

3rd Training Course on
**EMPOWERING WOMEN IN
BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT OF
AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES**

Thailand-Japan: 14th July to 10th August 2019



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Report of the
**3rd Training Course on
Empowering Women in Business and
Management of Agricultural Cooperatives**
Thailand – Japan
14th July to 10th August 2019

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COURSE REPORT

SECTION-I

Executive Summary

Background

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

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

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

Introduction

The International Cooperative Alliance (Alliance) is an independent, non-governmental organisation established in 1895 to unite, represent and serve cooperatives worldwide. The Alliance provides a global voice and forum for knowledge, expertise and coordinated action for and about cooperatives. The members of the Alliance are international and national cooperative organisations from all sectors of the economy. The Alliance has 310 members from over 105 countries, representing close to one billion individuals worldwide. According to the World Coop Monitor (<http://www.monitor.coop>) the world's top 300 cooperatives generate 2.6 trillion USD in turnover. Cooperatives generate partial or full-time employment for at least 250 million individuals worldwide, either in or within the scope of cooperatives, making up almost 12% of the entire employed population of the G20 countries.

Operating from a global office in Brussels (Belgium), the Alliance is organized with four Regional Offices - Europe, Africa, Americas and Asia-Pacific. The ICA-AP which was inaugurated in India in **1960** takes care of **109** members from **32** countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

Training Course

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of the Government of Japan has chosen the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) to implement an umbrella Project on "Capacity Building in Agricultural Sector in Asia and Africa (CB Project)" for three years starting from 2017.

Under this Project, the **3rd** Training Course on "Empowering Women in Business and Management of Agricultural Cooperatives" was held in Thailand and Japan. Part-**I** of the Training Course was held in Thailand in collaboration with the Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT) from 14th to 21st July 2019 and Part-**II** in Japan in collaboration with the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA) from 22nd July to 10th August. The Training Course was funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Government of Japan, and implemented by ICA.

Objective

The objective of the training course was to assist capacity building of leaders of rural women for promotion of active participation in organizational management and organized business activities in the countries of the South-East Asia and South-Asia countries.

Course Participants

Six (6) women participants were selected by ICA-AP for the Training Course from the following five countries– India, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal and Thailand. A list of participants is placed at Section-XI.

Home Country Assignments (HCA)

The selected participants undertook their Home Country Assignments (HCA) for a period of one week (08-13 July) prior to the actual commencement of the Training Course. They prepared a Country Report on the format supplied by us. They also prepared a draft Action Plan after discussion with their seniors in the organization on the format supplied by us. The purpose was to write down the ideas for the finalization of action plan in IDACA based on the experience and knowledge gained during the training course in Thailand and Japan. This helped them to explain and implement the action plan prepared in Japan after the training course for the development of their own organizations including social and economic activities to meet the objective of the Training Course.

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

Part-I: Study Visits in Thailand

A one-week study visit program with a focus on observation of the activities of cooperatives/women groups and social institutions was held in Thailand from 14th to 21st July 2019 in collaboration with the Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT) – a member organization of ICA.

Part-II: Training Course in Japan

Part-**II** of the Training Course, including field study visits, was held in Japan for 20 days (22nd July to 10th August 2019). The Training Course was conducted by and located at IDACA. Some of the key subjects covered at IDACA were:

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

Financial Support

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries [MAFF] of the Government of Japan contributed funds to the 3rd Training Course on "Empowering Women in Business and Management of Agricultural Cooperatives" which was followed by a grant for its implementation. The ICA is highly appreciative of the contribution made and grateful to the Government of Japan for this gesture.

Acknowledgements

In the implementation of the 3rd Training Course, the ICA has received full support and cooperation from the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives (JA-ZENCHU); Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries [MAFF] of the Government of Japan; Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia [IDACA] in Japan; Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT); and other ICA member-organisations in the Region. The ICA is grateful to its member-organisations for their support.

Administrative Arrangements

Mr. K. Sethu Madhavan, Advisor-Membership, ICA-AP, was responsible for the conduct of the 3rd Training Course. The entire Training Course was coordinated and implemented by him for its full duration, under the direction of the ICA Regional Director for Asia and Pacific.

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

Summary of the Time Table

The following was the summary of the timetable:

<i>Home Country Assignments (HCAs)</i>	:	<i>8th to 13th July 2019</i>
<i>Arrival of Participants in Bangkok</i>	:	<i>14th July</i>
<i>Part-I: Field Study Visits in Thailand</i>	:	<i>15th to 21st July</i>
<i>Arrival of Participants in Narita-Japan</i>	:	<i>22nd July</i>
<i>Part-II: Training Course in Japan-IDACA</i>	:	<i>23rd July to 9th August</i>
<i>Departure of Participants from Japan</i>	:	<i>10th August</i>

SECTION-II

Inauguration of Part-I of the Training Course in Thailand

The inauguration of Part-I of the 3rd Training Course on "Empowering Women in Business and Management of Agricultural Cooperatives" was held in the forenoon of 16th July at the premises of Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT). The inaugural session was attended by Mr. Chatnara Netinawin, Board of Director of CLT; Mr. Phanuwat Wanraway, Director of International Cooperative Department of CLT; Mr. K. Sethu Madhavan, Advisor-Membership/Program Coordinator, ICA-AP and several CLT officers and staff.

Mr. Chatnara Netinawin welcomed the participants and the guests on behalf of the CLT Chairman who is away on a business tour to Malaysia and Singapore. He said that the CLT is a regular member of ICA for many years and it has the honour to organize this international training program in Thailand for the last six years. He said that the CLT is intensely involved in empowering women in business and management of agricultural cooperatives which is the theme of the training course. CLT is the apex organisation and 8,263 different types of cooperatives are affiliated to it. The Government of Thailand extends a lot of support to women group activities and the products produced by women groups are displayed in CLT premises.

He assured the participants that they would enjoy their stay in Thailand. CLT staff has made good arrangements for field study visits in Thailand. He urged upon the participants to transfer the knowledge they will gain in Thailand and Japan to their colleagues' back home.

Finally, he wished the participants from the five countries a comfortable stay and meaningful visits in Thailand. He also conveyed his appreciation to the women groups and the cooperatives that the participants will be visiting during their stay in Thailand.

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

After the inauguration, a presentation on the Cooperative Movement of Thailand and CLT was made by Mr. Phanuwat Wanraway, Head of International Affairs, Cooperative Business Bureau, Cooperative League of Thailand, for the benefit of the participants.

Background

Cooperatives in Thailand, like in all developing countries, have been initiated by the government since 1915 with the prime aim of being a means of improving the livelihood of small farmers. This is due to the increasing debt problem faced by farmers shifting from self-sufficient economy to trade economy. Natural disasters such as droughts and floods have further worsened the debt situation of the farmers. Consequently, they have lost their farmland and became laborers, leaving their debts unpaid.

The first cooperative in Thailand was named Wat Chan Cooperative Unlimited Liability and was established by the Government on 26th February 1916, in Phitsanulok. It followed the Raiffeisen credit cooperative type with the single purpose of providing farm credit and being organized as a small village credit cooperative to help severely indebted farmers. The success of this type of cooperative in preventing many farmers' land led to the increasing number of small village credit cooperatives all over the country from being foreclosed by the money lenders. Small credit cooperatives had prevailed in the country

Opening of the Training Course at the Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT)



Field Study Visits in Thailand



until 1983 when other types of cooperatives were then established in response to the people needs (i.e. production and consumer cooperatives).

The increasing number of cooperatives also led to the establishment of the "Cooperative Bank" in 1947 through government capital. Village credit cooperatives were urged to increasingly hold share capital in the Bank with the hope that they would, in future, be owners of the bank which was their own financing center. In 1952 and 1953, two provincial cooperative banks were established in the Chiang Mai and Uttaradit provinces respectively by the affiliation of village credit cooperatives in each of the two provinces. The two provincial cooperative banks served their affiliates very well, both in their credit needs and depositing surplus funds. Unfortunately, the enactment of a new 'Commercial Banks Law' in 1962 laid down that the acceptance of deposits on 'current accounts' could only be operated by commercial banks which must be organized in the form of a 'limited company'. The two-existing provincial cooperative banks had, therefore, to be reorganized as credit cooperative federations and a program to set up new cooperative banks was dropped. In 1966, the government-cum-credit cooperative-owned Bank for Cooperatives was reorganized as the 'Bank for Agricultural and Agricultural Cooperatives', a state enterprise, functioning as a financial center of agricultural cooperatives including lending directly to individual farmers.

In 1968 with the objective to strengthen the cooperative movement, the Government enacted the Cooperative Act, B.E. 2511, which allowed the establishment of the Cooperative League of Thailand, functioning as the apex organization of the cooperative movement. The said cooperative Act also allowed for the amalgamation program which combined the neighboring small village credit cooperatives, paddy and marketing cooperatives, land improvement and land settlement cooperatives into a large-scale cooperative at district level performing multipurpose functions and which was officially categorized as agricultural cooperatives.

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

1. Agricultural Cooperatives (Agricultural cooperatives are established to enable farmer members to engage in business together, thus helping one another in times of crisis as well as gaining for themselves a better livelihood and quality of life).
2. Land Settlement Cooperatives (The primary objective is to allocate land to farmers who having either no land or small holding to make use for their living earning. Its operational scope is the same as that of agricultural cooperatives. However, land settlement cooperatives put more emphasis on land development including familiarizing members with appropriate farming techniques and modern irrigation methods).
3. Fisheries Cooperatives (Fisheries cooperatives consist of members who are involved in fishing activities, both fresh and sea water. The main purpose is to deal with production and marketing problems through joint purchasing, access to loan funds, increased knowledge of the fishing industry, and promotion of natural resources conservation).
4. Consumer Cooperatives (Consumer cooperatives are formed by consumers in obtaining various goods at reasonable prices and guarantee quality standard. It is a legal body, registered under the Cooperative Act, with its members as its shareholders. Members voluntarily co-invest in their cooperative stores to fulfill their purchasing needs in a way that will sustain their economic well-being).
5. Thrift and Credit Cooperatives (Thrift and credit cooperatives are those whose members are people having the same occupation or living in the same community. Its main purpose is to promote savings among members and provide loans for productive investment).
6. Service Cooperatives (The service cooperatives are another type of cooperatives formed by persons engaged in the same occupation to deal with common

concerns including building up employment security and maintaining the members' existing occupation).

7. Credit Union Cooperatives (The first credit union in Thailand was organized on 25th July 1965 by 13 pioneers with initial saving of 360 Baht, its name was "Soonklang Thewa Credit Union". Fr. Alfred Bonninque believed that dreams will come true if people join hands together and achieve their goals without bias to other people. This is the principle he believed people in the slums of Huay Kwang, Bangkok should observe to improve their lives and be of equal level to other people in the society. The credit union is the meeting point of people who trust and people who help people).

