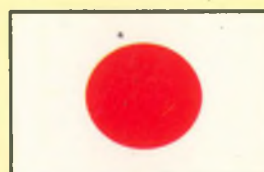




2nd ICA/Japan Training Course for  
**Rural Women Leaders of Agricultural  
Cooperatives in Asia, 1992**  
- A Report

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2nd ICA/Japan Training Course for  
**RURAL WOMEN LEADERS OF AGRICULTURAL  
COOPERATIVES IN ASIA, 1992**  
- A Report

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2nd ICA/JAPAN Training Course for  
**Rural Women Leaders of Agricultural  
Cooperatives in Asia, 1992**  
- A Report

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*Report Compiled by*

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Project Director  
ICA ROAP, New Delhi



2nd ICA-Japan Training Course for  
**Rural Women Leaders of Agricultural  
Cooperatives in Asia.**

Tokyo, Japan. August 25 - September 19, 1992

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**- A Report**

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### **Introduction**

The Second ICA-Japan Training Course for Rural Women Leaders was held in Tokyo, Japan, from August 25 to September 19, 1992, in pursuance of the agreement signed between the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of the Government of Japan and the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA). The four-week training course was held at the premises of the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA) in Tokyo. Six participants from three countries, two each from India, Sri Lanka and Malaysia, attended the Second Training Course.

The Training Course was organised in collaboration with the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Japan (JA Zenchu), IDACA and the National Council of Women's Associations of Agricultural Cooperatives (WAAC) in Japan .

The inauguration of the Second Training Course was held in IDACA on August 26, 1992. Representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives, JA Zenchu; National Council of Women's Associations of Agricultural Cooperatives; the Managing Director of IDACA, and the Project Director of the International Cooperative Alliance, Management Training Project, addressed the inaugural session.

The first training course was held during August 21-September 14, 1991, attended by six participants, two each from Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand.

### **Project Objectives**

The development and immediate objectives of the Project for Training of Rural Women Leaders in Asia are as follows:

### ***Development Objective***

To facilitate improvement of living standards of farm households through women's participation in agricultural cooperative activity.

### ***Immediate Objectives***

1. To provide opportunities for the development of leadership among rural women through training;
2. to provide encouragement for creating for them income-generating activities; and
3. to assist in the formulation of rural development projects for women's participation.

## **Implementation**

The training project was implemented by the International Cooperative Alliance through its Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, New Delhi, with the active collaboration of the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA), Tokyo.

## **Participants**

The training programme was attended by six participants - two each from India, Malaysia and Sri Lanka. In the two training programmes held so far, twelve women cooperative leaders from six countries have already been trained.

## **Training Course in IDACA**

The six selected participants attended the training course conducted at IDACA from 25th August to 19th September 1992, including study visits to agricultural cooperatives in Iwate Prefecture. Lecture-cum-practical field study assignments were combined to impart necessary knowledge to the participants on the working of women's associations in agricultural cooperatives and the general activities of the agricultural cooperatives in the country.

## **Country Status Reports**

After general introduction to Japan, its culture, agricultural cooperative movement and the working of women's associations in the agricultural cooperatives, country situations were reviewed. The following is a brief summary of the situation existing in the three participating countries with regard to women's involvement in cooperative activities. Country papers giving the present situation of involvement of women in cooperative activities in the three participating countries were presented by the participants. Some of the highlights of the country reports are as follows:

### ***I. India***

From the time when the first Cooperative Societies Act was enacted in 1904, the Indian Cooperative Movement has made rapid strides and has developed into a comprehensive movement. During 1990-91, the number of societies was 353,000 with a total membership of 156 million members and with a working capital of Rs. 7 billion. The movement

encompasses several fields and caters to different sections of society, like producers, consumers, housing, credit, marketing and processing activities.

The role of women in the economy is quite significant. A fairly large portion of female work-force is engaged in economic activities, with 80 per cent of women contributing in dairy production and fish farming. They share half of the work-load in cottage industries, processing, weaving, garment-making, forestry, horticulture and provide services as self-employed vendors, home-based producers and workers at construction sites.

Exclusive women's cooperatives are functioning in production and service sectors. Production cooperatives run by women include dairy, fishery, industrial and handloom societies. Women members work together in these societies in groups and earn income for their work. These societies are more or less self-managed with direct participation of women.

Service cooperative societies run by women include consumer coops, thrift and credit societies and urban cooperative banks. Urban cooperative banks exclusively run by women have the advantage of easy reach for women of the locality.

The number of women cooperatives in India is around 5,478 with an annual growth rate of 4.6 per cent. Membership in these cooperatives is around 540,000 with a paid-up share capital of Rs. 81.6 million and with a working capital of Rs.6 billion. Business operations of these societies amount to Rs. 2.9 billion.

It has been emphasised at a number of forums that participation of women in cooperatives is important as they constitute about one-half of the total population. Such participation can help women to increase their earning and thus raise their status in the society. In India, there is presently a growing awareness among women and they have been joining various types of cooperative societies. A number of societies have started coming up exclusively with female membership. Such societies can be found in a number of different ventures in the areas of dairy, housing, fruit processing, poultry/piggery, fishery etc. Punjab has the largest number of women cooperatives followed by Maharashtra, Manipur and Andhra Pradesh. However out of a total of 1577 such cooperatives in Punjab, as many as 1397 are thrift and savings societies. So far as women cooperatives in the industrial sector is concerned, Maharashtra has the largest number of them, (424) followed by Manipur (404), Andhra Pradesh (175) and Gujarat (151). Andhra Pradesh has the largest number of dairy cooperatives (77), while the largest number of multipurpose cooperatives are located in Kerala (63).

Apart from the above cooperatives which are of exclusive female membership, there is increasing participation of women as stated earlier, in other cooperatives. For example, in the eastern States of Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland, where there is heavy concentration of handloom cooperatives, it has been found that in some cases the number of female members exceed male membership. Similarly in Jammu & Kashmir about half of the members of the wool-weaving cooperatives are women.

Promotion of women's involvement in cooperatives has become an important activity as socio-economic development of women is one of the major national priorities in India. The

National Cooperative Union of India in collaboration with the Swedish Cooperative Centre has launched a 'Women's Cooperative Mobilisation Project' in 1985. Such programmes, intended for women at the grass-roots level, are likely to induce more women to join the mainstream of national life as equal partners.

The Committee on Cooperative Law for Democratisation and Professionalisation of Management has recommended open membership for husband and wife to encourage women's participation in cooperative activities. In some States, legislation has been passed for thirty percent reservation in elected posts to women members.

Due to low levels of education among women, especially in rural areas, cooperative education activities specially catered to the needs of women is vital for their participation in cooperative activities. Income-generating activities for involvement of women in cooperative activities which give a boost to family incomes are being encouraged for increasing women's participation in cooperative activities. These projects are undertaken by the state level organisations through their district-level federations to provide more job opportunities for women in rural areas. Women cooperatives in different states also help in implementing government-sponsored schemes like the '*Jawahar Rozgar Yojana*' for land development, social forestry, farm forestry, house construction etc. Human resource development schemes specially tailored for the development of rural women and widows are also undertaken by the women cooperatives to give training with a view to generating more employment opportunities in the rural areas. The women cooperatives also help in the moral uplift of their women membership.

The women workforce in rural and in urban areas, especially in assembly lines of the factories, is slowly but steadily increasing thereby giving better employment opportunities to them.

Based on the recommendations of the National Committee on Women, the Government of India have formulated a national action programme of women which emphasises (i) vocationalisation of education programmes, to orient it suitably towards involvement of women in social and economic activities; (ii) promotion of self-employment opportunities for women; (iii) village industries to promote employment for women.

Since 1975, the International Women's Year, the importance of women in the cooperative movement is being actively discussed and many schemes have been launched for involving women in cooperative activities, who form 48.26% of the country's population.

The efforts have not been very successful due to the following problems:

- i. illiteracy among women is quite high, lacking social consciousness;
- ii. dominance of men and inhibitions among women preventing their working equally with men;
- iii. even educated women having full faith in cooperatives are unable to participate due to social factors; and
- iv. adequate encouragement is lacking for their participation.

Women play an important role in consumer and industrial cooperatives run by them exclusively. Development of multipurpose cooperative societies exclusively for women could encourage their taking up income-generating activities, and better-living activities.

Women should also be encouraged to form their own consumer cooperatives, small-scale industrial cooperatives, and women's role in thrift and credit and small savings should be encouraged. Another vital area in which women's cooperatives can play an important role is in the field of family planning and child welfare. Rural women need education on importance of small families, child care, nutritious food etc. Another important role by women could be in organising consumer resistance to fight social problems like adulteration in foodstuffs, short weighments, etc. Health and hygiene and adult education could be another area where women's role could be tapped for advantage of the country. Social problems peculiar to Indian situation like the dowry system, ill-treatment of spouses, child marriages, and other social problems which have a bearing on the life of women could be effectively tackled by strong multipurpose cooperative societies run by women exclusively.

## ***II. Malaysia***

Involvement of women in cooperatives in Malaysia can be divided into two categories:

- i. Involvement in coops exclusively run by women;
- ii. involvement in coops where membership is open to both genders.

Every third member in a cooperative is a woman. The percentage of women in agricultural cooperatives is around 20% and in fishery sector it is negligible. In 1990, there were 37 women cooperatives with 11,500 membership in Malaysia. Generally the involvement of women in cooperatives is quite passive. Steps are urgently needed to enhance women's participation in the cooperative movement more actively.

Problems faced are as follows:

- lack of knowledge in cooperatives and lack of motivation;
- Traditional customs and culture and reluctance to participate;
- Commitments to the family leaving no time for public work;
- working women in urban areas can get involved only on a part-time basis due to their work commitments;
- lack of effective leadership among women to mobilise woman power; and
- misconception of cooperative ideology - membership obtained for getting loans only.

Hence special education and other programmes have to be launched to encourage more participation of women in cooperative activities. These will have to be directed to change the attitudes, upgrading their skills and increasing the knowledge on cooperative principles and philosophy.

The Angkasa (National Cooperative Organisation) of Malaysia conduct more than 35 training courses at the Cooperative College of Malaysia to give training on different aspects



of Cooperation. Some of these courses are specially tailored to the needs of women. Due to training imparted many women are now forthcoming to become members of cooperative supermarkets and retail shops and handicraft workshops. More emphasis is needed to encourage women in cooperative activities. With increasing economic development in the country and with the mushrooming of women labour force in factories, especially in the rural areas, special programmes to suit their needs are being contemplated. The Rubber Industry Smallholders Development Authority (RISDA), a statutory body, also helps in promotion of women in forming their own small-holders organisations and in group activities beyond processing and marketing of latex rubber. RISDA helps women to modernise their holdings' farm production, processing and marketing of rubber and thus helps in increasing their income levels. These women small-holding centres help in channelling support facilities like subsidies and credit for fertilizers, weedicides, latex stimulants and other relevant inputs. Out of the small-holder families numbering about 3.2 million people, fifty percent form women members.

The Women small-holders organisations help their membership through training and education activities, training in crafts such as artificial flowers, bamboo products, mengkuang leaves and ratan; food industries such as sauce, banana and potato chip preparation, jam, cakes etc., ; training in tailoring and dressmaking, patchwork, school uniform and embroidery work; poultry-rearing including use of waste products as organic manure; cash cropping such as banana, potato, vegetables and fruits and their marketing.

These above activities could be run by a group of 20 women forming themselves into a cooperative. Capital is collected from among the members. RISDA has established a fund in 1983 to assist these WSOs called the Smallholder Socio-economic Development Fund. Credit and grants are extended to the smallholders organisations from out of this fund for their economic activities.

Women small-holder community agents and field officers appointed by RISDA in every district help the WSOs in their extension programmes.

RISDA's training institutes also cater to the specific needs of women both within the cooperatives and outside.

### ***III. Sri Lanka***

The history of cooperative movement in Sri Lanka can be classified as follows:

1911-1930	Period of cooperative credit societies development;
1931-1941	Development of other types of cooperatives;
1942-1957	Development of stores societies and agricultural cooperatives; and
1958-1969	Development of village level multipurpose cooperative societies and other types;
1970-Todate	Formation of large primary multipurpose cooperative societies and other changes.

The present structure of the cooperative movement in Sri Lanka stands at three-tier basis. Primary societies at village or local level, various middle-tier organisations at a higher level, usually district, and apex organisations at the national level. But some societies function as two-tier organisations, i.e. primary and national level. Primary level societies consists of individual members. Secondary level and apex or national level organisations consist of the membership of registered societies.

The present cooperative movement is comparatively strong with a total membership of 4,118,600 and there were mainly 9,545 societies at primary level in 1990. The number of registered multi-purpose cooperative societies (MPCS) throughout the Island at present is 287. The membership in the multipurpose cooperative societies is 2,533,500 which is about 62% of the total membership.

At the end of the year 1980, there were 12 secondary and apex level registered cooperative societies. Two primary cooperative societies are registered with the entire country as their area of operation, which mainly belong to the category of institutional credit. These include the Educational Employees' Thrift and Credit Cooperative Society, holding a membership of nearly one million and Sri Lanka Transport Board Employees' Cooperative Welfare Society with a membership of 30,000.

There are certain factors which are common to all the districts throughout the Island regarding women. The rising cost of living has made life hard for most of the people and women are increasingly searching for ways of supplementing their family income. Low level of skill education and high overall rates of unemployment make it very difficult to find jobs in some areas. Therefore, they turn to producer-type activities such as cottage industries, handicraft and those which undertake production of various types of goods and which enable them to earn supplementary incomes.

