



3rd ICA/Japan  
Training Course for

**Rural Women Leaders of Agricultural  
Cooperatives in Asia, 1993  
- A Report**

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**3rd ICA/Japan Training Course for  
RURAL WOMEN LEADERS OF AGRICULTURAL  
COOPERATIVES IN ASIA, 1993  
- A Report**

Report compiled by : Daman Prakash

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE  
Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific  
43 Friends Colony, New Delhi 110 065, India

Telephone : (91)11-6835123  
Telefax : (91)11-6835568  
Telex : (81)31-75025 DICA IN

*World Headquarters*

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE  
15 Route des Morillons  
CH-1218 Grand Saconnex  
Geneva, Switzerland

Telephone : (41)22-7984121  
Telefax : (41)22-7984122  
Telex : (45)415620 ICA CH

Project Director : Dr. Daman Prakash, Project Director, ICA ROAP, New Delhi  
Course Director : Mr. Shiro Futagami, Managing Director, IDACA, Tokyo

August, 1993 (200)

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## PREFACE

*This Report represents the successful execution of the Third ICA/Japan Training Course for Rural Women Leaders of Agricultural Cooperatives in Asia which was held at IDACA in Tokyo, from June 12 to July 08, 1993. The implementation of this programme by the International Cooperative Alliance was made possible by the funding made available by the Government of Japan in the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and the most active collaborative support extended by the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Japan (JA Zenchu) and the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA). The Alliance places on record its highest appreciation of the financial contribution made by the Government of Japan.*

*The Third training programme was attended by six participants representing Bangladesh, Thailand and Vietnam. With the completion of this programme, 18 persons have been trained in women leadership from eight countries of the Region e.g. Bangladesh (2), India (2), Indonesia (2), Malaysia (2), the Philippines (2), Sri Lanka (2), Thailand (4), and Vietnam (2).*

*The ICA is thankful to its member-organisations for sponsoring candidates for participation in this programme, which I hope, would contribute favorably to the development of women's organisations in rural areas and provide them with appropriate development opportunities.*

*I take this opportunity of commending the efforts made and deep involvement of my colleague in our Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Dr Daman Prakash, Project Director of this programme, and Mr. Shiro Futagami, Managing Director of the IDACA in Tokyo, in organising and conducting this programme in a professional and satisfactory manner*

**Bruce Thordarson**  
Director-General

*International Cooperative Alliance  
Geneva, Switzerland.*

*August 1993*

As part of active communication with young families, the Ie-No-Hikari Association produces and distributes material which could contribute in enriching the family life. The Association has issued such booklets which help the housewives in the art of foodcraft...

健康をめざして風土に合った食生活をすすめる

# ●/人 家の光料理教室 テキスト

第10集



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その土地で  
今年も、

JAグループ  
家の光協会

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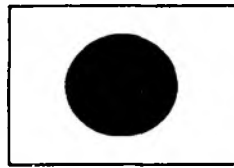
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**THIRD ICA/JAPAN TRAINING COURSE FOR  
RURAL WOMEN LEADERS OF AGRICULTURAL  
COOPERATIVES IN ASIA**

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**R E P O R T**

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**Introduction**

The Third ICA-Japan Training Course for Rural Women Leaders was held in Tokyo, Japan, from June 12 to July 08, 1993, in pursuance of the agreement signed between the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of the Government of Japan and the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA). The four-week training course was held at the premises of the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA), in Tokyo. Six participants from three countries, Bangladesh, Thailand and Vietnam, attended the Third Training Course.

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

The inauguration of the Third Training Course was held at IDACA on June 13, 1993. Representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives (JA Zenchu), National Council of Women's Associations of Agricultural Cooperatives and the Managing Director of IDACA, addressed the inaugural session.