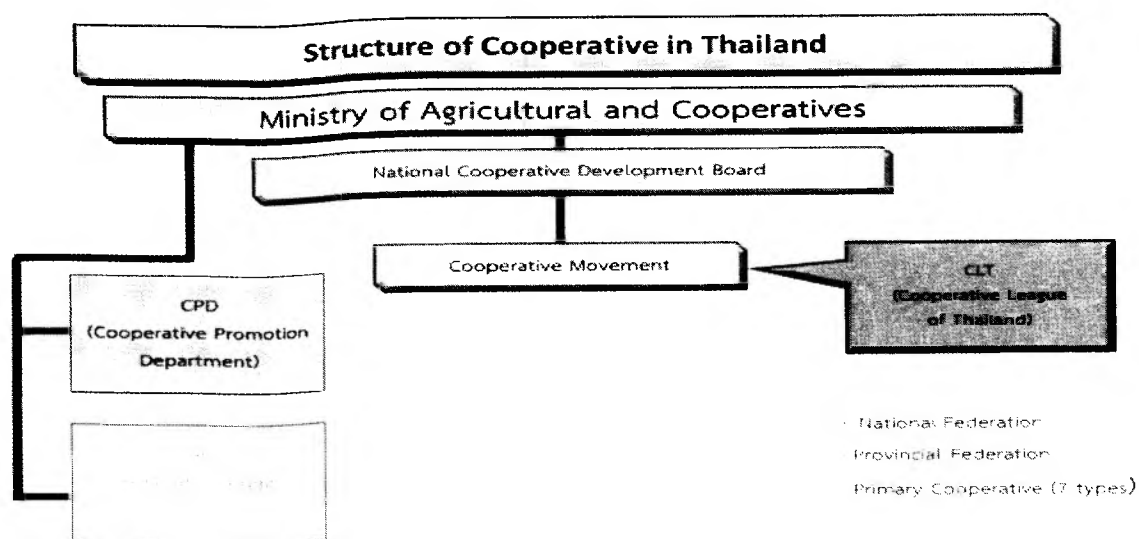
Organizational Structure of Cooperatives in Thailand

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

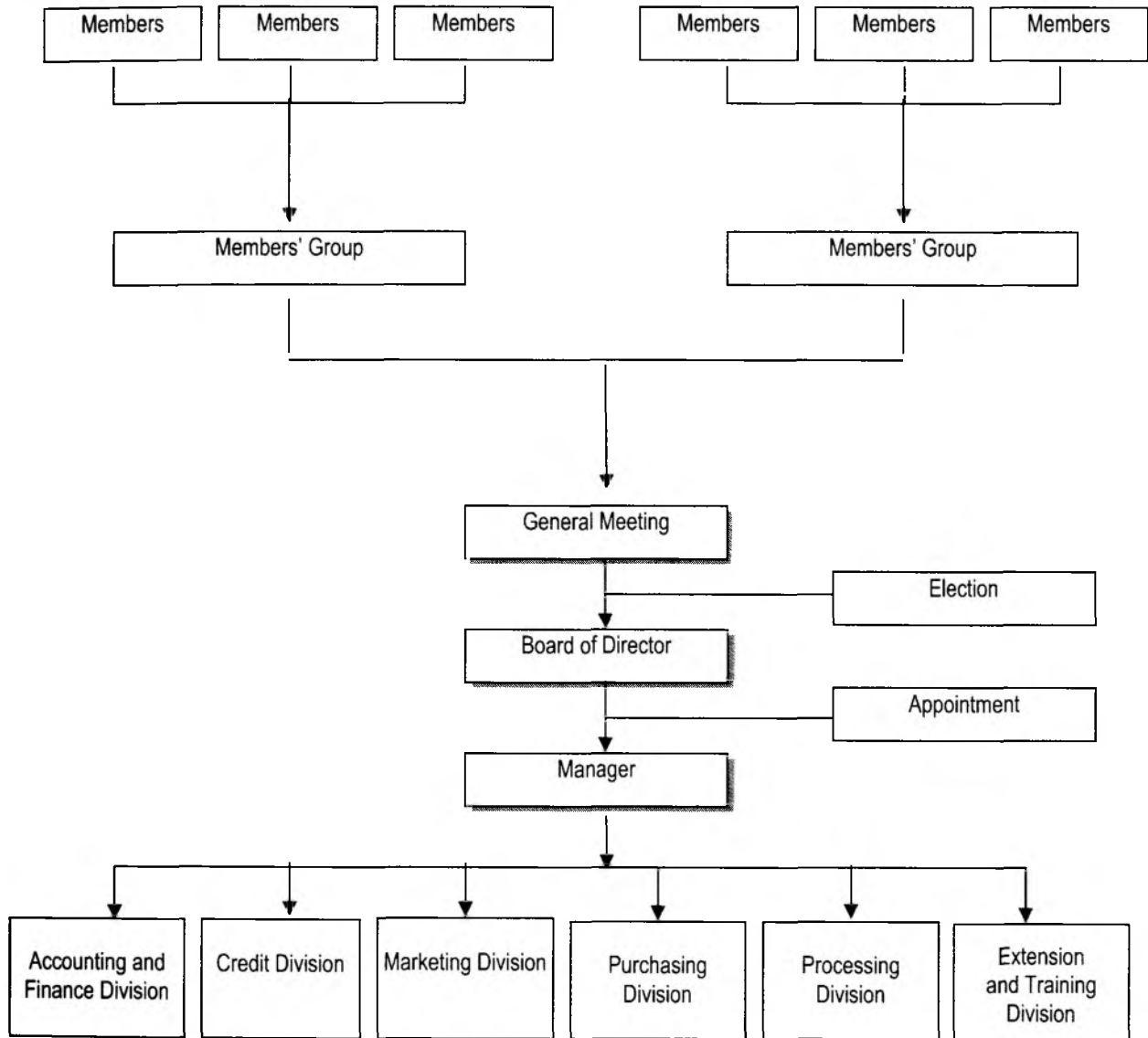
Five or more cooperatives at primary or provincial level can form a provincial or national federation together to undertake joint activities on behalf of their affiliations such as processing and trading of agricultural products.

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

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



Structure of Primary Cooperatives in Thailand



SECTION-III

Field Study Visits in Thailand

The field study visits were arranged from 15th to 19th July 2019 in and around Bangkok by the Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT).

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

Cooperative Promotion Department

In 1915, a year before the first cooperative was introduced to Thailand the Cooperative Section was established under the Ministry of Finance responsible for cooperative promotion. With an increasing role of cooperatives in the Thai economy, the Cooperative Section was transformed to be the Cooperative Department under the Ministry of Commerce in 1920, thus becoming the Ministry of Cooperatives in 1952.

The reorganization of the government agencies in 1963 caused the abolishment of Ministry of Cooperatives and the establishment of Ministry of National Development in substitution. Under the new Ministry, there were three newly established departments responsible for all previous cooperative duties as follows - Land Cooperative Department, Cooperative Auditing Department and Trade and Finance Cooperative Department.

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

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

Vision: Aim to develop cooperatives and farmer groups and keep them strongly immune to and updated with changes.

Mission: (1) to enhance and expand the quality of public services to respond to needs and expectation of cooperatives, farmer groups and the public; (2) to expand cooperation networks and integration of domestic and foreign organizations to develop cooperative system; (3) to accelerate the land allocation and promote additional occupations in cooperative land settlements; (4) to promote and support the creation of cooperative awareness and active participation; (5) to promote and support the alliance networking in administrative, economic, social and traditional areas to strengthen cooperative system; (6) to support and protect the operations of cooperatives and farmer groups to serve needs of their members and stakeholders in accordance with cooperative principles and related laws; and (7) to adjust organizational structure and develop public administrative and personnel system to serve promotion and development of cooperative system.

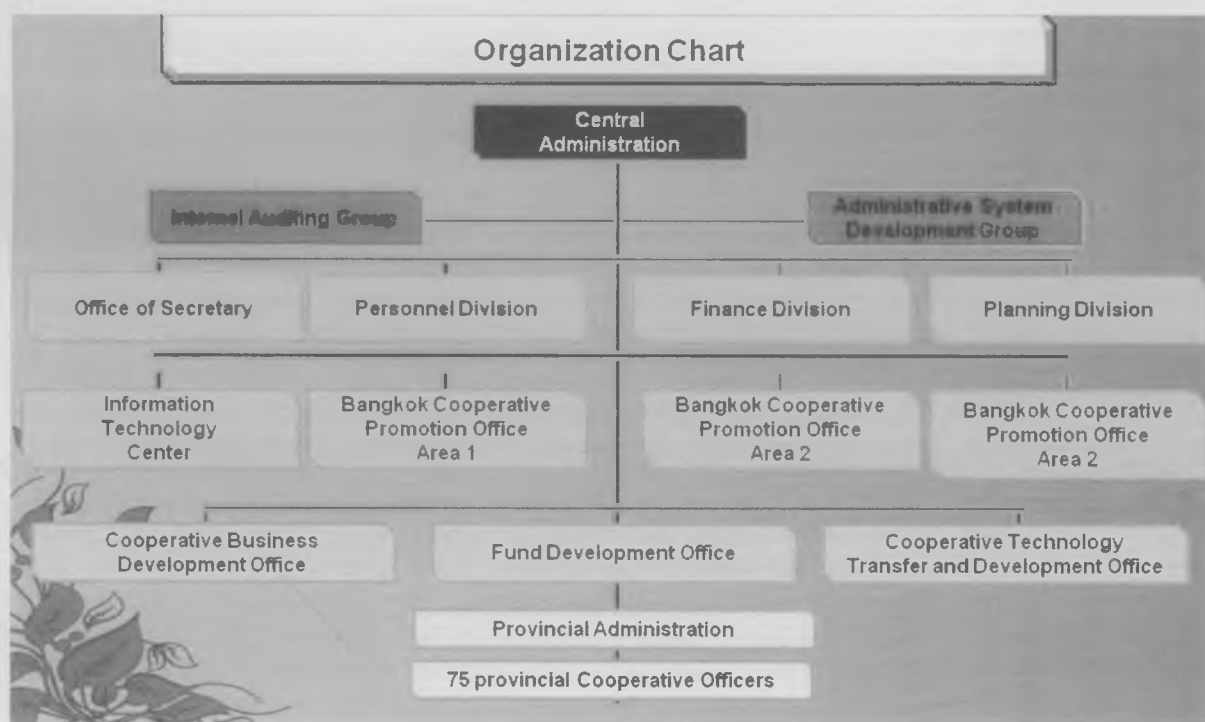
The CPD is responsible for promoting and disseminating the cooperative ideology, principles and methods to cooperative personnel, farmer groups and the public, promoting, supporting and strengthening the cooperative system, improving cooperatives' learning process to increase the capacity of business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





Organizational Structure: The administration of CPD is divided into 2 parts - Central and Provincial ones. Central Administration, which is in Bangkok, consists of 3 divisions, 1 center and 7 offices as follows:

Internal audit group is responsible for examining the administration, finance and accounting; Personnel division is responsible for personnel affairs, staff recruitment and manpower allocation; Finance division is in charge of finance, account and commodity procurement; Planning division is responsible for planning, budget allocation, project monitoring and evaluation, and international affairs; Information technology center is responsible for data base, information system and network development; Cooperative promotion and development office takes care of cooperative establishment and registration, including research and development on cooperatives and farmer groups; Cooperative business development office promotes cooperative and farmer group production, marketing, research and development on goods and services. It is specialized in all kinds of business (plantation, fishery, livestock, handicraft and service); Fund development office strengthens cooperative management and takes care of funding support to cooperatives; Cooperative technology transfer and development office designs and conducts training courses relevant and useful to CPD staff, cooperative members, board of directors and staff of cooperative and the public through its 10 regional technology transfer centers; Bangkok cooperative promotion offices in Area-1 and Area-2 have duties to educate cooperators, farmer groups and the public about cooperative ideology and principles and to foster successful business operation of cooperatives; Provincial administration comprises 75 provincial cooperative offices. These local offices are responsible for supervising and promoting all cooperatives within their responsible areas.



The Agricultural Cooperative Federation of Thailand Limited (ACFT)

The Agricultural Cooperative Federation of Thailand Limited (ACFT) was established and operated under "The Cooperative Act" formed to be the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation and for the agricultural cooperatives throughout Thailand under the supervision of the Cooperative Promotion Department (CPD), Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives.

Set up as "The Wholesale Cooperative of Thailand Limited" on 30th May 1952, the name was changed a few times, finally to "The Agricultural Cooperative Federation of Thailand Limited" since 1st October 1975. The regulations had been amended to suit the policy and objectives. Its network covers enormous number of cooperative members. It has over 4,000 cooperative members covering over 6.3 million farm family members.

The main objective of ACFT was to encourage members to do business and assist each other by means of cooperative procedures with a non-profit business concept which will benefit the members and the society in both economic and social aspects.

The ACFT has got the following divisions: (a) Agricultural business division; (b) Training development division; and (c) Printing Division.