Another reason is women are very conscious of the need for effecting small savings, and being able to obtain short term loans on reasonable terms in times of emergency. Therefore, they show a keen interest in thrift and credit societies.

However, in the multi-purpose cooperative sector, after 1960, women in leadership positions though not totally absent were and still remain of very small proportion. They have not been represented in the elected bodies and management strata of the movement in numbers proportionate to their contributions. As a result the cooperative movement has lost the benefit of additional human resources, which women cooperators could provide in the successful promotion of social and economic objectives.

The greatest obstacle to women's participation is their lack of awareness about the cooperative principles and practices and this has consistently kept women at a disadvantage. It was universally accepted that cooperative education and training are open to both sexes. However, in practice women in Sri Lanka have been granted only limited opportunities or have not availed themselves of existing facilities. Attention was not paid to the recruitment of women in cooperative organisations including managerial and/or administrative posts.

Though the participation of women in the cooperative movement existed from its beginning in a small way, a noteworthy change can be identified only after 1979. The Cooperative Women's Consumer Education Project was introduced in that year and it was the first effort to impart useful knowledge through cooperatives to women and thereby increase their involvement in the movement. This project had been launched with financial aid and advice of the National Cooperative Council of Sri Lanka, the Swedish Cooperative Centre, the Union of Cooperative Consumer Guilds in Sweden, the Swedish International Development Authority and the International Cooperative Alliance. The executing agency for the project was the National Cooperative Council of Sri Lanka.

The main objectives of the Project were:

- to supply consumer information to women;
- to educate women on nutrition and family health;
- to promote quality consciousness particularly of consumer goods;
- to create an awareness of consumer protection laws; and
- to educate women on the role that cooperatives could play in ensuring better living conditions for them.

Out of the total number of 287 multipurpose cooperative societies in the country, with a membership of 4,118,600, 35 per cent consists of women. There are 165 women's committees affiliated to the various societies with a total membership of 620,000.

In thrift and credit societies, 304,168 women members account for 49% and they represent 3,540 women's committees. About 100,000 women members are found in other types of cooperatives e.g. milk producers, animal husbandry, textile, fisheries etc.

The National Women's Committee is encouraging its women members to involve in various national development activities and projects. The urgent need for expansion into new activities is being realised by women's committees and also by the Department of Cooperative Development. Hopefully women cooperators in the rural sector where there is a more pressing need for organised cooperative effort carry out various projects and activities that will solve not only their everyday problems, but all other problems relating to the rural development such as nutrition, sanitation, family planning, women leadership and environmental protection.

In 1989 an amendment was made to the by-laws of the cooperative societies and according to that at least two women members should be included in the board of directors. At present there are 63 women in boards of directors in multipurpose cooperatives. Of them, 58 were elected and five were nominated members.

The National Cooperative Council of Sri Lanka (NCCSL) in collaboration with the Department of Cooperative Development has taken steps to set up women's consumer committees at the multipurpose cooperative society level and at the district and national levels.

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## i. MPCS Society Level Women's Committee

- (a) Branch level - The branch level women's committee is composed of five members elected at an annual general body meeting of the women members of the branches of the MPCSs. The president and the secretary of women's committees are elected by the general body from among the five elected members. The area of operation of this committee is limited to the area of operation of the branch. An average MPCS would have about 20 branches and there would be 20 women's committees in a society.
- (b) Society Level - Society level women's committee also consists of 5 members elected at a general body of the branch women's committee members. The president and secretary are elected from among the five elected members. This committee is known as the central women's committee of the MPCS. In 1989 there were 165 women's committees at society level which represents 620,000 membership.

## ii. District Level Women's Committee

The Central Women's Committees of the MPCSs in the district meet annually and elect the district women's committee consisting of five members who, in turn, elect their own president and secretary. The district secretary of the National Cooperative Council looks after the activities at the district level. There are 25 districts in Sri Lanka and the total membership is 125.

## iii. National Level Women's Committee

This was started in 1975 and the objects of the National Women's Committee are: (a) to enhance the participation of women in the cooperative movement; (b) to promote the economic, social and cultural status of women members; (c) to expand, promote and strengthen the cooperative movement in Sri Lanka; and (d) to function in collaboration with the international women's organisations.

The national level women's committee consists of ten members elected by representatives of various district level women's committees. One member is elected to represent each of the nine provinces of the Island. The tenth member is nominated by the Commissioner for Cooperative Development from among the lady executives of his staff. The committee elects its own president, vice-president and secretary for a term of three years.

Women in rural areas are socially backward and economically poorer. 70% of young girls leave school at the age of 16 and are unemployed or underemployed. Only a few are lucky to get jobs. The MPCSs strive to improve the living standards of their women members and their families through its Women's Committees.

Among the activities undertaken are: training classes to improve the social standards of young women members, courses on nutrition, family health, first aid, child care and consumer protection. Focus on leadership development and spoken English is also being added during the last few years. Income-generating activities like dress-making, pappadam making, cake

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making etc. are held to improve the economic standards of members. Short-term training on poultry farming, home gardening and coir works are given at village level.

Bank loans are facilitated to start small-scale projects at village level to increase income levels. Emphasis is also placed on cultural development of the members. Debates on women's rights, dances, dramas, cultural events are also conducted annually. Competitions are organised during yearly Cooperative Day Celebrations among school children and women.

With the activities of the women's committees over the years, the following achievements could be cited:

- women membership increased by 10%;
- women got elected to the boards of unions and federations;
- income of women increased;
- family's unit became strong and happy; and
- participation in social activities increased.

### **Problems of Women's Cooperatives**

In Sri Lanka, most women are active in various types of cooperatives such as consumers, fisheries, thrift and credit and agricultural societies, but still they have not been represented proportionately in the management committees. As a result the cooperative movement has lost the benefit of additional resources which women cooperators could provide in the successful promotion of social and economic development.

In practice the following obstacles have been encountered by women's cooperatives in Sri Lanka.

- lack of awareness about potentiality of cooperation among women, owing to illiteracy;
- lack of coordination and poor communication within the cooperatives and in between the women participants;
- weakness of some cooperatives, especially the primaries in organisation and administration of women's programmes;
- inadequacy of funds and poor financial arrangements;
- lack of enlightened membership and leadership;
- lack of motivation;
- social systems, customs and traditional attitudes against women's participation;
- lack of time to participate actively in the movement due to household responsibilities; and
- absence of adequate training facilities for the members at all levels.

### **IDACA Training Course Contents**

During the four-week training programme in IDACA emphasis was laid on practical studies and learning. Besides introduction to the basic aspects of Japanese culture and social way of life, detailed introductions to the organisation and functioning of agricultural cooperatives

in Japan was given. Subjects dealing with the activities of women's associations in agricultural cooperatives, their role in better-living activities and improving farm households and plans for future development were also presented.

Of special significance was the development, organisation and activities of the Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives (WAAC) and the role that the Association and its constituents play. Besides participating in agricultural production-related activities, the women associations have been undertaking a variety of social and environmental programmes e.g. use of powder soap, improving dieting habits, improving social and economic life-style, participation in programmes for the welfare of children and women worldwide, and drafting a plan of action entitled "A Path Towards the 21st Century for Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives" - a long-term development policy of the Association.

After a week's introduction to basic aspects, the participants were taken to Iwate Prefecture for study visits. The participants studied the working of JA Waga Chuou and the activities of its women's association and observed the cooperative's different facilities. They were introduced to the activities of the Prefectural Council of Agricultural Cooperatives and to activities of agricultural cooperatives in the prefecture. Participants stayed with the families of members of the cooperative to observe Japanese way of living and to have a closer contact with women in the farm households. They also joined in the cultural and better-living activities of women's associations. During the study visits participants had chance to study 'A' coop store and better-living activities of the JA Iwate Touwacho. Health control centre of the Iwate Welfare Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives was of special interest to the participants. On 9th September, 1992, the participants observed the Congress of the Women's Associations in Iwate Prefecture to have a feel of democratic participation of women in agricultural cooperative affairs.

After returning to IDACA, the participants prepared their reports giving impressions on their visit and the lessons that could be learnt for their respective countries.

### **Conclusions by Participants**

Women's Associations of Agricultural Cooperatives (WAAC) has completed 40 years of its working. Thus it has contributed a great deal to the balanced development of agricultural and agricultural cooperatives and the welfare of farmhousehold members.

Compared to the total membership, membership of women is still small. WACC members contribute a great deal to the total efforts aimed at the increase in productivity and family welfare. WAAC do their service to the best of their self-satisfaction and they do not expect any reward or appreciation for their work from others. They try to ascertain the views of their members through direct meetings, hamlet-level meetings, and satisfy their needs accordingly.

Five principles adopted by WAAC were:

1. Promotion of agricultural cooperative movement;
2. members are to be women who are engaged in farming;

3. autonomous management;
4. solidarity; and
5. political neutrality.

The participants felt that while credit, marketing and purchasing activities are carried out by WAAC members, processing is not undertaken. The WAAC also helps its members in insurance business.

The WAAC covers better-living activities adequately. The living styles of rural and urban women in Japan are almost equal. The WAAC members are assisted in book-keeping, dressing, up keep of house, introduction of new kitchen utensils, safe and healthy environment, in inculcating civic sense and behaviour pattern of members within the society. Encouragement by WAAC to develop kitchen gardens in almost every farmer's house has helped the home economy. Health care of family members with regular health cares is another important contribution of WAAC. Better-living activities like joint cooking, common bath, piggy bank, laundry place, group saving, water supply, group activities and joint purchasing activities were the other factors that impressed the participants. Study meetings of group farming and means to find jobs other than seasonal work was another important activity of WAAC. The exchange with overseas women associations made the WAAC members more informative. The WAAC is financially independent and has autonomous management.

The WAAC motivates young married ladies to take up farming and keeping the culture and tradition of the society. Music classes, cooking classes, kitchen gardens, dressing, English language classes are held to sustain the interests of young ladies.

Looking after the aged and young is another important area in which the WAAC lends its helping hand. Participants felt that the work of WAAC in the overall development of agricultural cooperatives is remarkable.

The participants made the following recommendations for the improvement of the working of WAAC:

- More women should be encouraged to join as regular members of agricultural cooperatives;
- More voluntary services should be made available for the nursing of the elderly people;
- The charge for the medical check up in the cooperative hospital should be reduced;
- Greater role in processing activities;
- More activities on the preservation of environment;
- Effective role in consumer and producer relationship such as more morning and evening markets and promotion of new products;
- More international exchange programmes for members and also the Young ladies groups;
- Increase the number of women directors on the boards of JAs;
- More income-generating projects should be introduced; and
- Assistance from Japan should be more in respect of transfer of technology than in financial assistance.

Country wise recommendations and lessons that could be learnt from the Japanese experience, as analyzed by the participants, are detailed as follows:

#### **A. India**

Women cooperatives should be encouraged to initiate the following activities:

- Rural Women Agricultural Associations;
- Health consciousness;
- Better-Living and family budgeting;
- Group Farming;
- Group Purchasing;
- Nourishing the elderly groups;
- Income-generating project for rural women;
- Preservation of environment;
- Balanced diet;
- Mutual insurance;
- Kitchen garden or green-house in the rural areas;
- Book-keeping systems; and
- Piggy bank to encourage saving habits.

#### **B. Malaysia**

The cooperatives in Japan give full facilities to members from birth to death. This leads to very strong sense of belonging between members and cooperatives and to create more awareness among women regarding cooperative activities.

This is an ideal example for Malaysia.

The following ideas are of great relevance for women cooperatives in Malaysia:

- To introduce more training/business activities in accordance with members' needs, just as is done in Japan;
- More activities for better living should be introduced such as kitchen garden, health screening, safety environment, looking after the elderly people, improvement of kitchen utensils and dieting habits;
- Joint purchasing of food done by the agricultural cooperative to ensure good quality product at lower price leading to healthier and safer lives;
- Dissemination of quarterly magazines on the progress of women activities;
- Better control and application of natural resources i.e. water, soil, air through healthy environmental campaigns;
- Extension of saving group in women associations;
- Encouraging more group activities at the hamlet level i.e. income-generating and better living activities;
- Exchange programmes with women groups in Malaysia as well as neighbouring countries;
- Introduce group farming by agricultural cooperatives to solve the problems of uncultivated land; and



introduce pension schemes to the members.

### **C. Sri Lanka**

Useful findings from study visits which could be relevant for Sri Lanka:

- to promote group farming;
- study programmes about awareness and health consciousness;
- nursing the adult and the youth;
- campaign for less use of agro-chemicals in farming;
- mutual insurance policy;
- leadership training programme for young ladies;
- nutritional and balanced diet;
- joint purchasing;
- kitchen gardens, green houses;
- better-living activities; and
- family budget, piggy bank and book-keeping.

### **Concluding Session**

The Concluding Session of the Second Training Course for Rural Women Leaders of Agricultural Cooperatives in Asia attended by six women leaders from India, Malaysia and Sri Lanka was held at IDACA on 18th September 1992. At the successful completion of their training in Japan, the participants were awarded the Certificates of Participation at a ceremony which was attended and addressed by the representatives of MAFF, CUAC and the IDACA.

The participants expressed their deep appreciation to the International Cooperative Alliance, the MAFF, CUAC and the IDACA authorities for the opportunity given to them to study the working of women's associations of agricultural cooperatives in Japan. The participants expressed their gratitude to the IDACA for facilitating their stay, studies and visits made to various cooperative institutions in Japan. Special thanks were extended to the leaders of cooperative institutions visited by them.