**Project Objectives**

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

*Development Objective*

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

*Immediate Objectives*

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

**Implementation**

The training programme was implemented by the International Cooperative Alliance through its Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ICA ROAP), New Delhi. The ICA ROAP, in consultation with the IDACA, identified the countries which were to be invited for this course. Invitations to

sponsor candidates for the course were sent out sufficiently in advance to ICA member-organisations in Bangladesh, Thailand and Vietnam. Upon receipt of nominations a final selection was made in accordance with the qualifications and procedures laid down by the ICA for such programmes. The selected candidates were then provided with appropriate facilities to travel to Tokyo to follow the programme at IDACA.

### Participants

The training course was attended by six participants - two each from Bangladesh, Thailand and Vietnam.

The previous two training programmes were attended by:

Course 1 - Aug/Sept 1991      Two each from Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand.

Course 2 - Aug/Sept 1992      Two each from India, Malaysia and Sri Lanka

So far, in all the three courses, a total of eighteen (18) participants have been trained.

### Training Course at IDACA

The six selected participants attended the training programme conducted at IDACA from 12th June to 08th July 1993. The IDACA had developed a course curriculum which included class room lectures on various aspects handled by IDACA faculty members and specially invited guest lecturers, field study visits and direct communication with women leaders. The field study visits were arranged to agricultural cooperatives and women's associations in Fukuoka prefecture and to some institutions in and around Tokyo. Lecture-cum-practical field study assignments were combined to impart necessary knowledge to the participants on the working of women's associations and the general activities of agricultural cooperatives in the country.

Time was also allocated for holding group discussions and reporting.

### Training Course Contents

During the four-week training programme in IDACA, emphasis was laid on practical studies and learning. Besides introduction to basic aspects of Japanese culture and social ways of life, detailed introductions to the organisation and functioning of agricultural cooperatives in Japan were given. Subjects dealing with the activities of women's associations in agricultural cooperatives, their role in better-living activities and improving farm households and plans for the future development were also presented. Following principal areas were covered:

- Historical development and activities of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives and its activities.
- Japanese Culture and Society.
- Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives in Japan.
- Government, agricultural cooperatives, women's programmes and better living activities.
- Cultural activities of the Ie-No-Hikari Association.
- Women's activities in fisheries cooperatives.

The participants were taken on field study visits to Fukuoka Prefecture, and to some of the primary and cooperative institutions in and around Tokyo during which time they were able to have direct communication with the women leaders and observe the various activities carried out by women associations in conjunction with agricultural cooperatives.





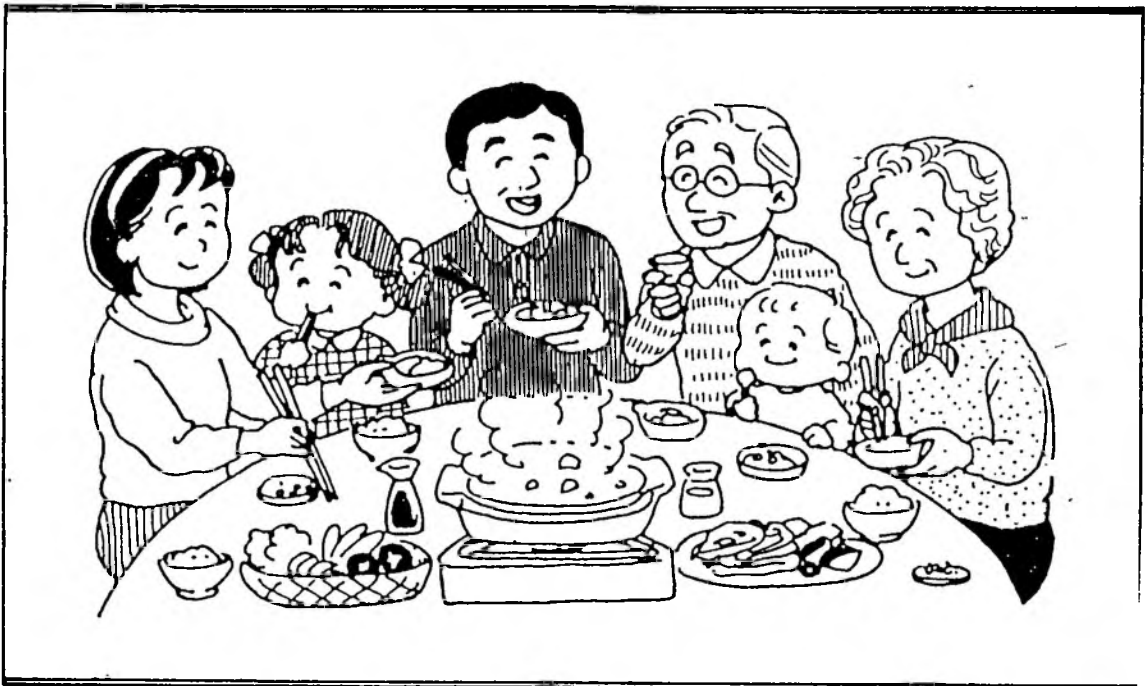
Of special significance was the development, organisation and activities of the Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives (WAAC) and the role that the Association and its constituents play. Besides participating in agricultural production-related activities, the women's associations have been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