To increase cooperative's business capability and network, the ACFT is supporting the following facilities: ACFT Business Center in Chiangmai Province; TJC Chemical Company Limited; ACFT Business Center in Ayutthaya Province; and ACFT Cooperative Rice Center.

Rice Center: Rice is the most important economic crop of Thailand. It is a staple food for more than 50 percent of world population including Thai people. Most of Thai farmers are rice growers. Thus, rice is the top five income earning crops for farmers and the country. The ACFT is a national cooperative and the center of all national agricultural cooperatives. Its mission is to support and promote agricultural cooperatives in all aspects including farm inputs, marketing and knowledge for management and services according to principles of cooperative for the social and economic welfare of members. The ACFT is also authorized by the Cooperative Promotion Department to be the principal cooperative for rice business. Therefore, the Thai cooperative Rice Center Project is launched to be the central agency for processing all kinds of paddy rice from cooperatives nationwide and process into white rice and brown rice including jasmine rice, sticky rice, non-sticky rice and native rice for direct consumption and marketing the best rice of the world.

Distribution Center: There are 4,000 agricultural cooperatives throughout Thailand. Among these localities, there are high quality agricultural products that meet consumer demand. The deficiency in the supply chain is the distribution center for such goods as vegetable, fruits, organic products, coffee, tea and seasonal fruits. The ACFT has thus opened the Distribution Center to serve as business channel for propaganda and selling agricultural produces.

The total membership of ACFT is 6.3 million members from 59 provinces. It has got 18 board of directors, all of whom are men. The term of office of the directors is for two years. They can be re-elected only two times consecutively. The ACFT has got 137 employees out of which 80 are women. The total sales turnover for 2017 was 2,000 million Baht and net surplus was 50 million Baht. The cost of one share of the cooperative is 100 Baht and not more than 5% of the total shares in the cooperative can be owned by a member. A maximum dividend of 10% can be paid by the cooperative.

Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT)

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

The main functions of CLT are: (a) Promote cooperative ideology and principles; (b) Provide technical assistance, training and education; (c) Promote business, trading, industry, and services of all cooperatives; (d) Strengthen cooperative networking and relationship locally and internationally; (e) Protect cooperative members' interests and

benefits; and (f) Provide cooperation with the government concerned in promotion of cooperatives for genuine and real benefits to members in general.

Resources and Facilities

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

Current Number of Cooperatives and Membership Classified by Types

No.	Types of Cooperatives	Number of Cooperatives (as of December 2016)	
		Cooperatives	Percentage
	Agricultural Cooperatives Sector		
1	Agricultural Cooperatives	4,480	54.22
2	Fisheries Cooperatives	110	1.33
3	Land Settlement Cooperatives	94	1.14
	Non-Agricultural Cooperatives Sector		
4	Thrift and Credit Cooperatives	1,499	18.14
5	Consumer Cooperatives	225	2.72
6	Service Cooperatives	1,284	15.54
7	Credit Union Cooperatives	571	6.91
	Total	8,263	100.00

As of December 2016, there are 8,263 cooperatives with 11.447 million individual members (17.41% of total population). The Board of Directors of CLT consists of maximum 14 members, who are 7 persons elected at general meeting of the CLT, and Chairman of 7 National Cooperative Federations. The Board of Directors shall elect from among its members one Chairman and one or more Vice Chairman. The Board of Directors shall appoint an Executive Director of CLT, and the Director shall be the ex-officio secretary of the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors shall have the duty to administer the affairs of the CLT and be authorized to issue regulations in compliance with its objects. The members of the Board of Directors shall have each term of office for four years. After the end of the term, if there has yet been no election of the new board members, the vacating board members shall be entitled to hold the office further until the newly elected board members assume their functions. The vacating board members may be re-elected but not more than two terms of office consecutively. In the case where a board member vacates the office before the end of the term, the board of directors of CLT shall select another delegate of the cooperative as a board member in his place. The newly selected board member shall be in office for period equivalent to the remaining time of the term of office of the board member whom he replaces.

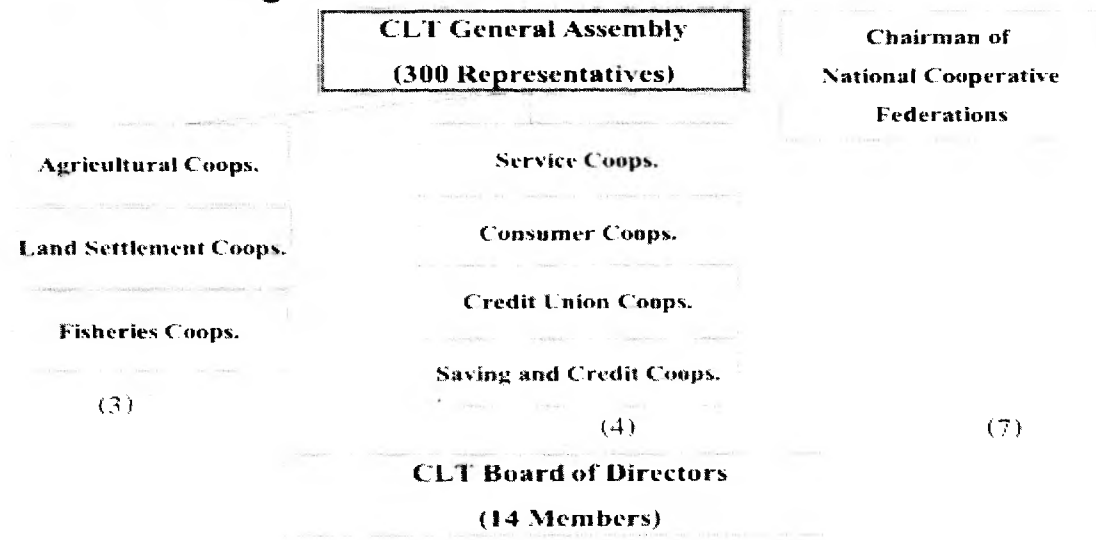
The board of directors shall call an annual general meeting once a year within 90 days from the last day of the accounting year of CLT. Upon reasonable circumstances, the board of directors may call an extraordinary general meeting whenever it thinks fit; or in

the case where not less than one-tenth of the total number of member requests in writing to the board of directors to call an extraordinary general meeting. Such a written request shall specify the objects for which the extraordinary general meeting is being called. In case of members requesting for an extraordinary general meeting, the board of directors shall call it within 30 days from the date of receiving the written request.

The Executive Director shall have the duties of managing the affairs of the CLT in accordance with the regulations and policies prescribed by the Board of Directors and shall have the power to control the officials thereof. In matters concerning the third persons, the Executive Director shall be a representative of the CLT. For this purpose, the Executive Director may authorize any person to do specific affairs in accordance with the regulations prescribed by the Board of Directors.



Organizational Structure of CLT



Bangplee Agricultural Cooperative Limited

Samutprakarn Province widely known as "Muang Pak Nam" is located at mouth of the Chao Praya River, north to the Gulf of Thailand and twenty-five kilometers from Bangkok. The whole area covers 1,004 square kilometers of alluvial plain, crisscrossed by canal, causing some areas to be flooded. The water in these canals is briny in the dry season. Most of the area is covered with paddy fields and orchards, with groves of Samee, prong, the mangrove and nipa palms. Well known goods from this province are "Khano Chak" or sweetened sticky rice wrapped by nipa palm leaves and dried gourami.

Samutprakarn province was founded during the Ayutthaya Period. The administrative center of the old community, known as "Muang Prapadaeng", was in an area currently the location of Prapadaeng District. It was a seaport for foreign merchandise ships that traded with Thailand.

Along the coast, forts, town moats and town-walls were constructed as a stronghold against hostile forces. During the Thonburi Period, King Tak Sin ordered dismantling of the town-walls. In the Ratanakosin Period, King Rama II was afraid that this town might have been used by the enemy as a route to transport their troops and supplies. The King thus had Muang Samutprakarn constructed in Tambon Pak Nam in 1819. The construction was completed in three years, with six forts being built on both sides of the

Chao Phraya River. Only three could be finished in this reign - Prakaisit Fort, Nagaraj Fort and Phi Sua Samut Fort. King Rama II visited the site of construction several times. By the royal command, a chedi, by the name of "Phra Samut Chedi," was erected on an island in the middle of the Chao Phraya River.

Unfortunately, the King passed away before the completion of the whole new town, leaving the construction to be resumed and completed in the reign of King Rama III, with three more forts to be added - Tri Petch Fort, Kongkapun Fort and Sua Sonlep Fort. King Rama V Pra Samut Chedi renovated the height of the chedi being elevated, and one more fort by the coast being built, named "Phra Chulachomklao Fort". At present, only Phi Sua Smut Fort and Phra Chilachomklao Fort remain in good condition whereas others are dilapidated.

The administration of Samutprakarn Province is divided into five districts. They are: Muang Samutprakarn, Bang Plee, Phra Pradaeng, Bang Boh, and Phra Samut Chedi District.

There is a total of 6 Amphur (districts) and Bangplee is one of the districts in Smutprakarn Province located around 30 km from Bangkok city. The main International Airport, Suvarnabhumi International Airport is also located in this province. The total land area is 1,004 sq. km; one side is opened to the Gulf of Thailand and other side is connected to Bangkok Capital City as well as industrial zones.

Bangplee Agricultural Cooperative Limited is an agricultural primary district level coop, covered two districts namely, Bangplee and Bang Sao Thong Districts. It was established under Cooperative Act of 15th November 1971 and on 3rd January 1978, the cooperative has amalgamated with Bang Chalong Rice Trading Cooperative Limited.

The cooperative has got 634 individual members with 13 groups; 12 board of directors (7 male and 5 female); 5 (3 male and 2 female) permanent staff. The business activities of the cooperative as on 30th December 2018 are as follows: share capital-US\$ 328,838; business turnover-US\$ 1,756,774; and loan provided to members-US\$ 612,256. The main business activities of the cooperative are rice trading and marketing of members' products. The cooperative made a net profit of US\$ 83,161 in 2018.

Boonsri's Thai Sweets Occupation Women Group

Boonsri's Thai Sweet Occupation Women Group is one of the most outstanding woman groups of Bangplee Agricultural Cooperative Limited. The group was formed in 2006 by Mrs. Boonsri Bhummalee, the group leader of cooperative member. The location of the group is Bangplee Old Town Market. There are 15 members in the group (12 women and 3 men). The group has been supported by both local government office and by the Bangplee Agricultural Cooperative Limited. The Bangplee Agricultural Cooperative Limited provided 60,000 Baht as subsidy to construct the shop-cum-factory in 2006. The Cooperative Promotion Department (CPD) provided a subsidy of 40,000 Baht at the initial stage. The daily sale of the group is 10,000 Baht. A variety of sweets are prepared by this Group. Pantan leaf is used to add colour for the sweets. Rice powder is procured from the private trader. Some members make the sweets at their homes and bring the produce to the shop and some members are working at the shop. The members working at the shop are paid 300 Baht every day. The sales per month is Baht 100,000.

Location of the group

103 Moo 10, Bangplee Yai Old Town Market,
Amphur Bangplee, Samutprakarn Province
Important Features of Boonsri's Thai Sweet Occupation Group
Established: 2006
Number of Members: 13

Main Products: Thai Sweet Branded Boonsri's Thai Sweet

Contact address:

Bangplee Agricultural Co-operative Ltd.
87/1 Moo 8 Tambon Bangplee Yai
Amphur Bangplee
Samutprakarm Province-10500, Thailand.

Pakkret Agricultural Cooperative Limited

The Pakkret Agricultural Cooperative was established in 1939 with 25 farmer-members and several groups of farmers. It now has got 1,538 households in its membership. The Chairman of the Cooperative has been holding the office for the last 40 years, as the members repose a high level of confidence in him. The Cooperative has got 13 full-time employees.