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## PROGRAMME

Aug 25, 1992, Tue	Arrival of Participants
Aug 26, 1992, Wed	<b>Inauguration</b> Greetings by  Mr Shigeki Yamamoto, Director, Overseas Technical Cooperation Office, Economic Bureau, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries (MAFF).  Mr Hiroshi Nishido, Dy Manager, International Dept., JA ZENCHU  Dr Daman Prakash Project Director, ICA ROAP  Mrs Kiyoko Takebe President, National Council of Women's Associations of Agricultural Cooperatives.  Mr Shiro Futagami Managing Director, IDACA  Introduction of Participants
	AN Presentation of Country Reports
Aug 27, Thu	Organisation and Business Activities of Agricultural Cooperatives by Mr Shiro Futagami
Aug 28, Fri	Japanese Society and Culture by Mr Yukio Abe. Agriculture in Japan by Mr Hiroshi Terunuma
Aug 29, Sat	Free
Aug 30, Sun	Observations in Tokyo.
Aug 31, Mon	Visit to JA ZENCHU History of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives by Ms Keiki Suzuki.
Sep 01, Tue	Middle Term Plan of the Women's Association and its various Activities by Mr Wataru Hirose.
Sep 02, Wed	Move to Iwate Prefecture for Study Visits.

Sep 03, Thu	Visit to JA Waga Chuou Study on activities of the Women's Association Observation of facilities. Home stay at Member's house
Sep 04, Fri	Presentation of Activities of Iwate Prefectural Council of Agri. Cooperatives / Outline of Agriculture and agricultural cooperative movement in Iwate Prefecture.
Sep 05, Sat	Observations in Iwate Prefecture.
Sep 06, Sun	Free
Sep 07, Mon	Visit to JA Iwate Prefectural Union, JA Iwate Touwacho - Study on operation of multipurpose agricultural cooperative / observation of 'A' Coop Store and better-living facilities/ culture school.
Sep 08, Tue	Observation of facilities owned by Iwate Prefectural Economic Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives, Health Control Centre.
Sep 09, Wed	Observation of the Congress for Women's Associations in Iwate Prefecture. Move to Tokyo.
Sep 10, Thu	Review of Study Visits
Sep 11, Fri	Role of Govt. for Improving Lives of Women in Rural Areas.
Sep 12, Sat	Supplemental Lecture
Sep 13, Sun	Free
Sep 14, Mon	Experience of Activities of the Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives
Sep 15, Tue	Observation of Activities of Women's Association of JA Tsukuigun.
Sep 16-17, Wed-Thu	Report-writing
Sep 18, Fri	Presentation of reports by participants Evaluation Closing Ceremony
Sep 19, Sat	Departure of Participants to home countries.

## PARTICIPANTS

### India

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# **AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT OF JAPAN - AN INTRODUCTION**

## **Objectives of Agricultural Cooperatives**

Agricultural cooperatives are organised by farmers to defend their livelihood and production activities and to improve their lot through mutual cooperation. Agricultural cooperatives operate in conformity with the Agricultural Cooperative Society Law promulgated in 1947. This law is basically aimed at increasing agricultural productivity and improving the social and economic status of farmers through the development of their cooperative organisations, and also at attaining the greater development of the national economy. The role performed by Japan's agricultural cooperatives has contributed significantly to the evolution of society as a whole.

## **Business Activities of Agricultural Cooperatives**

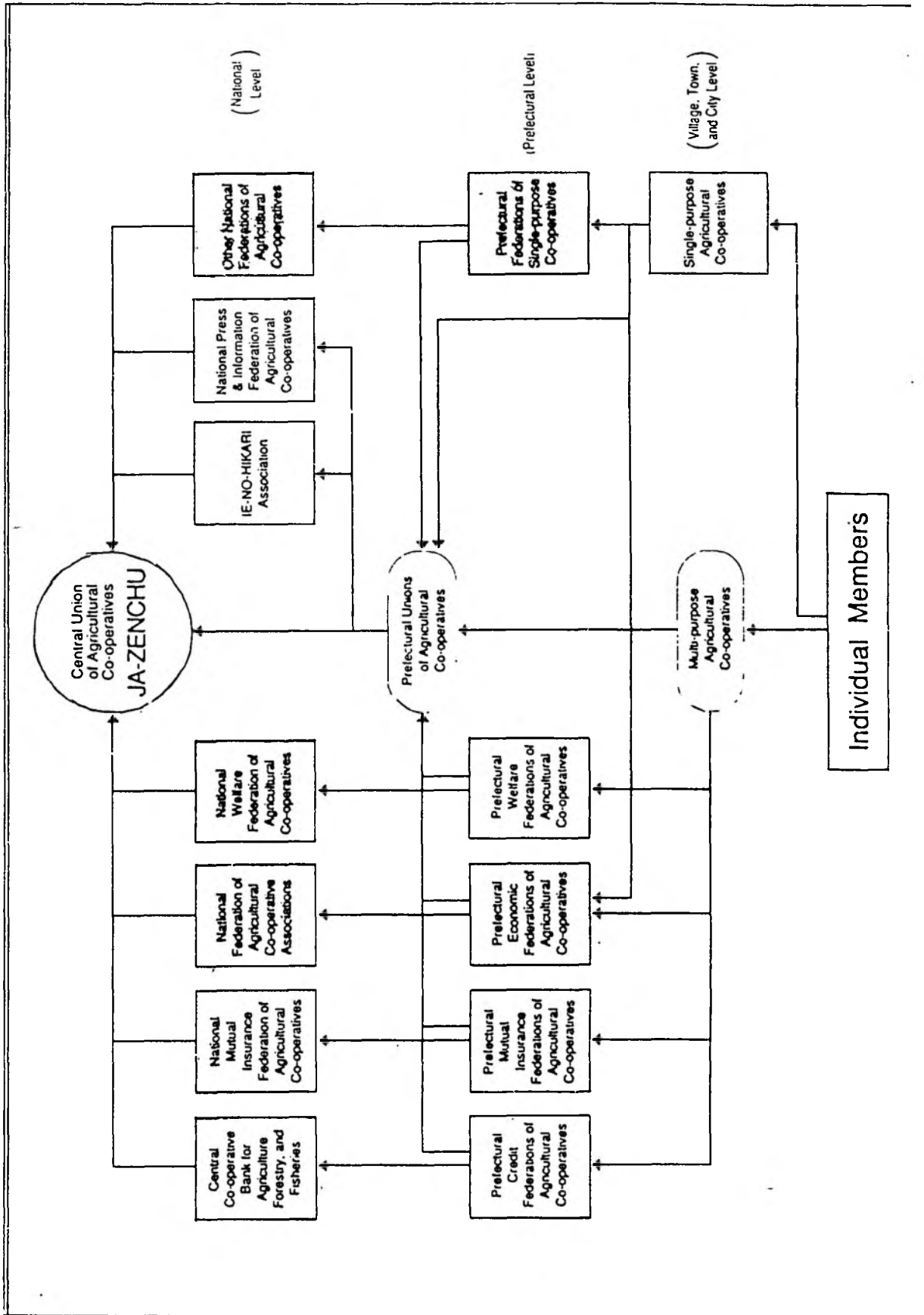
Agricultural cooperatives, in order to fulfil their purposes, run a wide range of activities and services. These are predominantly credit, marketing, supply, mutual-insurance, utilisation undertakings, and medical-care services.

Guidance activities, education and legislative activities are carried out so that these undertakings may be performed effectively according to their respective purposes. These activities cannot be expected to produce tangible results if carried out separately by agricultural cooperatives. Therefore, they have formed prefectural cooperatives with wider areas of activities and services and moreover they have created national federations with prefectural federations and agricultural cooperatives as members so as to raise operational efficiency within organisations and to display the advantages of cooperatives in external relations.

## **Objectives and Organisation of Unions**

Unions, which comprise prefectural unions and the central union have made it their objective to attain the healthy development of agricultural cooperatives. Prefectural unions, with primary agricultural cooperatives and prefectural federations in their respective territories as members, are endowed with the authority to make a recommendation to administrative authorities, besides, performing activities such as guidance on business and organisation, audits and educational activities for their member organisations.

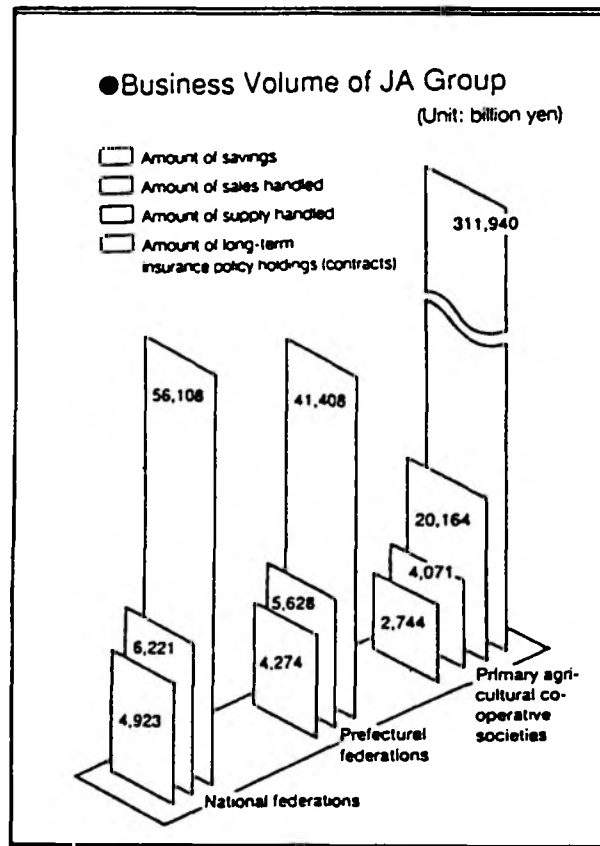
The Central Union, membership of which comprises prefectural unions and their member organisations, and national federations, is responsible for the guidance of the JA group and fulfils its role as a coordinating body for the JA group.



Number of Agricultural Cooperatives,  
Members and Personnel

Number of Members	
Number of Regular Members	Number of Associate Members
5,549,626	2,929,442

NUMBER OF PRIMARY AGRICULTURAL COOPS	
No. of multi-purpose Agr. Coops	3,574
No. of single-purpose Agr. Coops	4,023
NUMBER OF FEDERATIONS	
Number of Prefectural Fedns	226
Number of National Fedns	22
Others	357
NUMBER OF UNIONS	
Number of Prefectural Unions	47
Number of Central Unions	1
NUMBER OF PERSONNEL	
Multi-purpose agr.coops	296,770
Prefectural federations	72,028
National federations	6,286





## **Management and Characteristics of Unions**

Unions, endowed with the authority to make a recommendation to relevant administrative authorities regarding matters related to agricultural cooperatives, including the guidance of agricultural cooperatives in which almost all of farmhouseholds participate, are legally bound to monitor the way in which agricultural cooperatives are run and extend appropriate guidance to them. This shows that these unions lead the JA group.

Unions are also non-profit corporations akin to public bodies, and not engaging in any form of profit-seeking economic activity. Unions are then financed by contributions paid by member organisations.

## **Activities of Unions**

- i. Guidance to cooperatives as to matters related to organisation, business activities and management;
- ii. audit of cooperatives;
- iii. education and supply of information on cooperatives;
- iv. liaison with cooperatives and mediation in disputes involving cooperatives;
- v. investigative and study activities relate to cooperatives;
- vi. other activities indispensable to the attainment of objectives;
- vii. recommendation to administrative authorities concerned in relation to cooperatives;
- viii. Besides, the activities of unions are said to cover a wide range of problems concerning agriculture and farmers.

## **Outline of JA-ZENCHU**

JA-ZENCHU, the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Japan, has the status of coordinating body for Japan's agricultural cooperative movement. The role of JA-ZENCHU is laid down in its by-law as 'to establish the management policies of agricultural cooperatives across the country and of federations of agricultural cooperatives, and to make efforts to disseminate and drive home those policies, thereby ensuring the healthy development of agricultural cooperatives'.

In order to fulfil this purpose, JA-ZENCHU carries out activities related to guidance of and liaison with prefectural unions of agricultural cooperatives, and also provides education for personnel of prefectural unions in order to develop human resources of member farmers and officials and employees of agricultural cooperatives, in addition to the activities mentioned in the foregoing.

Furthermore, JA-ZENCHU, affiliated with the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) and Afro-Asian Rural Reconstruction Organisation (AARRO) has contributed substantially to the international cooperative movement and agricultural development.

## Management of JA-ZENCHU

The general meeting, organised by 246 representatives elected from among the regular member organisations, is JA-ZENCHU's supreme decision-making body. Also, the board of directors is set up as an organ second to the general meeting. JA-ZENCHU, moreover, has 10 departments, three offices and 23 sections which operate for the precise fulfilment of routine activities. JA-ZENCHU as the coordinating body for the JA group, engaged in a wide range of activities to fulfil its role and mission. Basic policies, which underlie such activities, are decided on at the National Congress of Agricultural Cooperatives which take place once every three years. The 19th Congress in 1991 adopted a resolution on 'Challenge and Reform Towards the 21st Century' and the Movement is putting it on practice.

### Membership of JA-ZENCHU

Regular members.	.....	.....	4,150
Prefectural members	.....	.....	4,135
Primary Agricultural Cooperatives	.....	.....	3,736
Federations	.....	.....	352
Prefectural Unions	.....	.....	47
National Organisations	.....	.....	15
Associate Members	.....	.....	12

### Central Cooperative College

*Outline of College* : The College opened in September 1969 to train prospective leaders in a new movement of agricultural cooperatives. Education for the regular course goes on for three years in a small class. There, trainees learn the principles of 'essentials of cooperatives', 'human aspects' and 'actions' for the sake of cooperative campaigns, along with a wide range of subjects related to agriculture as the basis of agricultural cooperatives. Graduates are now active as leaders of cooperatives, federations and other organisations. The annexed training facility for agricultural cooperative employees is used by a total of about 20,000 trainees in a year.