After a week's introduction to basic aspects, the participants were taken to Fukuoka Prefecture for study visits. The participants studied the working of JA Fukuoka Yoshii and JA Kurume and the activities of their women's associations and observed different activities. They observed the production of soyabean paste, participated in the collective cooking demonstration class, production of washing soap from left-over cooking oil, observing the potato processing unit, and received information on the Association's welfare and health-related activities. They were also introduced to the activities of the Prefectural Women's Council of Agricultural Cooperatives and to the activities of agricultural cooperatives in the prefecture. The participants stayed with the families of members of the cooperative to observe the Japanese way of living and to have a closer contact with women in the farm households. They also joined in the cultural and better-living activities of women's associations.

During the study visits the participants had a chance to study A-Coop Store and the Food Ingredient Delivery Centre and the Cooking Class of JA Fukuoka Yoshii.

The participants also had an opportunity of visiting JA Tsukuigun, near IDACA in Tokyo, and holding discussions with the leaders of women's associations and observing some of its activities.

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





## Country Status Reports

### *Bangladesh, Thailand and Vietnam*

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

#### **BANGLADESH**

##### *Status of Agriculture*

Predominantly Bangladesh is an agricultural country, nearly 61% of the people are engaged in agriculture.

The total number of agricultural holdings is 15 million ha. of which small (upto 2.5 acres) is 7.07 million, medium (2.5 to 7.5 acres) is 2.48 million and large (above 7.5 acres) is 0.496 million.

The average size of holdings is 2.3 acres. Agriculture still remains the largest sector of the economy occupying three-fourth of the employed labour-force and producing nearly half of the economic output. Land is the main productive asset. It represents both economy and social status.

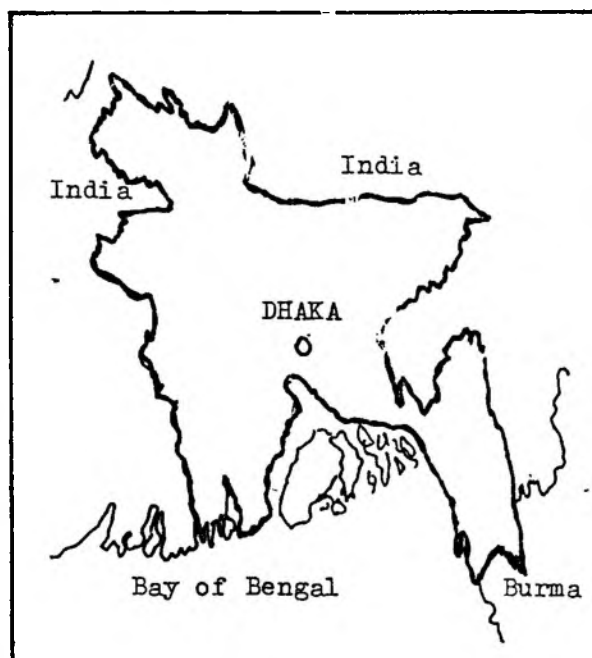
##### *Status of women in agriculture and related sectors*

Most of the women in the rural areas are directly or indirectly involved in agriculture and its related sectors. They play a very important and vital role in socio-economic activities. The domestic animals and birds of the rural agriculturist family are being looked after by women of the family. Now-a-days enthusiastic and active women are maintaining small poultry farms in their houses and their participation in other income-generating agro-based industries are gradually increasing.