Some of the principal activities of the cooperative are credit and savings, purchasing and supplies, and acting as a central agricultural marketing agency. 30% of the members are engaged in rice farming, and 15% in fruits and vegetables. The membership has not grown significantly due to high level of urbanization in the area since it is close to Bangkok. The membership has shown a downward trend – 2,200 in 2011, 2,100 in 2012 and 1,800 in 2013. The share capital has increased to Baht 60 million in 2013 from Baht 45 million in 2011. There is no share investment by the government in the cooperative. The cooperative does not borrow any money from any financial institution. Since credit is its main business, no loans have been taken by the cooperative.

Members borrow money from the cooperative for farming, purchase of household goods, and vehicles. Rate of interest on borrowing by members is 9%, and on deposits it is 2%. Default rate is within 10-12 per cent, since majority of borrowing members are employed, the deduction is usually done through the employers.

The cooperative has the following facilities: a high-end office space; warehouse and vehicles. All profits earned are tax-exempted like any other agricultural cooperative in the country.

The cooperative is run by a Board of Directors consisting of 15 members (6-women) and term of the Board is two years. However, the government is considering extending the term to four years. The board meeting is held once in a month. The cost of one-year share is 2,000 Baht. The profit for 2012 was US\$ 300,000. The present building of the cooperative is constructed in 2009 with its own funds.

Role of supporting Agencies: Government and other agencies which provide support to initiatives are: CPD – Advisory and guidance services including training of employees; CAD – Regular annual audits and frequent supervision visits; and CLT – Member education and information dissemination;

The problem areas of the cooperative are severe competition and occasional contradictory government regulations.

Kor Kret (Island) Batik Art Women Group

The Kor Kret (Island) Batik Art Women Group was established in 1999 with four members. It is an OTOP occupation group. The inhabitants of this group are the refugees from Myanmar. The group is established on an island in the middle of Chaopiya river under the patronage of the Royal Thai Government. The objective of the government was to help the refugees to settle and undertake professions for business purposes. The Cooperative Promotion Department (CPD) helped the women of the village to organize themselves and provide them with support in terms of technical guidance, short-term loans and grants.

The CPD organized technical assistance from government technical institutions for this group. The group has been promoted by Pakkret Agricultural Cooperative Limited.

The main business of the group is to produce batik clothes, variety of sweets, cakes and pastry for visiting tourists and households. Some of the products are sold to some business outlets in Bangkok. Raw materials come from the local residents and suppliers in Bangkok. Sugar is purchased from the cooperative. There is no single buyer of the products – 50% is purchased by tourists.

Out of the 30 members of the group, seven are men who are guided by the CPD provincial field officers and the agricultural cooperative. Confectionary items are produced by the members and sold through the group outlet on a commission basis - the profit is shared.

The average sale of the group is around 100,000 Baht per month. The expenses are about 50% of the sales. There are no employees. All activities (purchasing and supplies) are done by members themselves through the group.

The governor of Nonthaburi province gave first financial support of 40,000 Baht. The batik products were awarded 3 stars by the ministry of interior, department of rural development. Batiks made here also sold at the department stores. The group members are paid for their labour charges. 100 visitors come to this place every month for learning. About 300 customers visit the shop daily and on weekend around 500.

Marketing Organization for Farmers

The Marketing Organization for Farmers was established in 1947. It is a state enterprise under the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives. It operates two markets in Thailand. Director is the head of the Marketing Organization for Farmers and there are three deputy directors. Approximately, 300 employees are working in the organization.

Or Tor Kor standard market, the best market in Asia, located in the heart of Bangkok, provides with more than 1,000 nationally famous shops that sell the best quality of products and produces ranging from exotic tropical fruits and fresh seafood to Thai deserts. Products selling in Or Tor Kor fresh market are required to go through the quality check and other residues inspection before being sold to customers. With the endeavour to preserve the high standards of Or Tor Kor fresh market, many government agencies have granted them with myriad of awards and recognitions. Furthermore, in 2007, Time Magazine bestowed them with the title of "The Best of Asia" in which they have always been 'The Best of Asia'. With its prime location, travelling to Or Tor Kor fresh market is very easy and convenient. Or Tor Kor fresh market, where Kampaengphet subway station (MRT) is located, is just across the street from Jatuchak market and only 10 minutes' walk from Mochit sky train station (BTS).

Or Tor Kor market has the protocol as a standard for checking the quality and freshness of the goods and product, government officer from Health Department, Ministry of Public Health of Thailand, will randomly collect samples from each shop for microbiological and chemical laboratory testing.

Variety of uncontaminated fresh vegetables are delivered to the market every day. They carefully select fruits from every region in Thailand by its quality, taste and freshness. They also make sure that there are no contaminated residues in any of the produces.

Or Tor Kor market is the centre of fresh sea food, such as, saltwater fish, oyster, shrimp and crab.

The size of each shop is two square meters. To get a shop at the market, the farmer has to consult the prefectural government. The agreement is signed for three years. 200 to 500 Baht is charged per day from the shop owner towards maintenance charges (costs for

electricity, water, tax, etc.). The price of the products is fixed by the farmer. High quality products are sold in this market.

Thai deserts sold in the market are made from natural ingredients. The farmers pay close attention to every process of preparation to make sure that the Thai deserts are hygienic and provide their customers with the highest safety level for consumption. A new farmer can display his products for 10 days free of cost.

Banphaeo Agricultural Cooperative Limited

Banphaeo is a district (Amphoe) in the northern part of Samutsakorn Province, central part of Thailand. In the past the area of the district was covered with deep forest. Hunters who travelled to hunt wild animals there often lost the way, so they agreed to make meeting points by using Phaeo flags. When people established a new village, they named their village Ban Phaeo. It was controlled by Sam Phran district. Later when the village grew bigger it became a Tambon. In 1925 the government split Tambon Rong Khe, Lak Sam from Ban Bo district and merged it with Tambon Ban Phaeo to form the Ban Phaeo district. The new district was assigned to Samut Sakhon province. Neighboring districts are (from the north clockwise) Sam Phran district of Nakhon Pathom Province, Krathum Baen and Mueang Samutsakorn of Samutsakorn Province, Mueang Samutsongkram of Samutsongkram Province, Damnoen Saduak and Bang Phae of Ratchaburi Province. The district is subdivided into 12 sub-districts (tampon), which are further sub-divided into 97 villages (muban). There are three townships (thesaban tampon) - Ban Phaeo, Kaset Phatthana and Lak Ha. The non-municipal area is administrated by 7 Tambon Administrative Organizations (TAO).

The Banphaeo Agricultural Cooperative Limited was formally established in 1974 with 621 members with a share capital of Baht 130,000. Farmer-members in the area grow coconut, especially young coconut to meet the needs of the people of Bangkok. The marketing was done through middlemen. Initially there were 12 small groups which were doing the business on their own, but the Cooperative Promotion Department (CPD) grouped them into a cooperative to do the business on a collective basis.

At present there are 3,390 individual members out of which 1,290 are women. It has got 42 groups. Though the area is fit for cultivating paddy, the current preferred products are coconut, banana, star fruit, red apple, guava, vegetables and fisheries.

The main business activities of the cooperative are: farm credit (short and medium term); purchasing and supplies (fertilizer and farm chemicals including saplings); savings (short term deposits and fixed deposits), drinking water (processing, bottling and its distribution to nearby factories, tourists, households in the area including some areas in Bangkok).

While the membership remained almost static, there has been a marked improvement in members' share (Baht 86.280 million in 2018). The net profit for 2018 was 10.798 million Baht while it was 12.333 million Baht for 2017. The profit earned by the cooperative is tax-free (as is the case with all cooperatives in Thailand).

The cooperative employs 25 fulltime personnel (male 16 and female 9). Elections are held every two years. The cooperative sources loan from the Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives-BAAC (a government financial institution).

Some of the facilities of the cooperative are: Own office building with proper infrastructure, gas station, water treatment plant and cold storage, warehouse and transport vehicles.

Role of Supporting Agencies:

- *The Cooperative Promotion Department (CPD) is the prime mover in strengthening the cooperative and its activities. Some of the services of the CPD are management support, advice, training and education, linkages with government private enterprises, financial assistance by way of easy loans and*

grants, identifying women members who are willing to undertake business activities under OTOP or under any other program.

- *The Cooperative Audit Department (CAD): Timely conduct of yearly audit, monthly/half yearly regular inspection and guidance visits.*
- *Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT): Board/staff training, cooperative member education program; distribution of information material, sponsoring participants to national and international meetings; arranging visits of foreigners to cooperatives and support to women members to undertake OTOP activities.*

Ban Kaset Pattana Herbal Juice Processing Group

The group was promoted by the Banphaeo Agricultural Cooperative Limited under the leadership of Ms. Somsri, a member of the cooperative. The group was established in 1997 with 50 members and the support of the CPD. The initial share capital was Baht 40,000 (out of which Baht 30,000 was contributed by the CPD) with every member holding two shares of Baht 100 each. The current share capital is Baht 500,000.

The area is known for the cultivation of aloe vera. There was a factory which used to procure the herb from the farmers and process it. When the factory closed, the farmers lost interest and through the motivation and guidance provided by the agricultural cooperative and the CPD, the farmers gathered together to process the herb by themselves. Ms. Somsri provided the much-needed support and guidance and formed a group of women to organize a processing facility.

The group started gathering the herb from the members and processing it in a scientific manner and produced a variety of products for distribution. Some of the major products of the group are aloe vera juices and a range of health drinks including concentrates. It also undertook collection and production of artificial flowers and okra red flower. Major consumers of the products are local hospitals, community of the area and for exports. The marketing is done through a business agency which is exporting the products to various ASEAN countries (especially Cambodia and Vietnam).

Another major business activity is credit – it serves as a bank to the local community. Purchasing business includes raw material, sugar, bottles, labels, etc.

Role of Supporting Agencies: Several agencies provide support to local initiatives.

- *CPD and Kasetsarat University (Agriculture University) provide technical guidance and financial support;*
- *Agricultural Cooperative provide guidance, marketplace and linkages; and*
- *CLT support the group through the agricultural cooperatives and provide education and training.*

The sales turnover for 2018 was 3.850 million Baht. The group has got many awards from CPD, Province, etc. Profits earned are tax-exempted, as is the case with all women group business activities in Thailand. The members of the group are paid Baht 250 per day for their work for seven hours. Children of group members are working here as part-time workers.

Some of the problems of the group are marketing of juices; expansion of business; maintaining the quality of products (it must be monitored constantly not only by the group but by government health and food departments).

Danmakharmtia Agricultural Cooperative Limited

The Danmakharmtia Agricultural Cooperative Limited is situated under Kanchanaburi province. It was established on 26th May 1993 under Cooperative Act of 1968 with 84 farmer members and several groups of farmers. The area is covered by the following four Tambons: (a) Tambon Jorakeabheuk; (b) Tambon Klou Do; (c) Tambon

Tanmakharmtia; and (d) Tambon Nong Bai. Sugar cane and banana are the main cultivation of this area. Banana and coco are exported to Japan. There are 80 cooperatives in Kanchanapuri, but no fisheries cooperatives.

At the beginning of the five years, Mr. Damrong Suk Arporn and 10 board members with a share capital of 16,800 Baht, the business performance was quite weak. Currently, there are 13 group of members with a total of 2001 individual members.

The main business activities of the cooperative are – deposit business with interest rates of 2/3%; credit business (provided loan to members with a maximum amount of 200,000 Baht); supply and marketing business; and service business (traditional massage, coffee shop, community coop store and canteen).

The cooperative has got 9 employees (6 women and 3 men) and 11 board of directors (3 women) and 2 inspectors. The term limit of the board is two years and a board member can be in the board consecutively two times only. Last year 6.5% dividend was paid to the shareholders.