*Facility* : The College stands at a vast site covering 140,000 sq.meters in a corner of the Tama Hills, about four k.m. southeast of the Takao Station on the Japanese Railway Chuo line along the Machida Kaido road. It is made up of the main building complete with class-rooms, laboratories, a library and other facilities and a seminar hall provided with classrooms of varying sizes for seminar use. The College also has a recreation ground, a gymnasium, accommodation for seminar participants, a training house, and a club house.

*Features* : The per-grade class is limited to 50 students in order to give in-depth education, according to merit.

- All students live in a dormitory to understand the significance of collective life.
- An original three-year educational system.
- A half of the teachers are veteran agricultural cooperative officials.
- A seminar facility is available for system agricultural cooperative employees.

## **The Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA)**

Japan's agricultural cooperatives played an epochal part in reconstructing and developing Japanese agriculture after the end of World War II. This was made possible by the spirit of mutual assistance and cooperation nurtured among farmers from the days of pre-war cooperative societies as well as the systematic and vigorous activities of the cooperatives which gave a concrete form to this spirit.

In 1963, Mr Yasushi Hasumi, President of the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives, who was the first President of IDACA established IDACA in the compound of the former Cooperative Junior College, as an institution for leaders of cooperatives in developing countries to study within Japan's agricultural cooperative movement and to foster solidarity in the international community. For 22 years since then, IDACA has accepted more than 2,200 participants from abroad, establishing itself as a place of study and training, contributory to strengthening international solidarity and mutual understanding in the cooperative movement.

The Hasumi Memorial Hall has endeared itself extensively to people concerned with cooperatives both in Japan and abroad. It has now been removed to the new building in order to heighten the functions further and make a renewed start towards the 21st century with the firm belief that the cooperative movement will continue to spread the circle of cooperation and solidarity throughout the world and that the participants from abroad will deepen their understanding of Japanese agriculture and agricultural cooperatives.

The aims of IDACA are to provide training and research services to those associated with the agricultural cooperative movement with the intent of advancing the cooperative movement and thereby promoting socio-economic betterment, especially in developing countries. The IDACA in attaining such purposes engage itself in the following activities: (i) training necessary for the development of agricultural cooperation; (ii) research necessary for the development of agricultural cooperation; (iii) publication of literature and pamphlets necessary for training and research work as well as collection and dissemination of information; (iv) management and control of the training and research facilities and their installations for accommodation; and (v) activities other than those mentioned above which are necessary for the attaining the purposes of the Institute. The Board of Councillors and Board of Directors consist of the persons concerned in Japan as policy making and executive bodies, respectively. The Board of Advisors consists of the persons concerned in Asian countries as the advisory organs.

Training in the Institute consists, in good coordination of (a) lecturing, (b) discussion, (c) study visits, and (d) report writing.

- (a) Lecturing is to be followed by discussion. Audio-visual aids like films and slide are employed for better understanding of what is given in lectures.
- (b) Discussion is to take up as its topic the subject matter of the lectures. Lecturers will attend such discussion as advisers.

- (c) Study visit is to be conducted in such a manner that the lectures and discussions can be thoroughly understood through observation of the first-hand facts and operations of Japanese agricultural cooperation at different levels of organisations.
- (d) Report-writing is to help thorough understanding of the knowledge and information given on various phases of the agricultural cooperative movement in Japan. At the end of the course each participant is required to write a final report.

#### **Names and Jobs of IDACA Officials and Staff**

Mr Mitsugu Horiuchi	.....	.....	President
Mr Shiro Futagami	.....	.....	Managing Director
Mr Tetsuro Oikawa	.....	.....	General Manager
Mr Tokizo Takagi	.....	.....	Asst General Manager
Mr Zenichiro Terada	.....	.....	Chef
Mr Yukio Abe	.....	.....	Programme Coordinator
Mr Hiroshi Terunuma	.....	.....	Programme Coordinator
Ms Yukie Aoki	.....	.....	Teller
Ms Eiko Oshita	.....	.....	Staff
Ms Chizuko Kogure	.....	.....	Staff
Ms Fumiko Amano	.....	.....	House Keeper
Ms Hiroko Wada	.....	.....	-do-
Ms Kazue Murata	.....	.....	-do-
Ms Hatsumi Terada	.....	.....	Chef's Helper
Ms Yuko Yagi	.....	.....	-do-
Ms Hisako Mizunuma	.....	.....	-do-
Mr Kazuo Inohaya	.....	.....	Night duty staff

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**ACTUAL STATE AND PROBLEMS OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE,  
FORESTRY AND FISHERIES**

**Ms. Kyoko SAITO**  
**Deputy Chief**  
**Women and Life Division**  
**Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries**

## 1. Important Role Played by Rural Women

The number of women engaged in agriculture is 3.6 million, which represents 60% in the total farming population and half of the farmers working on farm more than 150 days a year, and they play an important role in agricultural production.

Particularly, in the prime of the thirties through fifties, nearly 70% of the farming population and 50 to 60% of the farmers working on farm more than 150 days a year are occupied by women.

Table 1 Agricultural labor force according to age

(Unit: a thousand persons, %)

Classification		Total	16 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	Above 60	Above 65
Total of men and women, real number	Farming popu- lation	5,968	284	549	632	1,393	3,110	2,057
	Farmers work- ing on farm more than 150 days a year	3,243	91	334	480	983	1,355	736
Real number of women of them	Farming popu- lation	3,596	135	381	435	934	1,709	1,090
	Farmers work- ing on farm more than 150 days a year	1,624	28	174	291	563	568	277
Percent- age of women	Farming popu- lation	60.3	47.6	69.4	68.9	67.1	55.0	53.0
	Farmers work- ing on farm more than 150 days a year	50.1	30.1	51.9	60.6	57.3	42.0	37.7

Source: "Annual Sample Survey of Agriculture": the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

Table 2 Change of the number of farm families, farming population and farmers working on farm more than 150 days a year

(Unit: ten thousand families, ten thousand persons, %)

	1970	1980	1985	1987	1988	1989
<u>Number of farm families</u>						
Total	495 (100.0)	466 (100.0)	438 (100.0)	428 (100.0)	424 (100.0)	419 (100.0)
Full-time farmer	61 (12.4)	62 (13.4)	63 (14.3)	63 (14.7)	61 (14.4)	60 (14.4)
Farmer doing farming on the side	434 (87.6)	404 (86.6)	375 (85.7)	365 (85.3)	363 (85.6)	359 (85.6)
<u>Population on farm families</u>						
Total	2,320 (100.0)	2,137 (100.0)	1,984 (100.0)	1,948 (100.0)	1,924 (100.0)	1,897 (100.0)
Women	1,196 (51.6)	1,097 (51.3)	1,018 (51.3)	999 (51.3)	988 (51.4)	976 (51.4)
Men	1,124 (48.4)	1,040 (48.7)	966 (48.7)	949 (48.7)	936 (48.6)	921 (48.6)
<u>Farmers working on farm more than 150 days a year</u>						
Total	489 (100.0)	413 (100.0)	370 (100.0)	349 (100.0)	335 (100.0)	324 (100.0)
Women	259 (53.0)	209 (50.7)	183 (49.4)	178 (50.9)	169 (50.4)	162 (50.0)
Men	230 (47.0)	204 (49.3)	187 (50.6)	171 (49.1)	166 (49.6)	162 (50.0)

Source: "Census of Agriculture and Forestry" ('75, '80, '85); the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

"Annual Sample Survey of Agriculture" ('87, '88); the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

The results of the "Survey on Women's View about Farm Household Economy" conducted for the members of the Home Living Improvement Practice Group showed that some 40% of them participated in the farm management plan and that they no longer provide only labor to the agricultural production but have changed in quality to participate in the management. Especially, it was shown that agricultural management is left to women in the farm households living mainly on income from jobs other than farming.

Table 3 Participation of women in the farm management plan  
(March 1988)

(Unit: %)

	Planting plan	Fund plan	Sales plan
Total	45.4	38.7	42.8
Full-time farmer	38.1	33.4	35.6
Farm households living mainly on farm income	45.7	38.4	43.7
Farm households living mainly on income from jobs other than farming	55.3	43.7	51.3

Source: "Survey on Women's View about Farm Household Economy"; the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

## 2. Rural Women, Who are Active in Various Fields

Rural women greatly contribute to maintaining and activating management of farm home and communities through housekeeping, raising children, nursing of the aged and participation in various events in the community.

## 3. Promotion of Participation in Decision Making

In the increase in importance of women in agriculture and rural communities, their participation in social activities and decision making on agriculture, forestry and fisheries in the community still remains on a low level, though the situation is gradually improving year by year.

Awareness of women themselves is much to blame, but another reason is that the role of women is not properly recognized in the whole community and the system in which women can fully demonstrate their ability is not ready yet.



Table 4 Participation of women in Agricultural Committees, Agricultural Cooperatives and Fishery Cooperatives

(Unit: %)

	Number of members of Agricultural Committee	Agricultural Cooperative		Fishery Cooperative	
		Number of members	Number of officials	Number of members	Number of officials
Total	62,943	5,554	74,056	371,418	22,141
Women of them	67	629	69	20,381	21
Percentage of women	0.11	11.3	0.09	5.5	0.09

Note: Survey in August 1988 for Agricultural Committee, 1988 for Agricultural Cooperative and 1987 for Fishery Cooperative

#### 4. Rural Women's Anxiety about Production and Life

- (1) Rural women, who take main responsibility for agricultural production and farm family life, face various problems in farm household economy, health and so on in the characteristics of family agricultural management, as well as anxiety about their own life in the old age and nursing of the aged in multi-generation families.

The above situation also applied to the women engaged in forestry and fishery.

Table 5 Coverage by farmer annuity

(Unit: a thousand persons %)

	1975	1980	1985	1987	1988	1989
Total number of insured	1,164	1,057	834	783	734	677
Women of them	56	52	33	31	29	27
Percentage of women	4.8	4.9	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0

Source: Surveyed by the Structural Improvement Bureau of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

(2) Time distribution for farming and housekeeping

Generally, most husbands do not do housekeeping even in the busy farming season, and in many cases, women keep housework while doing farming.

In the case of farmers raising outdoor vegetables, housewives' working hours including housekeeping exceed ten hours, longer by about an hour and half, especially in the busy farming season.

(3) Economic position of women

1) A number of women have their own properties, but most of them consists of savings and mutual aid of agricultural cooperatives, less in the basic property of real estate like farmland or residential land.

Table 6 Assets in the names of women

(Unit: %)

	Financial asset		Real estate	
	Have	Do not have	Have	Do not have
Full-time	63.2	36.8	7.1	92.9
Living mainly on farm income	59.9	40.1	7.9	92.1
Living mainly on jobs other than farming	73.7	26.3	12.6	87.4
Total	64.3	35.7	8.8	91.2

Source: "Survey on Women's View about Farm Household Economy" ('87: the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries)

## 5. Problems and Measures to be Taken

The role of women is rapidly increasing its significance in every field of agricultural production, farm household and community life, and it has become essential to utilise their ability and sense of living.

For this end, it is necessary to positively enlighten their own will for improvement and introduce proper evaluation of women, as well as to prepare conditions to promote social participation of women and stabilization of life in the old age.

### (1) Improvement of women's own will to participate in the society

1) It is necessary for women themselves to understand the necessity of their social participation and to actively create cooperative relation with the family and the community.

2) And it is important to reconsider customs and practices in the community so as to introduce proper recognition of the role of rural women and to bring about awareness of equality of the sexes and mutual cooperation, through:

- . propagation and establishment of the "Rural Women's Day" (advocated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) by the national and local governments, and;
- . support of voluntary activities of women's organizations such as the Home Living Improvement Practice Group.

Note: The "Rural Women's Day" was established with the aim of properly recognizing the role of rural women to promote trend to proper evaluation and utilization of women's abilities for the development of agriculture, forestry and fisheries and rural communities in the 21st century.

(2) Proper evaluation of agricultural labor of women and health-control measures

1) In order to ensure proper remuneration corresponding to the farming of women, it is necessary to reach agreement on its necessity and the method to carry it out among communities and families.

2) It is also necessary to prepare community environment which ensures safe and comfortable engagement of the farmers, taking into account of the characteristics of women, through:

- . establishment of evaluation method of farming of women,
- . establishment of farm management in harmony of plans for farm management and better living, and;
- . preparation of management index for improvement of farming and promotion of proper management of quality and quantity of farming and working environment based on the index.

(3) Preparation of conditions for social participation

1) It is necessary to prepare a support system in the community which enables ability development and demonstration of the ability, as well as to improve women's awareness for their active participation in the society.

2) It is also necessary to prepare conditions for women's engagement in agriculture and to make the community comfortable and active to establish attractive farm households and rural life, which are opened for urban dwellers, though:

- . support and promotion of voluntary learning activities and community activities of women,
- . establishment of a system to utilize leaders of women groups as rural area volunteers,

establishment of exchange and training facilities to be the basis for exchange and contact between cities and rural areas, and:

preparation of living facilities for easy and safe activities of women.

Also, propagation activities to establish a helper system, which gives non-farming days to women, and a labor supplement and mutual help system among farm families shall be reinforced.

(4) Stabilization of life in the old age

1) It is necessary to establish better life planning in the old age of women farmers and to ensure income for old women.