Women in Bangladesh also receive loans from the Grameen Bank and other financial institutions namely Central Cooperative Banks and associations and their loan refunding capability is better than of males.

##### *General Background Information about the Cooperative Sector*

Cooperative system was introduced in Bangladesh in 1904 under government initiative through the agency of cooperative department to solve the credit problems of rural poor peasants with the enactment of the Credit Cooperative Act, 1904. Since then, many types, sizes and



structural models of the cooperatives were experimented. Meanwhile the objectives and coverage of the cooperatives underwent several changes. In the late 50s, a new two tier cooperative model was tried by the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), Comilla. After liberation in 1971, cooperatives in Bangladesh have been functioning in two systems under the sponsorship of cooperative department and BARD.

The parallel working of the two separate models - one originally sponsored by the cooperative department and the other by the BRDB, led to sharp increase in the number of cooperatives. After independence, the policy declaration of the Government of Bangladesh in the field of cooperatives has been very clear. It has been pointed out in the Constitution that the cooperative sector is the third sector of economy besides the public and private sectors. There are several types of cooperatives from primary level society to national societies - small weavers societies, agricultural farmers societies, jute mills, insurance societies, cooperative banks and societies. There are also auto-rickshaw drivers' cooperatives and cooperative marketing society. There is a National Women's Cooperative Society and Women Handicrafts Cooperative Federation which export handicrafts products.



#### *Participation of Women in Agricultural Cooperatives and Related Sector*

Women in Bangladesh are also actively involved in agricultural cooperatives. Particularly in the rural areas women have formed primary agricultural cooperative societies, which are affiliated to central cooperative banks/associations. These primary cooperatives get loans from the central cooperatives for investment in agriculture. The women's participation in various agro-based industries are generally increasing day by day. In this way a good number of families are becoming self-reliant through the participation of women members through cooperatives, as such they are making contributions towards the development of agriculture in the country.

#### *The Bangladesh National Women's Cooperative Society*

Women constitute half of the total population in Bangladesh. Hence participation of women for overall development of the country is considered to be essential. Women cooperatives in Bangladesh can play a vital role in increasing production, employment and income-generation. Women, through cooperatives, can participate in the rural development activities like health and family planning, literacy awareness and income-generation. As such the government organised cooperatives for women. To develop women's cooperative movement and to ensure the participation of women in income generating activities, the National Women's Cooperative Society was organised in 1978.

#### *Main Objectives*

- a. To unite 48% of the women of Bangladesh into cooperative sector and to develop self-confidence among them;
- b. To conduct women towards economic salvation;
- c. To totally eradicate and remove superstition and illiteracy among women;
- d. To maintain uniform distribution of consumer goods;
- e. To save the nation from over-growth of population by encouraging family planning;
- f. To encourage cottage industries, assist in marketing of products, supply raw materials by import and distribute them;
- g. To establish stores for receiving all consumer goods by the members of the societies in fair price;
- h. To carry on business - retail or wholesale for the interest of members.

The National society has 30 central societies and 645 primary women's coops with a total individual membership of nearly 400,000. The Society has got an office building with accommodation of office, sales centre and godowns. The Society's shares, deposit, loans and reserves amounted to Taka 514,661.

The Society has a sales centre for dealing in handicrafts, cloth material and consumer goods. Consumer cooperative store of the Society is run under the general guidance of the secretary of the Society. Purchases amounting to Taka 223,413, sales Taka 201,714 with a gross profit of Taka 21,699 was carried out by the store.