The business performance of the cooperative is given below as on 30th June 2018:

• Working capital	:	179.999 million Baht
• Share capital	:	86.380 million Baht
• Reserve fund	:	28.970 million Baht
• Deposit business	:	45.470 million Baht
• Other funds	:	3.930 million Baht
• Credit business	:	170.470 million Baht
• Supply and marketing	:	15.760 million Baht
• Service business	:	1.380 million Baht
• Net profit	:	12.570 million Baht

The most successful eight women groups are as follows:

1. Wreath group
2. Leather making group
3. Cosmetics group
4. Sweet making group
5. Colorful bunch group
6. Keaw karnda herb group
7. Organic rice group
8. Flower garland group

Nongpum Sweet Making Group

Nongpum Sweet Making Group was started its 'Role Sweet' making business in 2014. So far, this group has not received any financial support from the Cooperative Promotion Department (CPD) and the Danmakharmtia Agricultural Cooperative. The group took a loan of 100,000 Baht from the cooperative to start its business. The group has gotten members, and all are working in shifts. The total sales per month is around 100,000 Baht. The members working for sweet making are paid a sum of 300 Baht per day. The net profit per month is 10,000 Baht. The sweets are made on order basis only. The group is now under inspection stage. Once it is approved, the group is expecting some grants/equipment from the CPD and the cooperative. After getting the grant the group plan to increase the production capacity of 'Role Sweet'.

Rice powder, coconut milk, butter, sesame and brown sugar are used for making the 'Role Sweet'. To use the green color, they use penton leaf.

SECTION-IV

Inauguration of Part-II of the Training Course in Japan

The inaugural session of Part-II of the Training Course was held in the forenoon of 23rd July 2019 in the Conference Hall of IDACA. Mr. Kyohei Sugaya, Officer in charge of ICA-Japan Project, Overseas Investment and Cooperation Division, International Affairs Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF); Mr. Masahiro Konno, Executive Director of the Institute for Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA); Mr. Chikaro Sato, Senior Advisor for Agricultural Cooperatives in Asia, International Relations Department, JA-ZENCHU; and Mr. K. Sethu Madhavan, Advisor-Planning & Membership, ICA-Asia and Pacific addressed the inaugural session. Mr. Toru Nakashima, Manager (Training/Development Department General Affairs Department); Mr. Yukio Abe, Cooperative Development Consultant; Mr. Hiroshi Terunuma, Cooperative Development Consultant and other officers of IDACA were also present.

Welcoming the dignitaries, **Mr. Sethu Madhavan** congratulated the participants for successfully completing the Part-I of the training course in Thailand and for attending the **Part-II** of the training course in Japan. He conveyed the sincere gratitude of the ICA to **Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)**, Government of Japan, for their **valuable** financial support for the development of women's activities in Asia. He mentioned **about** the longstanding collaboration between ICA and IDACA and thanked IDACA for **shouldering** the responsibility of conducting the part-II of the program in Japan by offering **its facilities** and resources. He also spoke about the ICA and the European Union (EU) Project.

In his brief inaugural speech, **Mr. Sugaya** welcomed the six participants of the training course from five countries (India, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, and Thailand) to Japan and extended a warm welcome on behalf of MAFF.

He said that "gender equality is a fundamental factor for the socio-economic well-being of all. It is particularly important in terms of improvement of global economy and social development. We think you will agree that rural women's roles are of vital importance. They not only contribute to the world food supply in a safe and sustainable way, but also promoting actual development, building peaceful and socially cohesive communities. On the other hand, rural women face number of difficulties, especially in developing countries. For instance, they have limited or no access to natural, infrastructural, technical and financial resources due to both cultural and legal constraints.

In the situation that the working population of Japan is continuously decreasing, it is required to increase the number of women who engage in various fields of our society. Five years ago, MAFF has been implementing the project supporting young women who engage in agriculture. They are often called 'Nogyo Joshi' in Japanese. Nogyo means agriculture and Joshi means woman. The project is aimed to increase the presence of female farmers in society and the number of young women who choose agriculture as their job by collaborating various companies and organizations related to not only agriculture sector but also various sectors and disseminating information on young women's activity in agriculture from various angles.

During this training course, through the lectures and field visits, you will learn various aspects of rural women's activities in Japan, e.g., the activities of the 'sixth industrialization' which means farmers engaging themselves in the occupations of the secondary industry, processing, and tertiary industry, distribution and sales. So, I believe that you will be able to obtain lots of valuable information and knowledge in this training course.

Finally, I wish this training course would be successful and fruitful for all of you. I would appreciate the cooperation from ICA-AP, IDACA and all of the people who are concerned with implementation of this training course.”

He requested the participants to take care of their health during their stay in Japan since it is the hottest and humid season in Japan.

In his address Mr. **Sato** said “the gap of living standards of most countries is big and expanding year to year. The gap is low in Japan and after field visits, you will agree with me. Agricultural cooperatives in Japan have played a big role. It is a community-based organization to help each other. JA has played an important role for the development of agricultural cooperatives in Japan. I hope you take a note of the situation to see how women group activities cooperate with agricultural cooperatives during your field visits. I hope it is doing a good example for women activities in Japan. I hope you examine what part of the women activities you can play in your countries during the field visits. Lastly, I would like to thank ICA-AP and MAFF for implementing this training course and supporting financially.”

Mr. Konno extended a warm welcome to all the participants to Japan on behalf of IDACA. He extended his sincere appreciation to Mr. Sethu Madhavan of ICA-AP for successfully handling the training course. He further said that the women’s training course was started in 1991 and going on for the last 28 years with the financial support of MAFF and expressed his gratitude to the MAFF’s support for many years. From 2017 onwards a newly developed training course started with emphasis on “Empowering Women in Business and Management of Agricultural Cooperatives”.

He further said “As you know, the objective of this training course is to build capacity of rural women leaders for promotion of more organized business activities in Asian countries. In Japan women’s groups are organised in almost all primary agricultural cooperatives, and the role of women in rural areas is important and plays an indispensable role in business activities and organizational management of agricultural cooperatives. Although it is a short visit, I hope, that you will learn Japanese experience through lectures and field study visits and find hints for assisting capacity building of rural women in your country.

IDACA was established in 1963 by JA-ZENCHU as a training institute for providing training opportunity for cooperative staff and government officers in charge of promotion of agricultural cooperatives initially focussing on Asian region. From the establishment, we have so far received more than 4,500, out of which 4,500 trainees were from Asian countries and many trainees from your country came to participate in IDACA training courses through ICA-AP.”

He said that during the stay of the participants at IDACA, there would be an exchange of experience and knowledge. He hoped that the participants would enjoy the life and a comfortable and memorable stay at IDACA.

Opening of the Training Course at IDACA, Japan



Lectures & Group Discussions



SECTION-V

Lectures at IDACA

The following lectures were delivered by the resource persons at IDACA in Tokyo during the training course. This is a summary of the contents of their presentations.

Assertive Communication Skills and Techniques

by Ms. Shiom Morita, Executive Director, Assertive Japan

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

She further said that needs for assertive training are gaining a momentum in Japan as well more than ever due to the mounting stresses caused by the globalization problems.

Society and Culture in Japan

by Ms. Elko Oshita, Coordinator, IDACA

Under this topic, the resource person explained about the basic information of Japan. She covered the following subjects – geographical features and climate; characteristics of the climate; impact of climate on Japanese lives; food in Japan; typical Japanese cuisine; clothing; Japanese house; prefectures; regions and cities (47 prefectures and 8 regions); population; factors affecting low birth rates; features of Japanese society; Japanese economy; main industry in Japan; agriculture in Japan; education system in Japan; people in Japan; characteristics of Japanese culture; why Japan has many earthquakes; and about the 6th industry.

Outline of Agricultural Cooperatives (JA) and Business Activities

by Mr. Hiroshi Terunuma, Cooperative Development Consultant, IDACA

Under this topic, the resource person explained about the different stages of development of agricultural cooperatives in Japan. He covered the following subjects – implementation of land reform after the World War-II; history of cooperatives in Japan (origin of cooperatives: establishment and development of industrial cooperatives in Meiji era, and establishment of agricultural cooperatives); hardships in the life of farmer until 1960s; scenes of poverty stricken rural Japan in 1950s and 1960s; development of agricultural mechanisation due to lack of man power caused by aging of farmers; hi-tech is a key for the future survival of Japan's agriculture; overall agricultural production outputs in Japan (8 trillion yen); cooperating agencies (such as R & D center, extension centre, crop insurance office, farmers' academy, agriculture committee, etc.); extension worker's appropriate attitude; farm guidance by JA farm advisor; differences between agricultural extension worker and JA farm advisor; better living activities; two types of agricultural cooperatives in Japan, such as multipurpose and single purpose; outline and activities of JA group (611 JAs in 2019); organizational structure of JA group (national-1, prefecture-47 and primary-611); JA is adopting multipurpose agricultural cooperative system; lobbying activity in Japan and abroad; salient features of JA; members supporting groups

for JA; farmers centering on regular members constitute the backbone of JA; roles of farm guidance in introducing new commodities and exploiting market channels; flow of distribution of vegetables and fruits through JA group; JA's marketing is closely linked with farm guidance, credit service, purchase of production inputs, joint use of facilities and processing facilities; diversified new marketing outlets; supply business (production inputs and consumer goods); mutual insurance business; members and users feedbacks; and what makes Japan's agricultural cooperatives tick.

Outline of JA Women's Association

by Ms. Hiroko Tayama, Coordinator, IDACA

The resource person explained the history and objectives of the JA Women's Association which were: (a) Cooperate with each other to protect women's rights and improve their social and economic status of rural women; (b) Promote greater participation and involvement of women in JA's activities so as to reflect the voice of women; (c) Introduction of numerical targets for realization of regular members, general representatives and woman board members in JA; and (d) Create comfortable local communities with affluence, keep close contact with each other and promote mutual help through cooperative activities involving women. She also covered the following subjects – background of establishment of women's association; main activities in early years; changes in the number of individual members (3.44 million in 1958 and about 545,000 in December 2018); trend of activity theme along with the long history and the time; organization and current activities of JA women's association; organizational structure (national council-1, prefectural council-46 and primary level-641); platform of JA women's association; 5 principles of JA women's association; current activities (entrepreneur activities, activities to promote regional agriculture, activities to improve skills, activities to protect environment, activities contributing to the local community); problems of JA women's association (aging and declining of members, unproductive activities, less participation in the management of JA, and lack of PR activity and collaboration with other organizations; and changes in the way of thinking of rural women.

Why and How Important is Cooperative Education

by Mr. Tadafumi Kigasawa, Former Manager in charge of Education of JA Kanagawa Prefectural Union and JICA Expert in Nepal

The resource person highlighted the Rochdale's Principles; ICA Principles; Cooperative Education of JA (Japanese Agri. Coops); General Pattern of Internal Structure of Multi-purpose Agricultural Cooperative; Education for Members; Education for Officials; Education for Employees; Education for youth and regional residents; Relationship with community.

He touched upon cooperative education in action in Nepal Cooperative Movement based on his experiences while working with the Central Cooperative Training Centre of Nepal from October 2004 to October 2006 as JICA expert. He acted as a stepping-stone to change the Nepal cooperative movement instilling the concept of genuine cooperative movement in the minds of cooperative members. His contribution to the development of cooperatives is highly recognized by the government of Nepal and JICA for his strenuous efforts in improving the cooperative movement. He gave an account of the reasons for starting women's only cooperative societies in order to get them out of living in slum areas. He further added that the new cooperative law was enacted in Nepal in 1994. There are currently 578 women cooperatives and 6,486 mixed cooperatives. The main problems being faced by cooperatives are as follows; slow pace of cooperative development; lack of policy and determination; and present cooperative acts are neither sufficient nor relevant.

He also shared his experiences in Myanmar that he had been involved in the IDACA-initiated project as director for Improvement of Livelihood of Farmers through joint purchase and joint use of farm machinery project which was implemented with the funding of Japan Foreign Ministry in 2015.