2) It is also necessary to smoothly transfer to younger generation managerial activities of home and farm to lead a useful and enjoyable life without worry, through:

- . guidance for establishment of better life plan according to life cycle,
- . offering of exemplary cases and information to set up in-family rules for smooth transfer, and;
- . promotion of activities of the aged for cultivation and processing of farm products in the area.

6. Reconsideration of the Home Living Improvement Extension Activities and Reinforcement of Support System by the Country

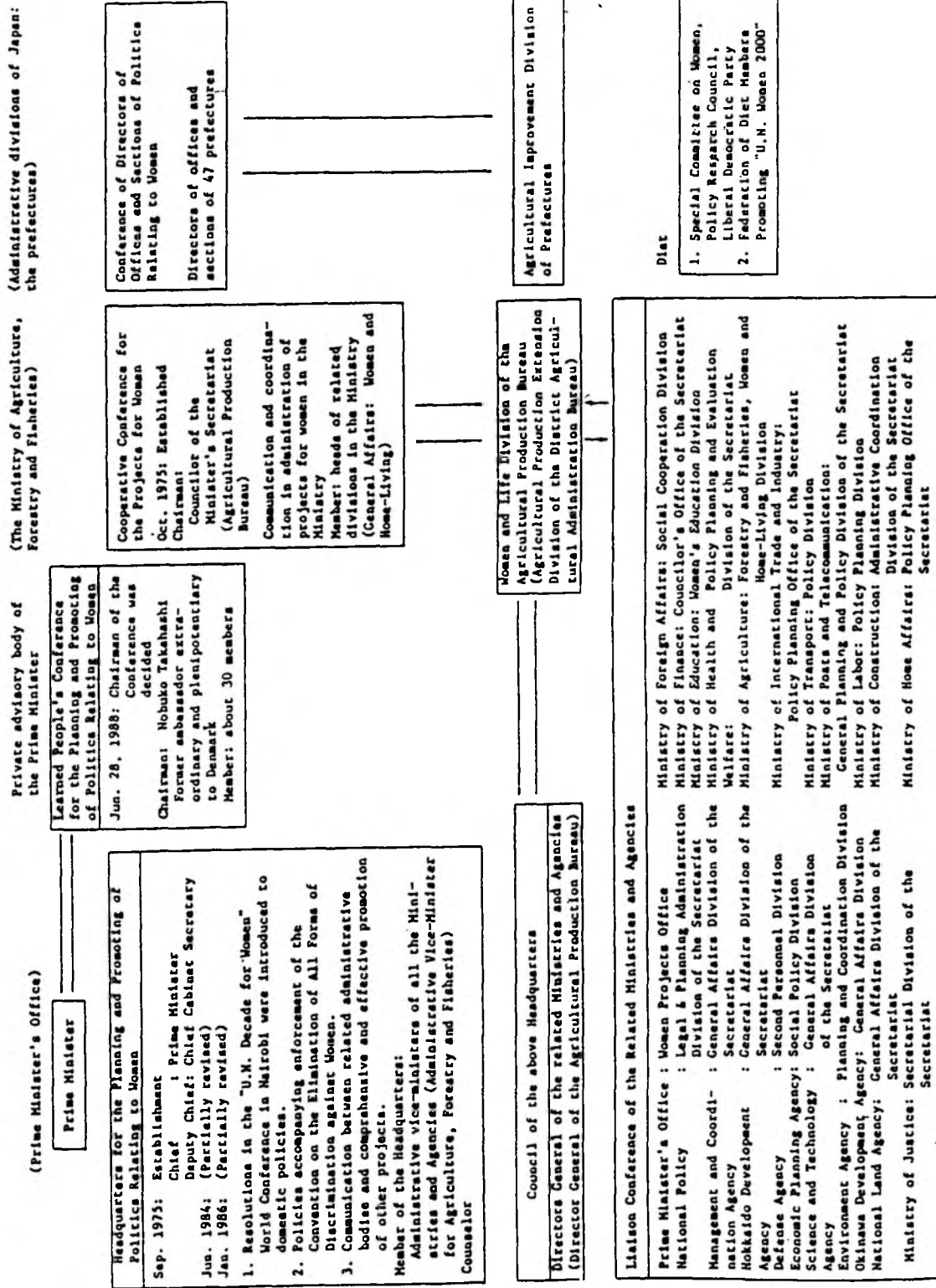
(1) In promoting the above projects for women, as mentioned in (1) 3, home living improvement in ordinary households will be reconsidered in the Home Living Improvement Work and extension activities will be enriched and reinforced in the life related fields through dealing with health problems of women farmers caused by farming, establishment of new farming management, which enables affluent and enjoyable households, in harmony of farm management plan and better family life plan, promotion of processing utilizing farm products in the area and improvement of living environment around them.

- (2) In June 1990, the Home-Living Improvement Division of the Agricultural Production Bureau was reorganized to the Women and Home-Living Division in order to understand in more detail the actual state of women in rural areas and to enrich and reinforce a system to comprehensively promote projects in the Ministry relating to rural women, while clarifying the basic direction toward improvement of the status of women.

Summary of Projects for Women

1. Position of projects for women in the whole country

Organizational Diagram of Projects for Women





Group photograph of the Training Course Participants.  
Seated fourth from left is Ms Kiyoko Takebe, President of the National Council of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives of Japan



Course Participants with Mr Takahashi, Mayor of Kitakami City, Iwate Prefecture



Participating team visiting a Fruit grading Centre of the JA-Wagachuo, Iwate Prefecture





Participants enjoyed the rice-pounding session during a cooking class demonstration held at JA Waga-chuo.



Course participants with the women leaders of the Women's Association of JA Waga-chuo.



Participants observing a make-up lesson held during their Home Stay at JA Waga-chuo



Mrs Obara, President of the Prefectural Council of Womens Association, Iwate Prefecture, together with the Kimono-dressed up participants



Ms Noorsiah Kamaruzzaman of Malaysia, Mrs Nagarathma Rao of India and Ms Subhashini Vardan of Sri Lanka posing together with Mr and Mrs Matsuda, the host family



Course participants were invited to join the 40th Congress of JA Iwate Women's Association



A visit to perishable foods sorting centre of JA Iwate Economic Federation



Harvesting grapes at a cooperative wine-yard in Japan



Participants dressed-up with Japanese Kimono together with Mrs Obara, President, and Mrs Takahashi, Vice-President of JA Iwate Council of Womens' Association



The participants visited the vegetable grading facility of the JA Iwate Towa-cho



Women members working at the fruit canning facility of a Cooperative in Malaysia

ACTIVITIES AND TASKS TO BE TACKLED  
WITHIN THE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF  
AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES-JAPAN

by

Ms Keiko Suzuki  
Office for National Council  
of Women's Association of  
Agricultural Cooperatives JA-ZENCHU

1. Organizational structure of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives

(1) Three tier system

Primary level → Prefectural level → National level

(2) Present situation of the organization (As of 1991)

Number of members	2,169,200
Number of organization in primary level	3,092 organizations
Prefectural level organization	47

(3) Problems to be tackled with

- 1) Decrease in the number of members
- 2) Aging of members
- 3) Establishment of a three category-groups system

2. Activities of the National Council of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives (JA Zen Fukyo)

(1) Policy for the activities of the National Council for Women's Association of Agri. Coops in fiscal 1992

The year 1991 was the big turning point for the National Council of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives and the organization had 40 years anniversary for its foundation. In order to realize the big target of "The Path towards 21st century for Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives", we established "The Plan for Vitalization of the National Council of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives" (San-san plan) in two years ago and the plan is implemented at present. Also, in order to expand and deepen its implementation within members and non-members of the women's association, we suggested to promote "Study campaign for 3 million women". Let's make a new step for the implementation of the plan to make women's associations of agricultural cooperatives as a fully matured organization. Four major activities to be

emphasized in the campaign are as follows.

- 1) Securing safety in dieting habits to protect health of family members.
- 2) In respond to the progress of advanced aged society,we will create a society where aged people can spend their life without anxieties.
- 3) Creating a confortable environment of the earth for our posterity through protecting our immediate living environments.
- 4) Uplifting a status of women.

(2) Results of the activities of the National council of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives in fiscal 1991

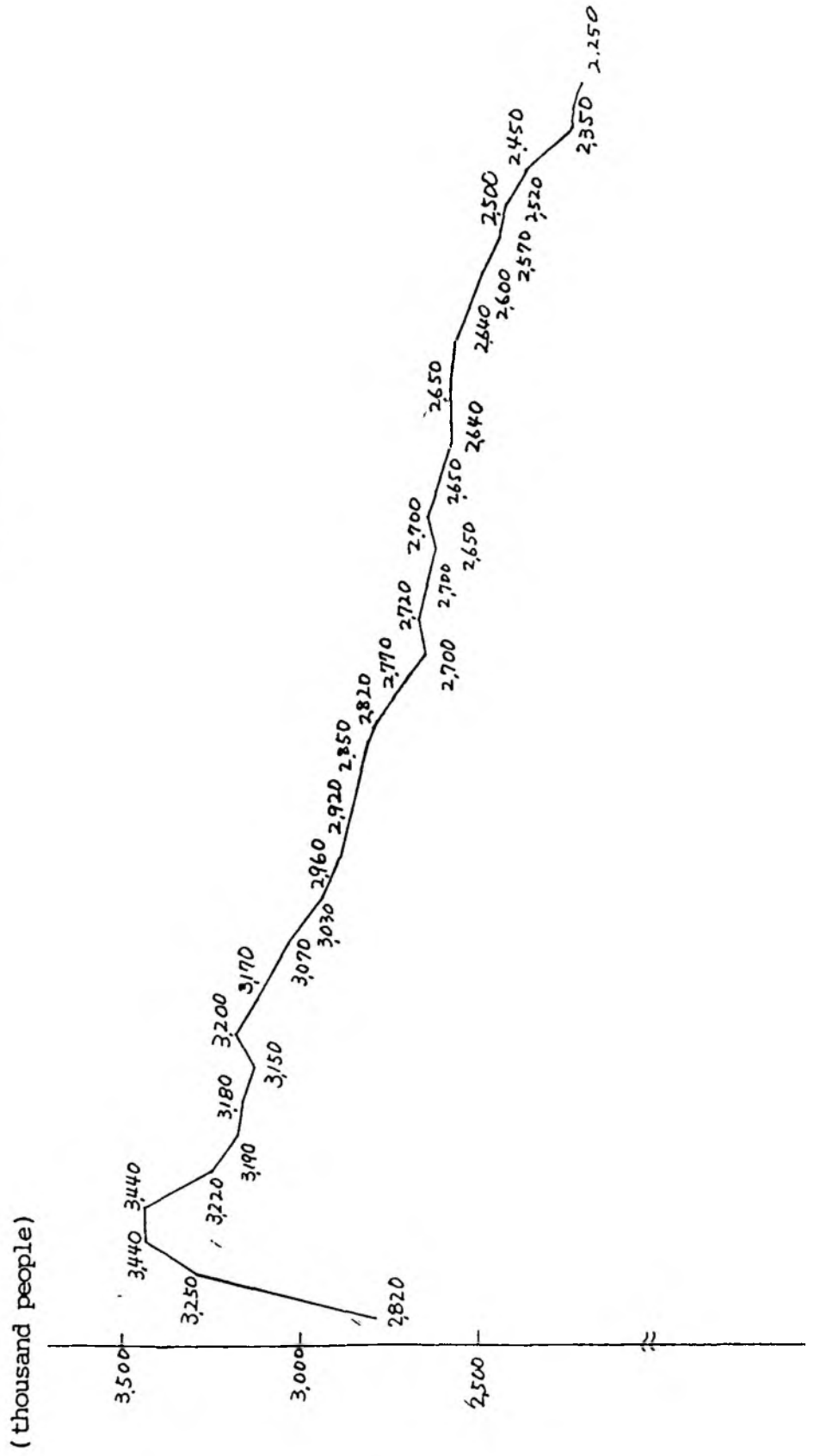
Item	Matters to be implemented by Zen-Noh Fukyo	Period for implementation
1. Measures for organizations		
(1) Dissemination of the sun-sun plan by Zen-Noh Fukyo and its implementation	1) Dissemination at district leaders training 2) Implementation of "Study campaign for 3 million women"	July-Aug. One year
(2) Dissemination and implementation of "The Path for W. A. of Agri. Coops toward 21st Century"	1) Implementation of "Plan for Vitalization of Women's Associations" and "Study meetings for 3 million women".	One year
(3) Implementation of memorial events for 40th anniversary	1) Holding 37th National Congress of Women's Association of Agri. Coop in commemoration of 40th anniversary of its foundation 2) Publication of "10 years history after 30 years anniversary"	Jan. 23, 24, 1992  March, 1992
(4) Measures for young members		
	1) Revision of naming of "Young Wives Group" Publication of pamphlet for defusion of the new name 2) Implementation of National Speech Contest for Young married ladies 3) Campaign for promotion of participation of young wives 4) Promotion of ridge walking events for mother and children	May, October  October - Application Dec. - Contest Jan. - March, 1992
(5) Promotion of women's participation	1) Implementation of campaign for officials of Women's Association to join in thier agri. coops as regular members 2) Promotion of joining agri. coops and paying share capital-savings for cultural activities	June - Start Mar. 1992 - Review  One year
(6) Holding leaders training at each district	1) Dissemination, implementation of "Sun-sun Plan of Zen-Noh Fukyo" 2) Report Meeting on Activities of Women's Assoc.	July - August
2. Measures for agriculture		
(1) Farm menegement	1) Presentation of excellent farm management 2) Extension and promotion of group acitivities such as hand made processing for each commodity	July - August  One year
(2) Promotion of safety use of agri. chemical and farm machineries	1) Promotion of safety use of agri. chemical and farm machineries	One year