The total income of the Society was Taka 402,281 while the expenditure was Taka 474,170 resulting in a net loss of Taka 71,881 during the year 1988-89.



The Society implemented developmental projects costing Taka 3.44 million during 1977-78 to 1982-83. Under the project 16 central and 160 primary women's cooperatives were developed by setting up some training units and sales centres for selling their products. At present there are 39 central societies and 645 primary women's cooperatives having nearly 400,000 women members.

The Society has developed confidence among its women members, developed awareness of their potentialities and a sense of self-reliance in them. Women are now regarded with dignity and honour among the community. The primary women's cooperative societies are affiliated to the cooperative banks/associations and receive loans from them. They purchase products of farmers at the time of harvesting and ensure better prices and control the market. By using the loans from the cooperative banks through the women's cooperative societies, women in Bangladesh are contributing to the increased growth of agricultural products.

#### *Problems faced*

- i. Lack of common source of agricultural goods for procurement and a weak net-work for supply and services;
- ii. Agricultural credit facilities have not been extended to the full requirements of members;
- iii. Inadequate godown facilities at the primary level;
- iv. Inadequate credit facilities in the women's cooperatives for adaptation of mechanized farming.

#### *Suggestions*

1. National Cooperative Union (BJSU) should establish consultancy and guidance service centres for women's cooperatives.
2. National development scheme for promotion of agro-based industries through cooperatives should be taken up for implementation.
3. To get higher prices in the international market, the quality of products should be improved, and for this purpose training facilities and equipments are to be extended upto central women cooperatives level.
4. All women cooperative societies should be affiliated to a financial institution for support, supply and procurement of modern appliances and raw materials.
5. Credit facilities should be extended for the improvement of sales and display centres of the national society.

## THAILAND

### *Involvement of women in cooperatives in Thailand*

At present there are six types of registered cooperative societies in Thailand e.g. agricultural cooperatives, land settlement cooperatives, fishery cooperatives, thrift and credit cooperatives, consumer cooperatives and service cooperatives.

1. *Agricultural Cooperatives:* An unlimited liability credit cooperative or a village credit cooperative is the oldest of agricultural cooperatives in Thailand. The agricultural cooperatives with limited liability were first established in 1959-60 as a pilot project in Pakchong and Muang Chacherngsao district. It was intended to have been a model upon which the existing credit cooperatives would be improved both in structure and working procedures, to make them more viable.

2. *Land-Settlement Cooperatives:* In 1938, Land Settlement Cooperatives were initiated in the Central Plans to help landless and tenant farmers to become landowners. This type of cooperative later

developed into three models - agricultural land settlement cooperatives, land hire-purchase cooperatives and land tenant cooperatives.

3. *Fishery Cooperatives:* In 1954, the first fishery cooperative was established among fishermen with the objective of improving productivity and marketing of fishery products. This type of cooperative was later accepted by small fishermen who do inland fishing as well as those engaged in marine fishing.

4. *Thrift and Credit Cooperatives:* The first thrift and credit cooperative was set up among government officials within the Ministry of Cooperatives in 1949 with the main objective to promote savings and to provide loans to members for clearing old debts and for meeting expenses of daily necessities.