What Makes Cooperatives Successful based on the model of Japan

by Mr. Yukio Abe, Cooperative Development Consultant, IDACA

The resource person outlined (a) the overview of agricultural cooperatives in Asian countries; (b) main problems confronting agricultural cooperatives in developing countries centering on Asia and the challenges; (c) factors responsible for the development of agriculture and agricultural cooperatives in Japan and its characteristics of a nation; and (d) case studies on some successful cooperatives, such as, Pimai Agricultural Coop and Lamphrapleong Primary Agricultural Cooperative in Thailand; Amul Dairy Cooperative in India; Limcoma Primary Cooperative, Sorosoro Iba Development Cooperative and Lamac Cooperative in the Philippines for the feasible future replication in the respective countries.

Moreover, he referred to such topics as the emergence of coops in Europe and Japan; the reasons for incredible fast recovery from the unprecedented natural disaster (Tsunami) in the North-eastern parts of Japan which occurred in 2011; consumer cooperatives in Japan which is the biggest consumer coop in the world; case studies on the women development and their empowerment in Japan, India, etc; cooperative education referring to roles of members, officials and employees using illustrations; an anecdote of three arrows which teaches the importance of a strong bond conveyed to three sons of the Mori-provincial lord in 1557 and other inspirational quotes including 21 rules of life.

He concluded his thought-provoking presentation by talking about what matters in life, namely, "Happiness can be found when you stop comparing yourself to other people" and "Together everyone can achieve more".

Current State of Rural Women Entrepreneurship in Japan

by Ms. Sumiko Abe, President, Rural Life Society of Japan

Under this topic, the resource person explained the development process of rural women entrepreneurship and local revitalization movement in chronological order from 1950s to 1990s; trend of the number of rural women entrepreneurs from 1997 to 2016 (around 10,000 now); description of women entrepreneurial activities in 2010 and 2016; trend of annual sales of women businesses from 2000 to 2010; age structure of women entrepreneurs for individual operations and group operations in 2010; case studies of five women entrepreneurship activities she visited; and the food system in Japan.

Case Study of Various Women Entrepreneurial Activities by Rural Women

by Ms. Mari Izumi, Visiting Researcher, Japan Cooperative Alliance (JCA)

Under this topic, the resource person covered the following: importance of women in rural development; challenges for rural women; must support rural women; and some of Japan's rural women businesses (organic farm, vegetables, farm tourism, grape, and lettuce farm). She also explained that the gender gap in Japan is still wide (104th out of 142 countries); background of gender gap in rural areas; facts of Japan rural women; women and farm management; small businesses by rural women; how to support rural women; family farm management agreement and its contents (23% of farm households have the agreement); tools for support (extension service is essential to support rural women); support to make rural women's group/network; growing expectation towards rural women; event for kids to enjoy rural life and nature; and cooperatives can play a major role to support rural women (in supplying finance, supporting production, marketing, farm diversification, young farmers and organizing women groups).

Experiences and Attitude as a JA Board of Director

by Ms. Tetsu Takahashi, Director, JA Iwate Hanamaki.

Under this topic, the resource person explained her experiences while working with JA Iwate Hanamaki Agricultural Cooperative as a board of director and community leaders' development project in Thailand (4 years). Her presentation included outline of multipurpose agricultural cooperatives; business activities of JA (purchasing, marketing,

credit, mutual insurance, welfare activities, and guidance activities); Role of female directors; definition, organization, guidance and support organization, and target people of better living activities; fostering of women's organization; situation of health care activities being implemented by JA; welfare activities for the elderly; direct sales activities (food and agriculture); and importance of better living activities; establishment of starting her own business (agro-processing) in 2013 with the initial capital of 2 million yen; details of main commodities traded; main marketing channels (sold at 3 farmers' markets within Hanamaki city).

Leadership – Role of Leaders and Importance of Communication

by Mr. Yoshiaki Ogane, Former Editor in chief of Ie-No-Hikari Publishing Association and Writer

Under this topic, the resource person gave a detailed account of the leadership elements and the needs of agricultural cooperative today, entitled "Why do we need Agricultural Cooperatives Today" – *Human resource development for creating core leaders who should shoulder the promotion of cooperative movement utilizing the following anecdote: "heaven and hell" – it lays in the mind of beholders; operation of public bus; from bicycle to 4 WD and to multi-carriage train; from the wisdom of ancient wooden temples in Japan (importance of deft ability) ; learn from Japanese fairy tale – momotaro (peach boy) (needs of delegating works to others) ; story of iceberg (use of one's own innate ability); learn from migratory birds flying in a formation (roles of leadership); and characteristic features of good cooperatives and unsuccessful cooperatives. His lecture struck a deep chord in the participants' heart.*

Lectures & Group Discussions



Field Study Visits in Japan



SECTION-VI

Field Study Visits in Japan

During Part-II of the Training Course in Japan, study visits were arranged in Fukushima Prefecture from 30th July to 3rd August to get them acquainted with the organizational structure and business activities of prefectural and primary level agricultural cooperatives, and to observe the organization and functioning of women's associations. The participants visited the following institutions during their study visits.

Fukushima Prefecture

Located in the southernmost part of Tohoku region, Fukushima prefecture lies at within 200 km from Tokyo. The population of the Prefecture is 1.848 million as of June 2019. The total land area of the Prefecture is 13,783 square kilometers (ranked 3rd after Hokkaido and Iwate). The prefecture has got 13 cities, 13 districts, 31 towns and 15 villages. The capital of Fukushima prefecture is Fukushima city.

Fukushima prefecture is divided into 3 areas composed of Naka-dori, Aizu and Hama-dori bordering the Abukuma highlands and the Ou mountains that stretches from north to south. Even if the areas belong to the same prefecture, the climate widely differs according to each area.

Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives in Fukushima Prefecture

Various kinds of agricultural commodities are produced in Fukushima prefecture, taking advantage of natural conditions suited for each area. The total value of agricultural production in 2016 was 207.7 billion yen, ranking 17th place in Japan, of this rice accounts for 30%. Viewed from the national average, it can be said that there are many agricultural products such as vegetables and fruits which are relatively high in terms of production volume.

The cultivated land area, both paddy and upland field, is showing an annual decrease, while the number of farm households is also decreasing every year. In addition to this, the full-time farm households dropped to a less than 20% of farm households in the prefecture.

The main agricultural products are: Rice (cultivated in 64,000 ha). The total amount produced in 2017 was 351,400 tons (7th rank in Japan) and became one of the leading prefectures of rice production; Vegetables (wide variety of vegetables produced especially, cucumber, tomato and French beans which are cultivated from summer to autumn); Fruits (peach and apple, 2nd rank in Japan for peach production); Livestock (beef cattle, milk cows, hogs and hens). With livestock products accounting for one-fourth of the total agricultural value, safe and delicious meat, eggs and milk are produced in the prefecture. The total value of fruits production was 27.1 billion yen and livestock production 49.7 billion yen in 2016.

The number of members of JAs in Fukushima prefecture in 2018 was 253,702 (regular-138,100 and associate-115,602). The number of member households was 197,144 and number of general representatives was 4,242. The number of directors in 2018 was 219, auditors 31 and advisors 21. The reason why the number of directors is high because the former directors of several JAs before amalgamation remained intact for a couple of years.

The total number of employees in 2018 was 5,511 (regular 3,941 and part-time employees 1,570). Out of this, male employees were 2,868 and female employees 2,643.

The main business activities of the Fukushima Prefecture in 2018 are: Savings-1,911,300 million yen; Loans-426,015 million yen; Long-term mutual insurance-3,403,489 million yen; Supply-46,726 million yen; and Marketing-89,172 million yen. The total business profit for 2018 was 40,657 million yen.

Agricultural productivity in Fukushima prefecture has been declining due to the decrease of farmers and also the effects caused by the great earthquake and the nuclear power plant accident. In addition, polarization of production bases, namely, self-supply of farmers and the large-scale farmers including incorporations is now making progress.

Along with further decreasing birth rate and progress of ageing population in the Prefecture, it is forecasted that upward economic trends resulting from the special demands in the post-disaster reconstruction of the great earthquake and the nuclear power plant accident will turn to the negative growth in 2019 as a turning point. Thus, it is concerned that the life and living of members will be sever in future.

The number of members of JAs in Fukushima stood at 253,911 (as of February 2018), but the declining number of regular members and the ageing of members pose a big challenge.

While JAs businesses centring on savings and loans have been making a steady growth so far, it is now showing the downward trend these days due mainly to population decline and deterioration of agricultural production productivity. Furthermore, what makes the matter worse is that JAs largely rely its main source of income on savings of those over 60 years old people, it is now apprehended that JAs might not be able to sustain the status quo down the road because of the above-mentioned reasons. (It is likely that old people would withdraw their savings for use of their living and livelihood in order to complement their pension which is feared to deteriorate income of financial institutions including JA group).

Fukushima Prefectural Council of JA Women's Associations

The establishment of women's associations started since 1948 in Japan. Its main objective during 1960-1970 was to improve the living standards of rural women. It can be said that the relationship between JA and the Women's Association is complementary to each other.

There are 5 JAs in Fukushima Prefecture and all of them have got JA Women's Association (JAWA). They form the prefectural council of JAWA. The Council was established in 1952 based on cooperation of each woman's association with the purpose of protecting women's rights, improving their socio-economic status, and creating a comfortable local community with good rapport and mutual aid through cooperative activities. It is a prefectural level organization made up of 5 JA women's associations in the prefecture with 12,000 members as of 31st March 2019.

Members of each woman's association consist of housewives of JA member households and residents in the community. The main roles of the organization are enlightenment and consultation for solidarity and interchange among JA women's associations. On top of this, it plays a very important role in helping strengthen the business and operation of JAs.

The prefectural council of JAWA aims at maintaining communication among members, improving education and culture of rural women, and building bright rural communities through the promotion of agricultural cooperative movement.

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

Apart from routine activities, such activities as the campaign for local production for local consumption; better living and mutual help activities; tackling on revitalization of the

organizations; and greater involvement and participation of women in JA's management are conducted by the association.

The Association also provided 5.8 million yen (4 million yen as donation and 1.8 million yen as contribution from relief funds) towards support for elementary school construction in Laos in 2002.

One of the greatest concerns for the Association is the progress of ageing of its members. Therefore, it has established a special group (young ladies' group) to attract new members below 45 years.

JA Fukushima Mirai

Located in the north-east of Fukushima prefecture, JA Fukushima Mirai was established on 1st March 2016 by the amalgamation of 3 JAs in northern part of the Prefecture and 1 JA in Soso area which is situated in the northern part of the coastal area. The share capital of the JA is 15.93 million yen. The JA has got 94,860 members, 55 directors and 8 auditors. It has got a total of 1,885 employees, 65 branch offices, 3 sub-branch offices and 54 others.

The total operational area covers 19% of whole prefecture and the northern part of the prefecture has the Abukuma river that flows through from north to south and basin is spread along the river. There are many tourist attractions such as hot spring in the operational area and a leading fruits production zone of peaches, apples, Japanese pears and so on are formed. Surrounded by the Pacific Ocean and Abukuma highlands, the Soso area is blessed with temperate climate with less snow. Because of this, people can lead a comfortable life under congenial environment. Production of paddy in the flat area and livestock in mountainous areas are thriving. Moreover, various horticultural products are produced all over the areas.

The main business activities of the JA Mirai are as follows.

Farm Guidance: The JA provide farmers a guidance on production techniques and marketing and give relevant advice on farming. Moreover, fostering of core farmers and agricultural incorporations are also an important part of the activities. The farm guidance activities play an important role for integrating various business activities in an organic manner, forming a solid foundation for the base to increase user's satisfaction.

Marketing: Collection of agricultural and livestock products produced by farmers and make shipment of them for sales to wholesale markets and retail stores. It is JA's most important task to sell farm products advantageously as it will lead to increasing income of member farmers. The marketing business turnover for 2017 was 28.1 billion yen.