Item	Matters to be implemented by Zen-Noh Fukyo	Period for implementation
(3) Measures for local residents	1) Implementation of exchanges within a area on the theme of "Foods and Agriculture" 2) Defusion and promotion of regular market by women's association 3) Supplying local products for school lunch 4) Joint sponsorship for 30th National Congress of Consumers	April ~ Dec.  One year  One year Nov. 14, 15 (Plan)
(4) Agricultural lobbying activities such as demands for producers price of rice	1) Demanding producers price of rice for 1991 measures for establishment of agricultural policy to support farmers 2) Measures for prevention of import liberalization of agricultural products	April ~ July  April ~
3. Measures for better living		
(1) Promotion of health care activities	1) Promotion of health screening 2) Reviewing dieting habits 3) Promotion of sports to maintain health	One year One year One year
(2) Activities to protect consumption life	1) Promotion of campaign to use statistics for living • Implementation of survey on living judged by book keeping activities 2) Strengthening joint purchasing activities with autonomous participation	Oct. ~ Nov.  One year
(3) Activities to protect living environment	1) Campaign to use powder soap 2) Measures for rearing children "Get-together for mother and children"	One year One year
(4) Measures for elderies	1) Promotion of helper for elderies 2) Promotion of study activities on "Aged life for women and life designing" 3) Promotion of participation in National Agriculture Midori National Pension Funds"	One year One year One year
(5) Measures for safety of living	1) Promotion of getting rid of non-insured motor bike	One year
4. Study • Suggestion activities		
(1) Suggestion activities	1) Promotion of discussion months with agri.coops	Jan.-March, 1992
(2) Study activities	1) Promotion of "Study activities for 3 million women" Producing video film Preparation of text books Promotion of using monthly magazine "Ie-no hikari" 2) Publication of series of text books 3) Publication of "Nokyo Fujinbu Dayori"	One year     Sep. ~ Nov.



Item	Matters to be implemented by Zen-Noh Fukyo	Period for implementation
	4) Reading circle for "Nihon Nogyo Shimbun" and "Ie-no-hikari" 5) Positive participation in study circle organized by agri. coop organizations and others 6) Defussion and use of "Handbook for Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives" 7) Defussion of the badge and the flag	One year  One year  One year  One year
(3) International exchange	1) Joint sponsorship of Women's Conference of Cooperatives Steering Committee Activities for Women's Committee of ICA Tokyo Congress in 1992 2) Exchange with virious visiting organizations	
5. Holding various conferences		
(1) Holding conferences for the organization	1) 41st regular meeting 2) Board of directors meeting 3) Auditors meeting 4) Presidents Conference for Presidents of Prefectural Council of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives 5) Joint Conference for Prefectural Presidents and offices	16, May 15, May, other days 15, May  March, 1992
(2) Holding various training course	1) Joint Training for Prefectural Presidents and offices 2) Joint Sponsorship for 30th National Congress of Consumers 3) Joint Sponsorship for 34th National Women's Association on "New life and saving" 4) Jont Sponsorship for memorial events for 5th Women's Day for Agri. Forestry, Mountain village Area	17, May  14-15, Nov. (Plan)  31, Jan., 1992  10, Mar., 1992 (Plan)

Trends of number of members in Women's Association of  
agricultural cooperatives



HISTORY OF THE WOMEN'S  
ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL  
COOPERATIVES IN JAPAN

by

Ms Keiko Suzuki  
Office for National  
Council of Women's Association  
of Agricultural Cooperatives JA ZENCHU

1. A Background for Establishment of Women's Association, of Agricultural Cooperatives

-In the movements of the post war period-

- (1) Situation of farmers before the World War II.
- (2) Emancipation of farmers
  - 1) 1946 Agricultural Land Reform
  - 2) 1947 Enactment of the Agricultural Cooperative Society Law
- (3) Emancipation of women
  - 1) Right for election
  - 2) Organizing women
- (4) Impoverished agriculture and village communities
  - 1) Over population
  - 2) Economic recession
  - 3) Management difficulties in agricultural Cooperatives

2. Establishment of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives (1947~ 1951)

- (1) Organizing women among immediate community groups
- (2) Initiatives taken by agricultural cooperatives
- (3) Establishment of National Liaison Council of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives in 1951

3. Contents of the activities in the initial stage

- (1) Dissemination and strengthening the organization
  - 1) Publication of News Bulletin of National Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives (Zenkoku Nokyo Fujin Dayori)
  - 2) Holding council meetings at each district
- (2) Better living activities
  - 1) Simplification of wedding and funeral ceremony
  - 2) Improvement of kitchen utensils
  - 3) Improvement of dieting habits

4) Birth control

(3) Dissemination of monthly magazine "Ie-no-hikari"  
(Light of a house)

(4) Extension of saving groups in women's associations

4. Measures taken in order to establish organizational bases

(1) Song for Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives,  
Badge for members of Women's Association of Agricultural  
Cooperatives

(2) Tasks for purification of the organization

(3) Decision of the character of Women's Association of  
Agricultural Cooperatives

1) Promotion of agricultural cooperative movement.

2) Members are to be women who engaged in farming

3) Autonomous management

4) Solidarity

5) Political neutrality

(4) Holding the 1st National Congress of Women's Association of  
Agricultural Cooperatives

5. Measures taken for expansion of the organization (1957~ 1959)

(1) Movement to produce movie film by women's association

1) 3 years movement from 1957

2) High reputations for the film "Niguruma no uta"

(2) Diversified better living activities

1) Movement to create healthy village

a. Family planning

b. Destruction of mosquitoes and flies

c. Destruction of parasitic worms

2) Holding the 1st Report Meeting on Better Living Activities  
of Agricultural Cooperatives

-Themes for report-

- "Book Keeping activities for better living"
- "Joint cooking"
- "Common bath and laundry place improved by women"
- "Piggy bank saving and establishment of a symple water supply system"
- "Book Keeping and improvement of Kitchen utensils"
- "Our group activities"
- "Better living activities stabilized"
- "Better living in a group activity"

3) Encouraging hamlet level activities

4) Grouping young wives

6. Development of the organization and the activities (1960~1974)

(1) Measures for strengthening the organization

- 1) Revision of "5 Principles of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives" and setting up "Plat form for Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives".
- 2) Publication of unified "Pocket Notebook for Women's Association"
- 3) 20 years anniversary for establishment of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives (1971)
  - a. Song of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives
  - b. Publication of "20 years History of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives"
- 4) Implementation of National Speech Contest for young wives

(2) Improving the contents of the activities

- 1) Better living activities
  - a. Campaign for life designing
  - b. Campaign to use A-Coop brand commodities
  - c. Health care activities
  - d. Consumers activities

- 2) Farm management activities
  - a. Study meeting on farming works by women and promotion of joint farming works
  - b. Measures to find jobs other than seasonal works
- 3) Agricultural lobbying activities
  - a. Participation in the Head Office of Measures for Rice of Agricultural Cooperatives
  - b. Positive agricultural lobbying activities tied up with Youth Association of Agricultural Cooperatives
- 4) Study Cultural activities
  - a. Establishment of a month to promote study meetings unified in a nation
  - b. Hobby and sports activities

(3) Relationship with other women's groups

- 1) Collaboration with womens groups in Japan
- 2) Exchange with overseas

7. Major activities after 1975

- (1) Project for promotion of exchanges between producing areas and consumption areas (1975~)
- (2) Campaign to use powder soap (1978~)
- (3) Campaign to review dieting habits (1978~)
- (4) Campaign to use statistics for living (1978~)
  - Survey on livings by the results of book Keeping-
- (5) Campaign to secure clean water for children in the cooperatives in the world (1979)
  - Saving 10 yen campaign-
- (6) Campaign to donate money for relieving famine in Africa (1985~1989)
- (7) "Stop bullying farmer, let's appeal sprits of rural women" as a motto, the national campaign to unify the organizations was promoted
- (8) Drafting "A Path Towards the 21st Century for Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives"
  - Long-term Policy of Women's Association"

Appendix I. History of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives and Agricultural Cooperatives

- 1947 Nov. Enactment of Agricultural Cooperatives Society Law
- 1949 Apr. Deciding "Policy for Agricultural Cooperataive Activities" in the National Guidance Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives (Former organization of C.U.A.C) and needs for education of farming women was emphasized
- 1950 May "National Liaison Committee for Better Living and Culture Activities for Farming Village" started publicity activities for Women's Association of Agri. Coops.
- 1951 Apr. Establishment of National Laison Council of Women's Association of Agri. Coops.
- Jun. Publication of "National Women's Association of Agri. Coops. News"
- Dec. Holding the 1st General Meeting of National Liaison Council of Women's Association of Agri. Coops.
- 1952 Song of Women's Association of Agri. Coops. and the symbol mark were decided
- 1953 Campaign for using Kumiai brand commodities started
- 1955 Sep. Decision of 5 principles of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperataives
- Dec. Holding the 1st National Congress of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives
- 1958 Mar. Reorganization of National Council of Women's Association of Agri. Coops.

Number of the member was 3,440,000 at peak



- 1959 Jan. Completion of movie film "Niguruma no Uta" produced by women's associations
- This activities was started in 1957 with contribution of 10 yen per member and the fund was targeting 32 million yen. Some members contributed by kinds such as eggs, straw, papers for recycle use. It had played a big role to strengthen the organization.
- 1960 Dec. President of National Council of Women's Association of Agri. Coops. and other women leaders participated in the 8th National Congress of Agricultural Cooperatives for the first time.
- 1961 Nov. 9th National Congress of Agricultural Cooperatives resolved to vitalize better living activities by agricultural cooperatives.
- 1963 Jan. Report meeting for the results of activities by women's associations of Agricultural Cooperatives was held.
- 1967 Apr. National Council of Women's Association of Agri. Coops. joined the Head Office of measures for rice of Agri. Coops.
- May Revision of "5 principles of Women's Associations of Agri. Coops." and decision of "Platform of Women's Associations of Agri. Coops." at the 17th General Meeting of The National Council of Women's Associations of Agri. Coops.
- 1969 Feb. Unified handbook of Women's Association of Agri. Coops. was published
- 1970 Apr. Okinawa Prefectural Council of Women's Association of Agri. Coops. joined the National Council
- Oct. "Basic Policy for Better Living Activities" was

resolved at the 12th National Congress of Agricultural Cooperatives

- 1971 Dec. 20 years anniversary for women's association "song for Women's Assn."
- 1973 Dec. National Council of Women's Association of Agri. Coops. Participated in the 1st Rural Medical Academy in Asia.  
Campaign to use A-Coop brand commodities started
- 1974 1st National speech contest for young wives.
- 1975 Discussion started to encourage women to be a regular member of agri. coops.  
Initiation of mutual exchanges between producing areas and consuming areas.
- 1977 Suggestion for strengthening ties with Agri. Coops.
- 1978 Mar. Campaign to use powder soap. Campaign to review dieting habits started.
- Oct. Starting survey on living of farmhouseholds by book keeping.
- 1979 Mar. Developing campaign for 10 yen coin savings to supply clean water to children in the world cooperatives.
- 1980 Sep. Representative of N.C.W.A.A.C. participated in the ICA Regional seminar for Women leaders held in Sri Lanka.
- 1981 Jan. 26th National Congress of Women's Association of Agri. Coops. made agreement on women participation in Agricultural Cooperatives as regular members.
- 1982 Feb. C.U.A.C. decided policies for fostering Youth Associations and Women's Associations of Agri. Coops.
- 1985 Sep. Campaign for relieving African Countries from

starvation 200 million yen were donated.

- 1986 Sep. Drafting "3 year Plan for Vitalizing Local Activities of Women's Association of Agri. Coops."
- 1988 Jul. "Stop bullying farmer, let's appeal sprits of rural women as a motto, the national campaign to unify the organizations was promoted.
- Nov. Decision of "The Path towards the 21st century for Women's Association of Agri. Coops. - Long-term policy of Women's Associations"
- 1989 Oct. Participation in the ICA Women's Committee for the first time.
- 1990 may Drafting a plan to strengthen Women's Association by N.C.W.A.A.C.
- 1990 Nov. First publication of news bulletin "Fureai" for all members of Women's Associations of Agri. Coops.
- 1991 Jan. Initiating study meeting campaign for 3 million members of Women's Association of Agri. Coops.

