmers had made it such a success and is still thriving. JA is also a role model in promoting and enhancing the status of women in the country. Their efforts to initiate more women in managerial roles are noteworthy. During this training we have met a lot of such energetic and enthusiastic Japanese women leaders. Now we leave with a vast knowledge of experiences from Japan and Thailand and I assure you that we will be using this information to enhance the situation of the cooperatives in our countries".

The participants left Japan for their home countries on 4th August 2012, after completion of the Training Course.

SECTION-VIII

Evaluation Summary

Thirteen participants attending the training course had participated in the evaluation exercise and returned the Evaluation Forms, duly filled in. The Program Coordinator of ICA-AP compiled the results of the End of the Course Evaluation. Given below is a brief summary of the Evaluation.

Rating Pattern

5=Excellent, 4=Very Good, 3=Good, 2=Satisfactory, 1=Poor.

01	To what extent the Course meets the Objectives?	9	3	-	1	-
02	Relevance of this Program in your job.	5	4	4	-	-
03	Usefulness of this training in your future work.	6	7	-	-	-
04	Your overall impression about this program.	9	4	-	-	-
05	Your grading of the faculty of this program.	6	5	2	-	-
06	Your rating of the study visits in Thailand.	9	4	-	-	-
07	Your rating of the study visits in Japan.	9	3	1	-	-
08	Your rating of the administrative arrangements (boarding, lodging, etc.).	10	2	1	-	-
09	Are you satisfied with the leadership provided and the technical inputs made by the IDACA faculty members? (Explain briefly).	<p><i>All participants said "YES" – they are fully satisfied with the leadership provided and the technical inputs made by the IDACA faculty members and everything was perfect.</i></p>				
10	Please suggest changes/improvements, if any, desired in future programs. (Please give your free and frank suggestions).	<p><i>Most of the participants said that NO changes/improvements required. Four participants have not said anything.</i></p>				
11	Please suggest which topics should be added to this Program in future.	<p><i>Lecture on all activities of JA Farm management and Agro-processing</i></p>				

12 Please suggest which topics should be deleted from future Program.

All participants said that all topics covered are interesting and nothing should be deleted.

13 Please list below your major gains from this Program.

Japanese agricultural cooperative (JA) system

Women's Associations' activities in Japan

Multifarious business activities of JA

Mutual help among community

Education, planning and Team work

Day care center

Roadside station

Leadership development and communication

Concept of direct sales shops and roadside stations

Integrity, discipline, honesty, loyalty and punctuality of Japanese people

Local production for local consumption

Rural women enterprises and marketing of their products

Value addition through processing

Working spirit of Japanese people

14 Your general suggestions, opinions (on any aspect) and recommendations, if any.

Got lot of valuable information from this program and thanked ICA and IDACA

Facilities of IDACA are very good (room, food, lectures)

If possible, all participating countries should be given two seats

This is a very good program for women and hence it should be continued in future.

SECTION-IX

Program of the Training Course

3 rd July 2012		Arrival of participants in Bangkok
4 th July	FN	Orientation/Opening Ceremony/Presentation on Cooperative Movement of Thailand and CLT.
	AN	Visit to Cooperative Promotion Department (CPD)
5 th July	FN	Visit to Cooperative Union League of Thailand (CULT)
	AN	Visit to Nong Jok Agricultural Cooperative Limited Observation of the products produced by Kam Lang Jai Group from coconut.
6 th July	FN	Participate in the IYC-2012 and 90 th Cooperative Day Celebration at CLT.
7 th July	FN	Visit to Bang Jhao Cha Women's Group
	AN	Visit to Baan Dhammakul Handicrafts Group Visit to Rice Mill of Meung Suphan Buri Agricultural Cooperative
8 th July		Sunday: Sight-seeing in Bangkok
9 th July		Preparation for departure
10 th July		Departure for Tokyo Arrival of participants at IDACA
11 th July	FN	Orientation and Opening Ceremony
	AN	Japanese Society, Economy and Culture by Ms. Eiko Oshita, Program Coordinator, IDACA.
12 th July		Organization and Business Activities of JA (Japan Agricultural Coops) by Mr. Yukio, Senior Coordinator, IDACA
13 th July	FN	Organization and Activities of JA Women's Association by Ms. Ariko Hotta, Better Living Promotion Department of JA-ZENCHU
	AN	Visit to Road Side Station in Hachioji and Observation of Rural Women's Entrepreneurial Group Activities
14 th July		Saturday: Sight-seeing in Tokyo
15 th July		Sunday - Free