Purchasing: JA provide quality production materials such as fertilizer, farm equipment, feeds as well as consumer goods stably to members at reasonable prices as much as possible. The purchasing business turnover for 2017 was 16.5 billion yen.

Credit: JA receives savings from members and provide loans for agricultural promotion and betterment of the life to them by operating their savings deposited. JA's credit business is safely in operation as "JA Bank" based upon introduction of "JA Bank System" created by joining hands with all JAs across the country. The savings and loans business turnover for 2017 was 875.2 billion yen.

Mutuai Insurance: JA mutual insurance has a double function, namely, life insurance and liability insurance to assure member's life by providing comprehensive insurance of "life, buildings and automobiles" based on the concept of mutual aid. The mutual insurance business turnover for 2017 was 2,678.6 billion yen.

The following activities connect JA with community.

Money Advisor: Equipped with expertise of financial commodities such as savings, pension and loans, the advisors make visits to people in the community daily and give them advice for support.

Life Advisor: Having special knowledge of JA mutual insurance, the advisors provide proper advice on life planning throughout the year.

The four initiatives of JA Fukushima Mirai are as follows: Strategies for regional agriculture (10% increase of agricultural income, adoption of TC system, promotion of acquisition of JGAP, and development and sales of products by 6th industrialization); Strategies for community and living (convey a message of importance of agriculture and food to children, and strive for the promotion of both mental and physical health); Strategies for management bases (reflection of opinions and wills of members, restricting of subsidiary companies, and introduction of teleconference system); and Creation of congenial workplace and development of human resources (academy for employees, mirairo road promotion project, exchange training program among employees within JA, establishment of employees' association, carrier development point system, mentor system, and interview to all employees for the opinion survey) .

Direct Sales Shop (Farmers' Market) – Mirai Hyakusaikan Nmebe

With the ageing of farmers progressing in the area, they are facing difficulty in undertaking joint marketing, bulk products demanded in the wholesale market. Thus, JA embarked on operation of direct sales shop (farmers' market) intended for the elderly farmers and farming women to help facilitate sale of even small volume of the products and comply with a wide variety. They bring the products to the shop and determine their prices by themselves, which is totally different from conventional sale of wholesale market system in which auction system is practiced.

The main purpose of establishing the direct sales shop (farmers' market) is: (a) to promote mutual friendship between producers and consumers; (b) to promote marketing of fresh and suitable agricultural products; and (c) to increase mutual benefits of producers and consumers.

The direct sales shop (farmers' market) under the operation of JA Fukushima Mirai (Mirai Hyakusaikan Nmebe) was established on 2nd July 2009. The total floor area of the shop is 1,684 square meters of which sales floor area is 977 square meters. The parking lot of the shop can accommodate 150 cars.

The shop operates from 09:00 to 17:00 hours daily. The shop is closed from 31st December to 4th January and every first Wednesday (except peak season). The sales turnover for the financial year 2018 was 852.884 million yen. Although 695 farmers are registered with the shop, only 180 to 240 farmers bring their produce daily on average. Nine JA staff, including 3 temporary staff, are working in the shop.

The farmer members bring their products in the early morning on their own and put stickers with bar code on them. Using bar code, JA can easily find out as to who produced the commodity. JA charges 15% sales commission for fruits and vegetables and 20% for processed foods for using the facilities of farmers' market. JA makes the payment to the farmers twice in a month. In addition, a membership fee of 2,000 yen is charged yearly by the JA.

When some products remain unsold, farmers must take them back. As mentioned above, the prices are to be determined by member farmers themselves. They are responsible for ensuring quality and safety of the products. The details regarding the relevant information of all members are put in with JA. The sales proceeds are instantly credited to farmers' account which they keep with their JA.

This kind of farmers market is now gaining its popularity in Japan from both consumers and producers as an emerging new sales outlet different from sales through conventional wholesale market system. There were 24,000 farmers' markets in Japan as of 2015

(JA's share is only around 2,000) and all are linked directly with the prevalent campaign, namely, "local consumption from local production", a concept being promoted by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF). One of the problems being faced by the farmers' market is that all members are not using its facility.

Peach Grading Center of JA Fukushima Mirai

The peach grading center of JA Fukushima Mirai was constructed in 1980. The total area of the grading center is 1,200 square meters.

The capacity of the grading center is 200 boxes (1 box is 8 kg) per hour per machine. The grading center has got 3 machines. The photo-censor checks for size, sugar content and colour of the peach. The grading starts at 8.30 am. Farmers bring their produce to the grading center in the morning (up to 12 noon). This grading center is used for grading peaches and apples only from July to December. First checking is done with hands by the employees working in the center. 80 yen per one kg is charged by the JA from the farmers towards the cost of grading, packing, cost of the box, etc.

After the grading and packaging, the boxes are taken to the cooling room for a maximum period of one day. The profit of the grading center is about 1 billion yen per year. The profit of the grading center goes to the JA (3%); Zen-Noh (1%); and farmers (96%). 3 staff members from JA are working in the grading center. Part-time employees are recruited as per the requirements. During peak season, around 100 employees are recruited.

In order to ensure delivery of safe and reliable fruits to consumers, they conduct thorough inspection and disseminate accurate information with producers and related organizations. As a result of it, the devastation from the great east Japan earthquake is steadily being reconstructed with the understanding and supports of consumers.

Day Care Service Center-Motomiya

The Day Care Service Center-Motomiya was established in 2015 by JA Fukushima Mirai. The objectives of Motomiya are to provide services with full of 'smile'; provide services that users want to come back again; provide services that users can enjoy interaction with community; and provide JA-like services, differentiated from other institutions. There are also many private day care centers in Fukushima prefecture.

The entire construction cost of the Center was borne by JA out of its own funds. It is not a profitmaking service. It aims to help the elderly to live in independence and also to create the community that guarantees a secured life to all the people. This facility could be used by anybody. In fact the day care system is a government run scheme and any entity including JA can embark on this activity. All the details are provided in the Nursing Care Act which came into force in 2001. This is heavily subsidized by the government in view of the arrival of ageing society in Japan. This nursing care insurance system is a public insured system whose management entity is municipality. Insurers are divided into two categories, namely, those over 65 years old who need to get nursing care support and those whose age are from 40 to 65.

The center can accommodate a maximum of 30 persons. Large amount of subsidy is provided to the insured persons depending on the magnitude of nursing care services required. They provide the following services: picking-up from homes and dropping back; physical exercises; bathing; lunch; rehabilitation training, etc. The working hours of the Center are from 09:15 to 16:30 hours (Monday to Saturday). Everyday health check-up is done by the nurse. The insured person pays only 10% of the cost involved, whereas the balance is met by the government.

Suzuyoshi Farm

Yuka Suzuki was born and raised in Fukushima prefecture and started working in agriculture after getting married in 2015. In the same year, they established Suzuyoshi Farm and engaged in cultivation of asparagus and production and marketing of processed products. In addition, opening a café/restaurant is scheduled soon. She is a member of JA Fukushima Mirai and the Vice President of fresh Ms. (young wives) group. She is also involved in the Fukushima Agriculture Girls Network for the exchange between farmers' wives.

Its purpose of establishment of Suzuyoshi Farm was (a) though they are the 4th generation of the fruits farms household, they wished to seek the businesses not in a conventional way but with flexible thinking; and (b) they had a goal to start up processing business and open café/restaurant.

The concept of the Farm was to produce good quality asparagus in open fields and to become a producer who can interact with consumers. For the café/restaurant, they would like to use locally produced ingredients besides their own cultivated vegetables. The marketing channels are direct sales shop, direct sales to customers and restaurants.

Asparagus is a unique vegetable. Once it is planted, it will last for over 10 years. Third year will be the time for harvesting on a full scale. It will take four to five years until thick asparagus can be harvested. They are growing asparagus with care, thinking about the people who wait for their asparagus eagerly. They feel like enjoying farming and their motto is 'healthy and brightly' for years to come.

The Farm has got its own grading machine and cultivator. Harvesting season of asparagus is twice in a year. The marketing turnover of the Farm is 4 million yen.

SECTION-VII

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

The concluding session of the Training Course was held at IDACA in the afternoon of 9th August. The session was attended by Mr. Kyohei Sugaya, Officer in charge of ICA-Japan Project at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAFF); Mr. Masahiro Konno, Executive Director of the Institute for Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA); Mr. K. Sethu Madhavan, Advisor-Planning & Membership, ICA-Asia and Pacific and other officers of IDACA.

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

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

He further said "The objective of this training course is to assist capacity building of leaders of rural women for promotion of more organized business activities in the countries of South-East Asia and South Asian regions. I think you had some valuable information and knowledge in Japan. After you return to your countries, I believe you will cooperate with rural women who live under difficult conditions to build socially cohesive communities by the knowledge and experience you gained in this training.

Also, from the perspective of continuing to secure the budget for this capacity building program and follow-up program, it is very important to implement your action plan because the ratio of implementing the action plan is used as a success indicator. So, if you face some difficulties in implementing your action plan, please consult your colleagues, ICA-AP and IDACA and seek some advice from them. We hope all of you will do your best to realize your own action plan through what you learned in this training course.

At the G20 Agricultural Ministers Meeting held in Niigata Prefecture on 11th and 12th May, the successful activities by Filipino and Thai women who had participated in past training courses were included in the list of "G20 Best Practices" which is one of the outcome documents of the Meeting. We are looking forward to hearing implementation of your action plan and hope it will produce good effects on your community.

Tomorrow, you will go back to your countries, but I believe you will never forget this experience in Japan. We hope you will return to Japan someday, for instance Tokyo Olympic 2020 and meet us again. Finally, I wish you all the best for your future success and deepening friendship between Japan and your countries."

Mr. Konno congratulated the participants on successful completion of the training course. He further said "Since you came to IDACA about two weeks have passed and the program in Japan comes to an end today. I am very happy to see that all of you could complete the program without any trouble. Also, I would like to thank Mr. Sethu for the smooth management of this training course.

During two weeks in Japan, you have studied many things on cooperative activities done by JA including women's group activities through lectures and study visits in Fukushima Prefecture.

I think the situation involving cooperatives and women's activities might be different in each country. However, I hope that many useful findings and experiences you have obtained from your observation will be useful for your future work.

After you return to your country, I hope that you will report on the result of the training to your colleagues, such as conducting a report meeting at your workplace, and take action to realize your action plan prepared now. I greatly expect that the results of your training will lead to further capacity building of rural women in your country.

I think this training course has provided a valuable experience for each other, and it was a good chance to discuss and exchange views on common problems regarding the situation and empowerment of rural women. Therefore, please take care of each other's network of participants cultivated in this training and please use it in your future work.

Then, let me express my sincere gratitude to MAFF and ICA-AP for offering this wonderful opportunity of training to our fellow participants, and I would like to ask continuous support in the field of promotion of rural women's activities in Asian countries.

I would like to tell you that even if the training is over, but both your fellow participants and IDACA will ever remain good friends in the future. So please remember IDACA as your second home in Japan. In closing, I hope that everyone will return home safely having good memories in Japan and we are looking forward to your further success in your organizations".

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

Ms. Anindita Guha Chakraborty (India) spoke on behalf of all the participants. She expressed the participants' gratitude to the ICA-AP and IDACA for organizing the training course from 14th July to 10th August 2019 in Thailand and Japan. She specially thanked Mr. K. Sethu Madhavan of ICA-AP and Ms. Hiroko Tayama of IDACA for excellent handling of the course. The participants felt that the training course was very relevant for the women leaders of agricultural cooperatives in Asia and hence it should be continued. She also expressed the greatest appreciation of the participants to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Government of Japan for providing financial support for this Training Course. She hoped that the MAFF would continue to support this training program in the future also for the development of rural women in the developing countries.