Appendix II Progress of a general society and women's activities

- 1945 Oct. Right to election for women was decided.
- 1949 Apr. The 1st women's week implemented.
- 1950 Oct. Establishment of Alliance for Protection of Human Right for Women.
- 1952 Mar. Decision of campaign to consume rice under control 1 Gou (0.18 liters) for 1 person every day by House Wives Federation (Shufuren)
- Jul. Establishment of National Federation of Regional Women's Groups.
- 1953 Mar. 1st National Report Meeting for improving living in rural area.
- Apr. Establishment of Japan Federation of Women's Organizations (FUDANREN)
- Aug. . House Wives Federation Started 10 yen Soybean Curd Campaign
- 1954 Feb. National Congress for Women held in the occasion of enactment of the Anti-Prostitution Law
- Nov. Establishment of the council to oppose recovery of the family system
- 1955 Jun. The 1st Japan Mothers Congress
- Jul. Participantion in the World Mothers Congress
- 1956 Apr. 1st Congress for Working Women
- June 1st International Conference for Working Women
- Dec. Establishment of National Council of Consumers

organizations

- 1957 Feb. 1st National Consumers Congress
- 1959 Sep. Establishment of National Council of Women's  
Association of Fisheries Cooperatives
- 1964 Mar. Establishment of Study Circle Liaison Meeting for  
better living groups
- 1965 Dec. National Congress to oppose price hike
- 1966 Dec. Tokyo Local Court judged the system to retire after  
marriage against the constitution
- 1968 Jun. Holding the 1st women's consumers cooperative school
- 1970 May Enactment of Home Industry Law
- Sep. 5 consumers groups refrained to buy Coloured T.V.  
Sets
- 1971 Jul. Akita bank brought the issue of equal wage for man and  
woman to the court
- 1972 Feb. National Congress to oppose price hike
- 1973 Nov. Shortage of toilet paper--- people rushed to stores
- 1974 Nov. National Congress to stop using chemical detergent
- 1975 Jun. International Women's Year World Congress
- 1976 Jan. Ms. Nobuko Takahashi Shuffled to the Deputy Secretary  
General of I.L.O.
- 1977 Oct. National Women Education Hall was established by  
Ministry of Education
- 1979 Jun. Establishment of Japan Women's Academy

- Oct. National Congress to oppose sales tax
- 1980 Jul. World congress for International Women's Year
- 1985 Nov. "U.N. 10 years for Women" Japan Congress--- action target to improve status was resolved
- 1986 Apr. Enactment of Law to Protect Equal Oppotunity of Employment for Men and Women
- 1989 Apr. Adoption of sales tax

## THE PATH TO THE 21ST CENTURY

### Long-Term Policy of the Activities of the Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives

November 28, 1988

The National Council of Women's Associations of Agricultural Cooperatives

#### Introduction: Planting A Tree For Our Future

Since its establishment, the Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives (hereafter, the "Women's Association") has been active in a wide range of fields. These activities included the original production of the movie "Niguruma no uta (The Song of A Cart)," the advocate of the individual consciousness and cooperative activities, and the worldwide promotion of drinking of clear water for children of cooperatives to save their lives.

Currently, we are undertaking an extensive variety of nationwide agricultural, lifestyle, and cultural activities, which has taken firm roots in the practice of the three-year plan for the promotion of regional activities.

At the same time, however, we are facing situations where members are leaving the Women's Association and non-agricultural employment of the members increases. We now stand at a point where the basic stance of the Division needs to be reviewed.

The environment surrounding us has become increasingly severe, rapidly heading for the direction that will deny us the joy of agricultural life in harmony with the Nature and of working in cooperation.

We now should have a clear grasp of the trend of the times, standing firmly. We consider that present circumstances demand us to take a serious review of ourselves, the quality of lifestyle, and the stance of the Division and to have a definite, forward-looking orientation for ourselves.

We would like to plant a tree, marking the first step of the Women's Association's confident path toward the 21st century.

Through growing up of this tree large for the following generations, we sincerely wish to uplift the power of the women of cooperatives nationwide.

## Two Orientations of the Division

Both agricultural cooperatives and the Women's Association now face new challenges of violently changing times, which comprises mixed locations of agricultural areas, depopulation, large decrease and diversification of farming households, women's advance into society, and the increasing responsibility of women as the central bearer of agriculture.

We should overcome these challenges and look toward the 21st century with ideals and affluence based on a review of our total lifestyle, taking advantage of the benefits of Japan's agricultural and fishery products, and through establishing a healthy and cultural food life. With this in view, we set the following two orientations for ourselves.

- (1) We aim to become a pioneering builder of communities that are rich of heart. On the basis of agricultural cooperatives, we will spearhead the promotion of building up comfortable communities that emphasize the importance of agriculture and nature through extensive exchanges with local people.
- (2) We aim at a joint participation by men and women in agricultural cooperatives activities. Women should also participate in these activities as cooperative members, which will promote the practice of joint-partnership cooperative activities.

## Four Problems and Suggested Solutions

- (1) Does the Womens's Association's activities reflect all of members' voices?

Due to an increasing diversification of the lifestyle of individual members and the operations of agriculture, it has become difficult for the Women's Association to respond to all opinions among the members. This has resulted in a tendency where the Women's Association's activities are likely to be based on certain sectors or the management personnel of the Organization, leaving away general members from the Women's Association. Efforts



should be made to listen to opinions of individual members, however small, and to respond to them, thereby leading the Division's activities to reflect those voices.

- (2) Are the Women's Association's activities sufficiently deep and broad-based?

With an increasingly stronger tendency where the members of the Women's Association participate only on the occasions they are urged to, self-motivated proposals are hard to come up, thereby making the activities shallow and limited, and giving little influence on the community as a whole. In order to overcome this problem the content of the activities should be made deeper and broader so that it can cover the community as a whole.

- (3) Are sufficient numbers of successors secured?

Sufficient efforts have not been made to encourage the participation of young members to succeed current activities, casting a shadow on the development of the Women's Association in the future. This calls for making an effort to positively respond to the problems of young farming females and female employees in non-agricultural sectors, thereby expanding the number of the young members.

- (4) Are the Women's Associations playing a central role in cooperative activities?

The number of female members of agricultural cooperatives is extremely small, and the opportunities to reflect their opinions on the cooperatives are limited, too. This has made an embarrassment among female members. Efforts should be made to expand the scope of women's activities in the cooperatives in order to encourage further participation by women with a view to promoting the activities to protect the members' life and farm management. The Division should try to upgrade its capabilities and seek stronger operations of cooperatives.

### III . Concrete Measures To Be Taken

#### (1) Strengthening of Activities

##### i) Confirmation of a personal way of life

- a) The activities will cover extensive areas of basic study concerning the problems of life, agriculture, cooperatives, and women, thereby confirming an independent way of living.
- b) Personal approaches will be made, which includes hobbies, working goals, acquisition of qualifications, and the involvement in local communities and the Women's Association's activities.

##### ii) Establishment of an independent lifestyle

- a) Annual health checks and physical buildups will be promoted, enhancing the awareness of health.
- b) Activities will be promoted to protect households from dangerous food imports, thereby establishing a healthy, cultural food life that enjoys the precious benefits of Japan's agricultural and fishery products.
- c) With a view to promoting the obtainment of safe, fresh, and high-quality food products at inexpensive prices, purchasing activities centered on nearby, reliable cooperatives will be positively encouraged.
- d) Agricultural products processed by fellow members will be included in the joint-purchase product items to be exchanged among members and the Women's Associations.
- e) Positive undertakings will be made to create opportunities where unmarried men and women can get to know each other.

iii) Positive participation in agriculture

- a) Efforts will be made to promote the reduction of expenses and costs, and the improvement of production technologies, thereby encouraging individual members to have a firm concept of agriculture and to nurture managing capabilities together with the member's family.
- b) For the purpose of producing safe, fresh, and good-quality products, the reduction of agricultural chemicals will be encouraged on the basis of nurturing soil, and services promoted to clarify the place of origin and the name of producer, and to introduce the way of cooking.
- c) Positive participation in regional farm management group activities and producers group activities will be encouraged, which will contribute to establish a brand production area.
- d) Integrated efforts with cooperatives will be made concerning the research, development and marketing of processing-profit business by the Women's Association's of Agricultural Processing Group.
- e) With a view to the effective utilization of women's agricultural technologies, the "workers'bank," or the bank for labor exchanges, will be established, thereby promoting mutual offer of labor forces.

iv) For providing a comfortable life for the elderly

- a) Exchanges will be made concerning the ways and means to have a healthy, enjoyable life.
- b) Activities will be made to encourage planning of revenues and expenses for a safe personal life.
- c) Mutual assistance will be promoted as well as making requirements on the administrative authorities.

v) For a lively local community

- a) Joint meetings with local consumer and citizen organizations will be promoted to discuss food and agricultural situations in the area.
- b) Making a direct linkage with the citizens' kitchens will be encouraged through promoting the fairs of fresh, safe agricultural products and hand-made processed foods.
- c) The problems of children will be addressed in cooperation with local citizens, including the "hand-made" playing gardens to be created in the natural environment and the school lunch with a unique local feature.

vi) For broadening the scope of women

- a) Participation of women in the membership and representatives of Agricultural Cooperatives will be encouraged for a more independent cooperative movement.
- b) Participation of women in public council institutions, e.g., agricultural committees and land improvement districts, will be promoted to reflect their opinions on agricultural policies.

vii) Providing places to get together

- a) Requests will be made to cooperatives for the establishment of women's training centers that will enable the members and local residents to get together in an easy atmosphere.
- b) Management of tea parlors, reform centers, laundry corners, processed-product corners, and other women's shops will be encouraged to provide places for practical conveniences and information exchanges.

viii) International exchanges

- a) International exchanges will be promoted with a view to broadening the scope of farming women in Japan.

(2) Strengthening of the Organization

i) Provision of "arenas" for easy participation

- a) Aiming at the activities closely related to living and farm management, we will encourage each member to make her own proposal and will undertake inquiry surveys, which will be summarized and responded to. The provision of arenas for easy-to-join activities will be promoted.

ii) Broader, deeper activities

- a) A variety of groups will be set up in response to diversified requirements of the members, enabling the members to manage independently and to share the joy achievement.
- b) Individual group activities will be specialized to deepen their content.
- c) Each group or special department will be encouraged to concentrate on a single objective, thereby avoiding the mannerism of activities and promoting inter-group exchanges.
- d) The appointment of activity leaders will be encouraged to support group activities and hamlet level activities.

iii) Expansion of the number of members

- a) Participation of plural members from a single household will be encouraged to resolve the problems and concerns of a wide range of female generations through a direct participation. Organizations of activities will be

divided according to generations or positions.

- b) Non-participants will be organized into groups, through efforts such as the plural participation from a single household, objective-oriented group activities, and the activities based on generations and positions.

iv) Strengthening of directorship system

- a) The system will be strengthened where each director can realize her responsibility through training sessions, etc., increase the capability of independent management, and concentrate on activities of the Women's Association.
- b) The formation of directors will reflect in principle the age construction of the members. However, in view of the nature of the directors' responsibility, the limitations on the age or the tenure of office of directors will be considered in favor of rejuvenation.

v) Improvement of independent financial sources

- a) The Women's Association's institutional expenses will be reimbursed by its budget, which includes those of directors' meetings, general and other meetings, specialist groups, organs, and money due to prefectural organizations.

vi) Strengthening of the secretariat

- a) The appointment of full-time personnel for female matters within an agricultural cooperative will be proposed to cooperatives, thereby strengthening the secretariat of the Women's Association.

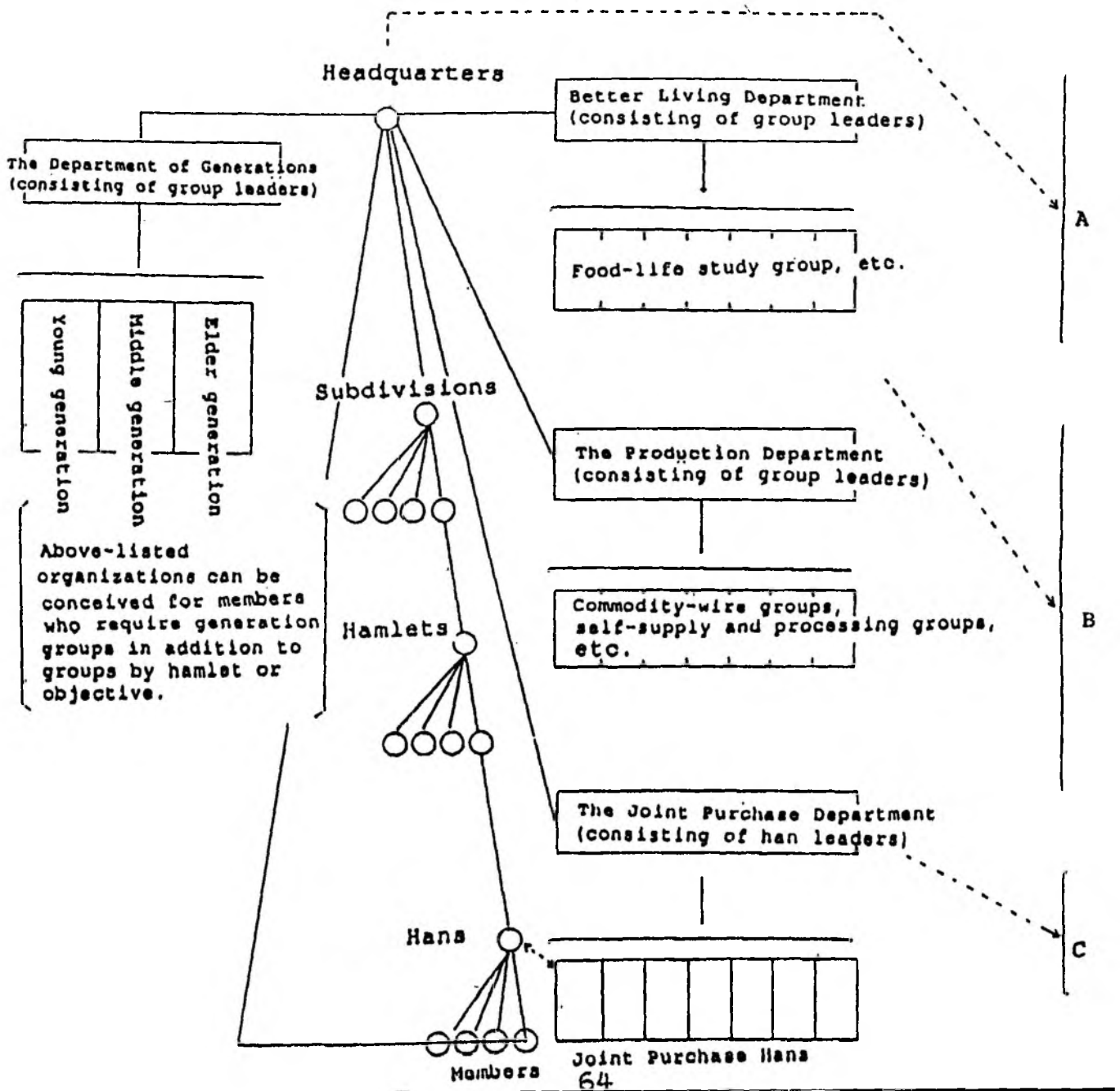
vii) Improvement of the organizational structure

- a) The establishment of the following organizational structure will be suggested in order to resolve the problems facing the Women's Associations and to respond

to members's requirements. This will assist the Women's Associations to facilitate its community-oriented activities.