16 th July		Monday - National Holiday
17 th July		Employment Creation via Women's Entrepreneurial Activities and Livelihood Improvement by Ms. Kazuko Kano, President of Pan-Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association.
18 th July		Ways to Establish Direct Sales Shop by JA Women's Association in Japan and Case Study on Entrepreneurial Activities by Rural Women in Thailand by Ms. Tetsu Takahashi, Director, JA Iwate Hanamaki
19 th July		Presentation of draft Action Plan by the participants and Discussion
20 th July		Assertive Training for Smooth Human Communication by Ms. Shiom Morita, Executive Director, Assertive Japan.
21 st July		Saturday - Free
22 nd July		Sunday - Free
23 rd July		Move to Fukushima Prefecture
24 th July	FN	Visit to JA Fukushima Prefectural Union and Briefing on its Activities. Exchange meeting with members of JA Women's Association
	AN	Visit to Farmers Market "Nme-be" and observation of women's Entrepreneur activities (food processing)
25 th July	FN	Observation of Disaster-Stricken Areas (JA Soma)
	AN	Visit to Day Care Centre "Kirara" run by JA Tamura
26 th July	FN	Visit to Farmers' Market "Hatakenbo" of JA Sukagawa Visit to Shirakawa Kosei General Hospital
	AN	Move to Tokyo
27 th July	FN	Group Discussion on Study Visits to Saga Prefecture
	AN	Presentation of Group Reports
28 th July		Saturday - Free
29 th July		Sunday - Free
30 th July		What is Marketing and Marketing of One Village One Product (OVOP?) by Ms. Kaz Yamamoto, President, Japan Agricultural Marketing Institute.
31 st July		Visit to Women's Entrepreneurial Activities of Ms. Mitsumori in Yamanashi Prefecture.

1 st August	FN	Individual consultation with the participants regarding their Action Plans
	AN	Supplementary Lecture by Mr. Mitsuo Murakami, Vice President of JA-ZENCHU (Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives).
2 nd August	FN	Finalisation of Action Plan by the Participants
	FN	Presentation of Action Plan by Participants
3 rd August	FN	Presentation of Action Plan by Participants (continued)
	AN	Evaluation and Closing Ceremony
4 th August		Departure of Participants from Japan

FN Session : 09:30~12:00
AN Session : 13:30~16:00

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SECTION - XI

Action Plans Proposed by the Participants

In view of the experience gained by the participants through class room lectures, field study visits in Thailand and Japan, interaction among themselves and based upon their own work environment, the participants were able to develop detailed Action Plans which they would recommend to their organisations after their return to their home countries. The brief description of the Action Plans prepared by the participants is given below.

Name of Country	:	Cambodia
Name of the Participant	:	Ms. Heng Pidor and Ms. Chhieu Chhi Narath
Position	:	Vice Chief of Planning, Finance & Int'l Cooperation & Vice Chief of Human Resource Development, Department of Agricultural Extension
Name of Organization	:	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF).
Title of the Proposal	:	Strengthening the Women Group for Increasing Production of Basket in Sre Rean Village.
Target Group	:	20 Members in Group Sre Rean Village, Svay Chrum Commune, Mesang District, Prey Veng Province.
Implementing Agency	:	HRD Office of Department of Agricultural Extension in Collaboration with the PDA and PDoWA.
Duration of the Plan	:	1 year (November 2012 to October 2013)
Name of Country	:	India
Name of the Participant	:	Ms. Arti Bisaria
Position	:	Elected Director
Name of Organization	:	Astha Women Urban Cooperative Bank Limited
Title of the Proposal	:	Empowerment of Rural Women through Cooperatives in Rural Areas of Rajgarh District and Sehore District
Target Group	:	100 rural women - Rajgarh district and Sehore district
Implementing Agency	:	Astha Women Urban Cooperative Bank Limited
Duration of the Plan	:	2 years (January 2013 to December 2014)

Name of Country : **Laos**
Name of the Participant : Ms. Sisomphet Souvanthalisith and Ms. Panida Phommalisack
Position : Director for Advance of Women Division & Officer, Division for International Cooperation, Department of Planning
Name of Organization : Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF)
Title of the Proposal : Strengthening of Women Group of Vegetable Production (cabbage) in Paksong District, Champasack Province.
Target Group : Farmers Group Leaders in 4 Villages (Ban Nongmek, Nongthuem, Nonghine and Nongtuang in Paksong District, Champasack Province) - 115 persons.
Implementing Agency : Division for Advancement of Women (DAW), CAW/PAFO, DAFO and Stakeholders
Duration of the Plan : 1 year (September 2012 to August 2013)