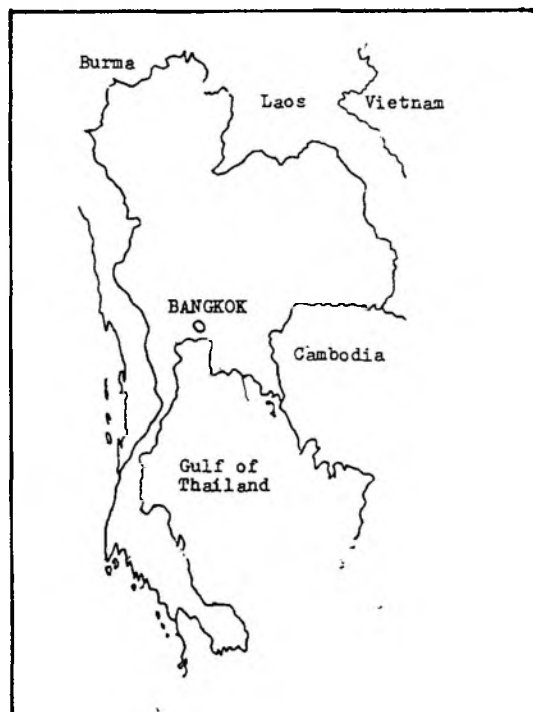
5. *Consumer Cooperatives:* In 1937, the first consumer cooperative was organised in Amphoe Sena, Ayutthaya, to help rural people in their daily purchases of consumer goods. This cooperative was the origin of other consumer cooperatives organised to solve the problem of consumer goods shortage both in rural and urban areas after the World War II.

6. *Service Cooperatives:* These are miscellaneous forms of cooperatives organised among the rural people for purposes of improving the methods of production, providing credit and marketing services, and raising the members' income through the Principles of Cooperation. Since 1977, many new cooperatives were established among people engaged in handicraft business e.g. umbrella making, cutlery, water supply, taxi-drivers and housing.

### *Structure of Cooperatives*

Cooperatives in Thailand are vertically organised at three levels: primary societies at the local district level, secondary societies at provincial level and the apex societies at the national level. Primary agricultural cooperative consists of individual farmers, divided into various groups at a village or tambo level for training purposes, business activities or determination of proposals for forwarding to the board of directors. Three or more primaries can together form a secondary federation at provincial level. These secondary federations undertake joint activities on behalf of their primary affiliates including processing of agricultural products.

At the national level, the Agricultural Cooperative Federation of Thailand is the apex society of agricultural cooperatives while the Consumers Cooperative Federation of Thailand and the



Federation of Saving and Credit Cooperatives of Thailand are the federated apex organisations for consumers and thrift and credit cooperatives respectively.

### Cooperatives in Thailand (as of January 1, 1993)

<i>Type</i>	<i>No. of coops</i>	<i>No. of members</i>
Agricultural Cooperatives	1,797	2,752,724
Land Settlement Cooperatives	93	101,290
Fisheries Cooperatives	36	7,302
Thrift and Credit Cooperatives	878	1,564,142
Consumer Cooperatives	345	675,503
Service Cooperatives	286	89,592
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,435</b>	<b>5,190,593</b>
National Cooperative Organisations	.... 11	
Member Societies	.... 1,325	
Regional Cooperative Federation	.... 1	
Member societies	.... 9	
Provincial Cooperative Federations	.... 73	
Member societies	.... 1,005	

#### *Agriculture*

Thailand's economy traditionally rests on an agricultural base. Today about 60% of Thailand's working population is engaged in agricultural production, including forestry and fisheries. Low commodity prices, and the government's emphasis on diversification and industrialisation have led to a deterioration of the agricultural sector. However, agricultural products, primarily rice, rubber, tapioca, sugar and maize earn close to half the country's foreign exchange earnings.

Although livestock is an important component of the agricultural sector in Thailand, it ranks far behind crops. Chicken and ducks are most commonly raised along with cattle, pigs, goats, sheep and horses. Many farmers whose primary interest is growing rice, also rear a few chicken, pigs and fish for private consumption.

Government is taking steps to improve beef and dairy production through cross-breeding and artificial insemination by using high grade stocks imported from the US, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Australia and New Zealand. Through the introduction of desirable grass varieties, grazing potentialities are also being increased.

In terms of dairying, there are many dairy cooperatives now established in Thailand. The first one was set up at Nong Pho about 20 years ago and now it has more than 4000 members. The cooperative not only gives farmers secured marketing facilities for their products, but also offers services such as artificial insemination. Farmers are also paid an annual dividend.