Building up of an organization based on the initiative of the members

---A federation of objective-oriented, autonomously-managed organizations (Autonomous organizations should be established, where, although based on hamlet levels, groups actively pursue individual objectives. The Women's Association Headquarters should control these organizations.)



#### A. Headquarters

- \* The Headquarters consist of subdivision managers and individual group leaders.
- \* The Headquarters are responsible for the planning/study of the Primary-level matters such as total coördination, common activities, budget control, information provision, and the basic policy of the Women's Association.
- \* Common activities of the Headquarters include agricultural festivals, sports events, health checks, improvement of female status, overseas exchanges, meetings, and general meeting. Information concerning common activities are conveyed both through subdivisions/hamlets and through subject-matter groups.

#### B. Groups by objective

- \* Each group shall consist of approximately ten members and shall be managed independently. The expenses of group shall be reimbursed by the Headquarters budget and beneficiaries.
- \* A meeting of group leaders consists of individual group leaders.
- \* A meeting of group leaders is responsible for inter-group adjustments, budget control, information provision, etc.
- \* Common activities of the meeting of group leaders include presentation meetings, exhibitions, and inter-group and inter-organizational exchanges.
- \* Group members can be renewed every 1 - 2 years, or plural groups with a same objective can be admitted.

#### C.

- \* All members shall participate in the Joint Purchase Department, in principle.
- \* Otherwise, the Joint Purchase Department can consist primarily of members who wish to make a joint purchase of, say, fresh



food. Conventional joint purchases can be made by joint purchase plans.

From the New National Plan of Action Towards 2000  
May 1991

**Basic Direction and Development of Measures**

## **Promotion of Measures for Women in Agricultural, Mountain and Fishing Villages**

Agriculture, forestry and fisheries policies contain clear measures concerning women in agricultural, mountain and fishing villages (hereinafter referred to as "women"), and seek to improve the structure set in place to promote measures which give positive and concrete recognition to their capabilities and roles, and which make effective use of their skills.

In agricultural, mountain and fishing villages women play a key role in production and regional activities, but in many cases the importance of this role is not properly recognized. Consequently, the government is pushing ahead with educational measures aimed at changing customs and practices that are based on an entrenched male-female role-division consciousness, and also strengthening the economic standing of women. The government is also working to improve the skills, business management capabilities, and working conditions of women engaged in agriculture, forestry or fisheries. Priority is also being given to laying the foundations which will enable women, the backbone of regional productivity and life, to take part in voluntary activities on their initiative.

## **Goal**

To promote measures for women in agricultural, mountain and fishing villages

### **Basic Measures (Fiscal 1987- 2000)**

(1) Enlightenment and guidance so that the role of women in agricultural, mountain and fishing villages is given proper recognition.

- a. Undertake educational campaigns aimed at women in agricultural, mountain and fishing villages (hereinafter referred to as "women") and regional society in general with a view to abolishing customs and practices based on an entrenched male-female role-division consciousness.
- b. Foster learning and training activities which deal with the knowledge and skills necessary to develop the role of women so as to facilitate their participation in the community and raise their status in society; and promote greater cooperation among women's agricultural, forestry and fisheries organizations at the local, prefectural and national levels.
- c. Give educational guidance aimed at enhancing the economic standing of women, and providing stability and comfort in their later years.
- d. Conduct surveys and research and provide data with the object of contributing to the proper recognition of the role fulfilled by women.

(2) Promotion of measures aimed at improving the skills, business management capabilities, and working conditions of women engaged in agriculture, forestry or fisheries.

- a. Promote measures which will contribute to improving the skills and business management capabilities of women in agriculture, forestry or fisheries so that they can participate more actively in management.
- b. Contribute to the elevation of the economic standing of women by promoting higher agricultural productivity through business rationalization.
- c. Promote improvements to the working environment and working conditions so that women can work safely and with relative comfort.

(3) Support for women in their efforts to improve their lives in agricultural, mountain and fishing villages.

- a. Promote the establishment of a system for effective use of labour based on mutual assistance in the regional community so as to hasten the development of new roles for women and the elderly and to form regional communities that are full of vitality.
- b. Promote the improvement of the production and living environment for the purpose of developing a comfortable environment.
- c. Support various activities by women so that they can realize a good life, taking into account actual conditions in agricultural, mountain and fishing villages

(4) Promotion of women's participation in policy decisions related to regional agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

Conduct educational campaigns to promote women's active participation in policy-making decisions at the various regional agricultural, forestry and fisheries bodies, such as agricultural committees, marine fisheries adjustment committees, agricultural cooperatives, and fisheries cooperatives.

#### **Concrete Measures (Fiscal 1991-1995)**

(1) Enlightenment and guidance so that the role of women in agricultural, mountain and fishing villages is given proper recognition.

- a. Promote educational and information campaigns that will pave the way for the setting up and general acceptance of such social measures as a "Rural Women's Day" as a means of bringing about change in customs and practices based on an entrenched male-female role-division consciousness, which is still prevalent in the home and in regional communities, and thereby elevating the status of women in agricultural, mountain and fishing villages (hereinafter referred to as "women").
- b. Further promote educational campaigns for women and various related regional organizations as a means of advancing women's participation in all fields.

- c. Promote information exchange and improvement of leadership capabilities within women's agricultural, forestry and fisheries organizations so as to strengthen cooperation among them, and make them much more active in regional society.
- d. Promote educational campaigns which will ensure that women receive the proper recognition for the role that they fulfil and that suitable salary levels are clearly laid down so as to contribute to the strengthening of their economic standing; and also facilitate management transfer will clarification of the amount that women have contributed when taking over business operations.
- e. Promote educational campaigns for women engaged in agriculture and fisheries with regard to the purpose and details of the national annuity fund system, a supplementary system to the basic annuity.
- f. Further promote the development of research and statistical information so that the actual circumstances of women in production and daily life can be accurately grasped.

2) Promotion of measures aimed at improving the skills, business management capabilities, and working conditions of women engaged in agriculture, forestry or fisheries.

- a. Promote women's voluntary learning activities and an expansion of the opportunities for them to improve their capabilities, such as various kinds of training and technical exchanges aimed at improving skills and business management capabilities related to agriculture, forestry and fisheries, so that they can participate more actively in management.
- b. Develop a manual which will make business diagnosis and planning possible based on the the overall agriculture, forestry and fisheries business conditions by looking at management and the household economy, and give guidance on formulating a medium- to long-term life plan based on the manual.
- c. Promote improvements to the working conditions of people engaged in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, such as appropriate working hours, inspections of the working environment, and provision of non-work days so that they can work in safety and comfort.

(3) Support for women in their efforts to improve their lives in agricultural, mountain and fishing villages.

- a. Promote the establishment of a supplementary labour system and helper system on a mutual-help basis in a region so that women can more readily participate in farming and community activities.
- b. Promote the improvement of the production and living environment in agricultural, mountain and fishing villages through the formulation of plans for regional development that makes effective use of the nature and scenery around these villages, based on examination and diagnosis of the surrounding production and living environment.
- c. Support women's regional community activities, such as village vitalization activities, regional environmental preservation, passing down or creation of regional culture, and exchanges with city dwellers, as a means of forming vibrant communities in agricultural, mountain and fishing villages.

(4) Promotion of women's participation in policy decisions related to regional agriculture, forestry and fisheries.-

- a. Promote women's participation in policy-making decisions at the various regional agricultural, forestry and fisheries bodies, such as agricultural committees, marine fisheries adjustment committees, agricultural cooperatives, and fisheries cooperatives, by way of campaigns aimed at educating the women themselves and the various organizations as to the necessity for women's participation; and also promote the improvement of women's capacities that can back up this participation, an increase in the opportunities for women to state their views, and women's entry into the various associations as full members.
- b. Encourage local public bodies that women should have more chance for qualifications and titles which give certain standing and recognition, such as "farmer" and "fisherman", in order to promote the activities of women as regional leaders.
- c. Encourage local public bodies and related organizations to promote the participation of women in the development of the regional vision, such as plans to create a comfortable environment.

WOMEN AND COOPERATIVES RELATED BOOKS

An Overview of Gender Integration and Women in Cooperative Development in the Asia-Pacific Region. W.U. Herath. 1992. pp.85. Rs.100/US\$15.

Gender Integration in Cooperatives-FIJI. M.Vuluvano. 1992. pp.84. Rs.100/US\$15.

Gender Integration in Cooperatives-PAKISTAN. Shahnaaz Kazi. 1992. pp.74. Rs.100/US\$15.

Gender Integration in Cooperatives-THAILAND. Pailin Supakitvilekagarn. 1992. pp.51. Rs.100/US\$15.

Gender Integration in Cooperatives-KOREA DPR. Gang Jung OK. 1992. pp.19. Rs.100/US\$15.

Gender Integration in Cooperatives-SRI LANKA. Chandra Rupasinghe. 1992. pp.62. Rs.100/US\$15.

Women in Development Through Fishery Cooperatives in Asia. Editor MMK Wali. 1990. pp.147. Rs.150/US\$25.

Housewives in Consumer Cooperatives (Housewives' Involvement in Consumer Cooperatives in Japan). 1989. pp.141. Rs.100/US\$15.

First ICA/Japan Training Course for Rural Women Leaders of Agricultural Cooperatives in Asia, 1991. -Report by MV Madane. 1992. pp.29. Rs.100/US\$15.

Second ICA/Japan Training Course for Rural Women Leaders of Agricultural Cooperatives in Asia, 1992. -Report by Dr Daman Prakash. 1992. pp.70. Rs.100/US\$15.

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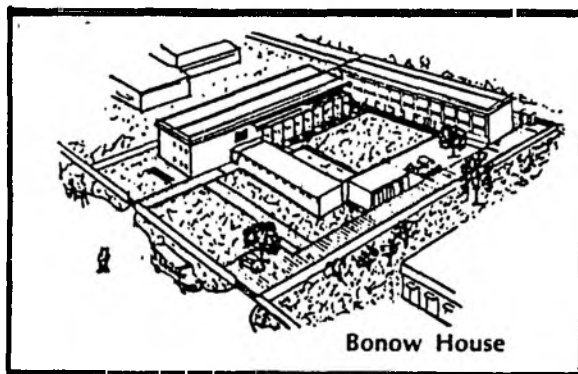
## ICA DOMUS TRUST

(Established in the memory  
of Dr. Mauritz Bonow)

The ICA DOMUS TRUST, registered in November 1988, was created in the memory of Dr Karl Mauritz Bonow, (of Sweden), former President of the International Cooperative Alliance (1962-1975). He initiated and introduced the idea of Swedish international assistance for cooperatives known as Fund Without Boundaries. He was responsible for the establishment of the ICA Regional Office in Asia and for creating a permanent work-place for the ICA in the Asia-Pacific Region. In recognition of the work and contribution made by him, the present building housing the offices of the ICA Regional Office in New Delhi was named Bonow House in 1975.

The main objectives of the ICA DOMUS TRUST are, among others, propagation of Cooperative Principles; promotion of cooperatives; assist cooperative organisations/movements in encouraging genuine, self-supporting and technically sound cooperative organisations; bringing out publications for the promotion of teaching and study of Cooperation; undertaking cooperative education and training activities and promoting collaboration between cooperatives and the State, etc.

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The International Cooperative Alliance is one of the oldest non-governmental international organisations. It is a worldwide confederation of cooperative organisations of all types. Founded in London on 18th August 1895, the ICA has affiliates in 77 countries with 195 national and ten International level cooperative organisations as members serving over 648 million individual members at the primary level. The ICA is the only international organisation entirely and exclusively dedicated to the promotion of Cooperation in all parts of the world. The ICA holds Consultative Status of Category-I in the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN/ECOSOC).

Besides the head office in Geneva, Switzerland, there are four regional offices viz. the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in New Delhi, India (established in 1960); the Regional Office for East, Central and Southern Africa at Moshi, Tanzania (established in 1968); the Regional Office for West Africa at Abidjan, Ivory Coast (established in 1979) and the Regional Office for Central America and the Carribeans at San Jose, Costa Rica (established in 1989).

The ICA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ICA ROAP) serves 54 national level organisations from 19 countries, representing nearly 440 million individual cooperators. These countries are: Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Democratic Republic of Korea, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, USSR and Vietnam.

Main activities of the ROAP include coordination of cooperative development efforts within the region and promotion of exchanges and experiences; project identification, formulation and evaluation; promotion of establishment and development of national cooperative apex organisations; and organisation of seminars and conferences on specific subjects including support for programmes aiming at the involvement of women and youth in cooperative activities.

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