Name of Country : **Maldives**
Name of the Participant : Ms. Mariyam Simla
Position : Senior Research Officer
Name of Organization : Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture
Title of the Proposal : Strengthening of the Marketing Business through Promotion of Members Participation in A-Eleven Cooperative Society
Target Group : 205 members of A-Eleven Cooperative
Implementing Agency : Ministry of Fisheries and Agriculture (MFA)
Duration of the Plan : 1.5 years (January 2013 to June 2014)

Name of Country : **Myanmar**
Name of the Participant : Ms. Thu Thu Theint & Ms.Thu Zar Nay Win
Position : Manager and Assistant Manager
Name of Organization : Central Cooperative Society Limited (CCS)

Title of the Proposal : Revitalization of Handicraft Business to Secure Income Generation for People in Yaykyi Township

Target Group : 50 rural women of Yaykyi Township through Handicraft Production

Implementing Agency : Yaykyi Handicraft Cooperative Society Limited

Duration of the Plan : 3 years (October 2012 to September 2015)

Name of Country : **Nepal**

Name of the Participant : Ms. Shanti Adhikari

Position : Member of Board of Director

Name of Organization : Nepal Federation of Savings and Credit Cooperative Unions Limited

Title of the Proposal : Rural Women Empowerment for Food Processing through Micro Finance

Target Group : 2 Women's Groups of food processing (21 persons)

Implementing Agency : Pravat Women Savings and Credit Cooperative Limited in Chitwan.

Duration of the Plan : 1 year (October 2012 to September 2013)

Name of Country : **Philippines**

Name of the Participant : Ms. Dorafy C. Famatid

Position : Division Manager

Name of Organization : Leon Small Coconut Farmers Multipurpose Cooperative (LESCOFAMPCO)

Title of the Proposal : Sustainable Organic Farming System for Vegetables Production in the Municipality of Leon.

Target Group : 200 farmers in the municipality of Leon

Implementing Agency : Leon Small Coconut Farmers Multipurpose Cooperative (LESCOFAMPCO)

Duration of the Plan : 3 years (January 2013 to December 2015)

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Name of Country : **Thailand**

Name of the Participant : Ms. Sutthidaporn Saijai

Position : Accountant

Name of Organization : Chiang Mai Agricultural Cooperative Federation Limited (CMACF)

Title of the Proposal : Promotion of PR and Marketing Activities for the Products of Ban Pa Kham Handicraft Group

Target Group : 32 members of Ban Pa Kham Handicraft Group

Implementing Agency : Cooperative Nikom Sansai Limited; Chiang Mai Agricultural Cooperative Federation Limited and the Cooperative League of Thailand.

Duration of the Plan : 1 year (September 2012 to August 2013)

Name of Country : **Vietnam**

Name of the Participant : Ms. Dang Huong Giang & Ms. Ly Thi Diu Thuong

Position : Officer of Policy & Coop Development Department & Officer of General Administration Affairs Department

Name of Organization : Vietnam Cooperative Alliance (VCA)

Title of the Proposal : Promotion of Marketing Business for Hoanggia Chayote Vegetable Cooperative, Tamdao Town, Vinhphuc Province.

Target Group : 20 members (mainly women) of Hoanggia Chayote Vegetable Cooperative, Tamdao Town, Vinhphuc Province.

Implementing Agency : Policy and Cooperative Development Department of Vietnam Cooperative Alliance (VCA).

Duration of the Plan : 1 year (January to December 2013)

ICA Co-operative Identity Statement

DEFINITION

A Co-operative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

VALUES

Co-operatives are based on the values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. In the tradition of their founders, Co-operative members believe in the ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others.

PRINCIPLES

The Principles of Co-operation are guidelines by which Co-operatives put their values into practice.

First Principle: Voluntary and Open Membership: Co-operatives are voluntary organisations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

Second Principle: Democratic Member Control: Co-operatives are democratic organisations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women, serving as elected representatives, are accountable to the membership. In primary Co-operatives, members have equal voting rights [one member one vote], and Co-operatives at other levels are also organised in a democratic manner.

Third Principle: Member Economic Participation: Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their Co-operative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the Co-operative. Members usually receive limited compensation, if any, on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. Members allocate surpluses for any or all of the following purposes: developing their Co-operative, possibly by setting up reserves, part of which at least would be indivisible; benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the Co-operative; and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

Fourth Principle: Autonomy and Independence: Co-operatives are autonomous, self-help organisations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organisations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their Co-operative autonomy.

Fifth Principle: Education, Training and Information: Co-operative provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees, so that they can contribute effectively to the development of their Co-operatives. They inform the general public – particularly young people and opinion leaders – about the nature and benefits of Co-operation.

Sixth Principle: Co-operation among Co-operatives: Co-operatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the Co-operative Movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

Seventh Principle: Concern for the Community: Co-operatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