She further said "I feel immensely honored to speak in this closing ceremony of 3rd Training on Empowerment of Women in Business and Management of Agricultural Cooperatives and propose a vote of thanks on behalf of six participants from India, Laos, Nepal, Myanmar and Thailand. It has been a great period of last 27 days since we arrived at Bangkok and ICA-AP, CLT and IDACA have been well adept in designing the course so that we all can witness cooperative success in both the countries of Thailand and Japan. We appreciate the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries (MAFF) for supporting such international training course for agri-business leaders across the Asian countries who have ample opportunity for development of agriculture in their respective countries.

We do extent our gratitude to this institute IDACA under the leadership of Mr. Konno whose aim year after year is to develop such agricultural cooperation for a better tomorrow for our lovely earth. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all officials and staff of IDACA for their meticulous planning and execution of this course curriculum. We also thank all the speakers of this training course for their motivation and deeper understanding of keys of successful cooperation.





Award of Certificates of Participation at the Closing ceremony



Our Special thanks also go to Mr. Phanuwat of Cooperative League of Thailand for his sincere efforts to arrange study visits to successful cooperatives in Thailand.

We would like to extend our gratitude to Mr. Sethu Madhavan of ICA-AP for being with us and guiding us on every aspect since initiation of the training program and even before that.

Our special thanks to Tayama san and Abe san for your help and coordination during our stay in Japan and study visits to Fukushima Prefecture. Due to your well coordination and time management, we could cover all the targeted programs successfully.

I once again thank on behalf of participants to ICA-AP, IDACA and CLT for successful completion of this training course”.

The participants left Japan for their home countries on 10th August 2019, after completion of the Training Course.

SECTION-VIII

Evaluation Summary

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

Rating Pattern

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

01	To what extent the Course meets the Objectives?	3	3	-	-	-
02	Relevance of this Program in your job.	2	4	-	-	-
03	Usefulness of this training in your future work.	2	4	-	-	-
04	Your overall impression about this program.	3	3	-	-	-
05	Your grading of the faculty of this program.	2	4	-	-	-
06	Your rating of the study visits in Thailand	4	1	1	-	-
07	Your rating of the study visits in Japan.	3	2	1	-	-
08	Your rating of the administrative arrangements (boarding, lodging, etc.).	3	3	-	-	-
09	Are you satisfied with the leadership provided and the technical inputs made by the IDACA faculty members? (Explain briefly).					

All participants said "YES" – they are fully satisfied with the leadership provided and the technical inputs made by the IDACA faculty members and everything was perfect.

10 Please suggest changes/improvements, if any, desired in future programs. (Please give your free and frank suggestions).

(a) one participant suggested to expand the period of the training course and visit to more agricultural cooperatives; (b) another participant suggested study visits to more prefectures; (c) one participant said that everything is okay; and (d) three participants had no suggestion.

11 Please suggest which topics should be added to this Program in future.

Most of the participants said present topics are okay. A few participants suggested the following:

Processing of agricultural products
Improving capacity of rural women

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

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

13 Please list below your major gains from this Program.

*Japanese agricultural cooperative (JA) system
Concept of direct sales shops (farmers market)
Assertive training for smooth communication*

Farm guidance and better living guidance
Government support to set up infrastructure facilities
Marketing knowledge
Understand the consumers' need first
Effectiveness of teamwork
Foster leadership in the organization
Survey for utilization of rural resources
Japanese culture and society
Background of women in rural areas
Knowledge on preparation of action plan
Japanese society and culture
Women group activities in Thailand and Japan
Women's Associations activities in Japan
Rural women enterprises and marketing of their products
Interaction with the Japanese farmer
Encourage community to use local resources
Value addition through processing
Welfare activities run by JA for the aged people
Knowledge of cooperatives in other countries

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

Got lot of valuable information from this training course

This is a very effective training course.

Could learn about cooperatives and women groups in Thailand and Japan

Everything in Japan is interesting (culture, technology, clean, discipline, etc.)

IDACA is a very nice place. Thank you very much for good arrangements.

SECTION-IX

Program of the Training Course

14 th July		Arrival of participants in Bangkok
15 th July	FN	Visit to Cooperative Promotion Department (CPD)
	AN	Visit to Agricultural Cooperative Federation of Thailand (ACFT)
16 th July	FN	Orientation/Opening Ceremony/Presentation on the Cooperative Movement of Thailand and CLT.
	AN	Visit to Boonsri's Thai Sweets Occupation Women Group of Bangplee Agricultural Cooperative Limited.
17 th July	FN	Visit to Kor Kret (Island) Batik Art Women Group of Pakkret Agricultural Cooperative Limited.
	AN	Visit to Marketing Organization for Farmers
18 th July	FN	Visit to Banphaeo Agricultural Cooperative Limited.
	AN	Visit to Ban Kaset Pattana Herbal Juice Processing Group
19 th July	FN	Visit to Danmakharntia Agricultural Cooperative Limited
	AN	Visit to Nongpum Sweet Making Group
20 th July		Saturday - Sight-seeing in Bangkok
21 st July		Sunday - Free (Preparation for departure)
22 nd July		Departure for Tokyo
		Arrival of participants at IDACA
23 rd July	FN	Opening Ceremony and Orientation on daily life at IDACA
	AN	Program Orientation
24 th July	FN	Presentation of Country Reports by participants.
	AN	Guidance on preparation of Action Plan
25 th July		Assertive Communication Skills and Techniques by Ms. Shiom Morita, Executive Director, Assertive Japan.
26 th July	FN	Society and Culture in Japan by Ms. Eiko Oshita, Program Coordinator, IDACA.
	AN	Outline of Agricultural Cooperatives (JA) and business Activities by Mr. Hiroshi Terunuma, Cooperative Development Consultant, IDACA.
27 th July		Saturday – Free
28 th July		Sunday – Sightseeing in Tokyo.
29 th July	FN	Outline of JA women's Association by Ms. Hiroko Tayama, Coordinator, IDACA.

	AN	Why and How Important is Cooperative Education by Mr. Tadafumi Kigasawa, former Manager in charge of Education of JA Kanagawa Prefectural Union and JICA Expert in Nepal.
30 th July	FN	Move to Fukushima Prefecture
	AN	Participation in Fukushima Prefectural Women's Associations Conference organized by Ie-No-Hikari Publishing Association.
31 st July	FN	Visit to Direct Sales Shop (Farmers Market) Nmebe of JA Fukushima Mirai Visit to Peach Grading Center of JA Fukushima Mirai
	AN	Visit to Hokushin branch office of JA Fukushima Mirai (credit business and farm material center) Visit to JA Fukushima Prefectural Union
1 st Aug	FN	Fukushima Prefectural Council of JA Women's Association (overview and activities)
	AN	Visit to Day Care Service Center-Motomoya of JA Fukushima Mirai
2 nd Aug	FN	Visit to Suzuyoshi Farm (Asparagus cultivating farmer)
	AN	Peach picking at Azuma orchard
3 rd Aug	FN	Sight-seeing in Fukushima Prefecture
	FN	Move to Tokyo from Fukushima
4 th Aug		Sunday - Free
5 th Aug	FN	Review on study visits
	AN	What Makes Cooperatives Successful based on the model of Japan by Mr. Yukio Abe, Cooperative Development Consultant, IDACA.
6 th Aug	FN	Current Status of Rural Women Entrepreneurship in Japan by Ms. Sumiko Abe, President, Rural Life Society of Japan.
	AN	Case Study of various Women Entrepreneurial Activities by Rural Women by Ms. Mari Izumi, Visiting Researcher, Japan Cooperative Alliance (JCA).
7 th Aug	FN	Experiences and Attitude as a Board of Director by Ms. Tetsu Takahashi, Director, JA Iwate Hanamaki.
	AN	Leadership-Role of Leaders and Importance of Communication by Mr. Yoshiaki Ogane, Former Editor in chief of Ie-No-Hikari Publishing Association and Writer.
8 th Aug.	FN	Action Plan preparation - individual consultation
	AN	Finalization of Action Plan by the participants
9 th August	FN	Presentation of Action Plan by the participants
	AN	Presentation of Action Plan by the Participants Evaluation and Closing Ceremony
10 th Aug.	FN	Departure of Participants from Japan

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

SECTION-X

List of Participants

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|---------|---|--|
| India | 1 | <p>Ms. Anindita Guha Chakraborty
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| | 2 | <p>Ms. Suruchi Kumari
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| Laos | 3 | <p>Ms. Lattana Soulibouth
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| Myanmar | 4 | <p>Ms. Nyein Aye Thu
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| Nepal | 5 | <p>Ms. Kalpana Shrestha
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- Thailand 6 **Ms. Sararat Songcharoen**
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- ICA-AP 7 **Mr. K. Sethu Madhavan**
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Nick Name: **Sethu**
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SECTION - XI

Action Plans Proposed by the Participants

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

Name of Country	:	India
Name of the Participant	:	Ms. Anindita Guha Chakraborty
Position	:	Manager/Branch Manager
Name of Organization	:	National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED)
Title of the Proposal	:	Promotion of Marketing of Processed Food (Potato) By Women Self-Help Group in West Bengal.
Target Group	:	Potato Farmers Family/Women Self-Help Group
Target Area	:	Hooghly District of West Bengal
Implementing Agency	:	NAFED through Cooperative Societies
Duration of the Plan	:	8 months (1 st September 2019 to 30 th April 2020)
Name of Country	:	India
Name of the Participant	:	Ms. Suruchi Kumari
Position	:	Junior Field Representative
Name of Organization	:	Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative Limited (IFFCO)
Title of the Proposal	:	Promotion of Handmade Jute Products by Women's Self-Help Group in Patna District.
Target Group	:	5 Women Members near IFFCO Bazar through Women Members of Self-Help Group.
Target Area	:	Patna District, Bihar
Implementing Agency	:	Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative Limited (IFFCO).
Duration of the Plan	:	7 months (1 st September 2019 to 31 st March 2020)

Name of Country : **Laos**
Name of the Participant : Ms. Lattana Soulibouth
Position : Technical Staff of Multilateral Section
Name of Organization : Department of Planning and Finance, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF).
Title of the Proposal : Development of the Women Group on Strengthening Capacity for Technical Skill of Mushroom Production.
Target Group : 40 women members of the Farmers Group.
Target Area : Sangthong District, Vientiane Province.
Implementing Agency : Department of Planning and Finance, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF).
Duration of the Plan : 13 months (1st October 2019 to 30th November 2020)

Name of Country : **Myanmar**
Name of the Participant : Ms. Nyein Aye Thu
Position : Manager
Name of Organization : Myoma Market Savings & Credit Cooperative Society Limited.
Title of the Proposal : Food Processing Activity for 60 Women Cooperative Members from the Myoma Market.
Target Group : 60 Women Cooperative Members in the Myoma Market.
Target Area : Kyaukpadaung Township
Implementing Agency : Myoma Market Savings and Credit Cooperative Society Limited.
Duration of the Plan : 12 months (1st September 2019 to 31st August 2020)

Name of Country : **Nepal**
Name of the Participant : Ms. Kalpana Shrestha
Position : Chairperson
Name of Organization : Mahila Jagaran Savings and Credit Cooperative Limited.
Title of the Proposal : Establishment of Direct Sales Shop
Target Group : 5 Groups out of 115 Women Groups.

Target Area : Makawanpur Rural Municipality

Implementing Agency : Cooperative Groups/Mahila Jagaran Savings and Credit Cooperative/Local Government/Technical Experts.

Duration of the Plan : 12 months (1st September 2019 to 31st August 2020)

Name of Country : **Thailand**

Name of the Participant : Ms. Sararat Songcharoen

Position : Public Relations Officer

Name of Organization : Watchan Cooperative

Title of the Proposal : Encourage Women Cooperative Members to Plant Fruits and Processing Products to increase income in off-farming period in Watchan Cooperative.

Target Group : Women Cooperative Members (20-30 melon fruit producers)

Target Area : Phitsanulok Province

Implementing Agency : Watchan Cooperative

Duration of the Plan : 2 years (9th September 2019 to 8th September 2021)

ICA Co-operative Identity Statement

DEFINITION

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

VALUES

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

PRINCIPLES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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