#### *Women and Agriculture*

Women play a major role in agricultural systems in Thailand providing unpaid family labour in addition to their normal work at home. Increasingly they are involved in para-agricultural activities and off-farm employment as well. However it is only recently that women's various contributions have been recognised - out of 18 million people who work in agriculture, almost 10 million are women.

Women indisputably are significant contributors to livestock production. However, their qualifications as successful farmers are undermined by social, economic and scientific technical factors, each of which is compounded by encompassing gender issues, the sum of which serve to hinder the development and implementation of government livestock promotion. Socially family and village structure accords livestock ownership to male household heads. This places related management and financial decisions in their hands.

In education in general, particularly in the field of science and technology, the disparity between men and women is most pronounced. In agriculture, this is reflected in women's ignorance and fear of new technology. This, in turn, limits the unique contribution of the feminine perspective to design, to experimentation and to planning.

Migration of men, due to lack of income, leaves women and children to share the remaining agricultural labour. Thus women represent an experienced and stable workforce, lacking only in knowledge, management and decision-making skills. Therefore, the support of successful live-stock rearing by women may serve to alleviate a root cause of rural migration, namely insufficient family income. It also serves to enhance the partnership of men and women working on the farm.

#### *Promotion of Women's Involvement in Cooperatives in Thailand*

The policy of the Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT) for developing women in cooperative sector is to promote the involvement and participation of women in the field of cooperatives so that women could, through group action, find cooperative solutions to their problems and become active partners in cooperatives and contributors to economic and social development.

For the effectiveness of policy mentioned above, the CLT has appointed a policy-makers committee to handle the project by organising seminars, training courses, workshops, as well as seeking for assistance funds, marketing and technology, for improving the quality of the products, the understanding in nutrition, family health, family welfare and household economy, which have helped in the improvement of quality of life of the rural people.

As of 30th June 1992, the number of women in cooperatives is as follows:

<i>Type of coops</i>	<i>No. of coops</i>	<i>No. of women groups</i>	<i>Activities</i>
Agricultural Coops	77	138	Handicraft, making shirts, nets.
Land Settlement Coops	35	35	Agricultural, making artificial flowers, consumer goods.
Land Reform Coops	2	3	
Land Improvement Coops	1	1	Food preservation
Service Coops	1	1	Saving, maintenance of agricultural machinery
	116	178	

#### *Problems and Obstacles*

1. Shortage of working capital
2. Marketing problem - purchase of products.
3. Deficiency of skills
4. Lack of cooperation among women.

The Cooperative League of Thailand conducts four training programmes for cooperative women groups per year and each course consists of 30 women or 120 persons annually. The objective is to upgrade the quality of life of cooperative member-families and to teach such courses as sewing and dress-making, food preservation artificial flower making, weaving and health.

#### *Suggestions*

1. Provide funds to women groups to maintain the continuation of activities of the women groups,
2. Find markets for products of women groups,
3. Provide additional training and skill development programmes and arrange for women groups to participate more in social activities.

## *Zonta Dairy Village of Chom Bung Rural Development Centre*

### *Background*

Chong Bung is a district in Ratchaburi province covering an area of sixty square km along the Burmese border and has a population of approximately 66,000. The district was largely forest reserve which was exploited until only dry shrub remained on eroded soil. It was further depleted when illegal landlords turned the area into sugarcane and cassava plantations which were abandoned when the soil was spent. Drought is common in the area, the yearly rainfall is only 900 mm even less than the internationally recognised drought area of north-eastern Thailand. In the past, majority of the inhabitants of this area were illiterate peasant farmers. They could only survive by working as temporary labourers for the big landlords during the peak seasons.

In 1974, the Chom Bung Rural Development Centre was established by the Diocese of Ratchaburi to implement development projects aiming at alleviating the plight of such farmers. Through the action of this organisation, land rights were obtained for several hundred local families.

In 1979, the Chom Bung Rural Development Centre undertook a resettlement programme in conjunction with the Bangkok chapter of the Zonta International Women's Club. The Zonta dairy programme evolved from a series of activities and projects undertaken to establish dairying as a source of livelihood for the population.

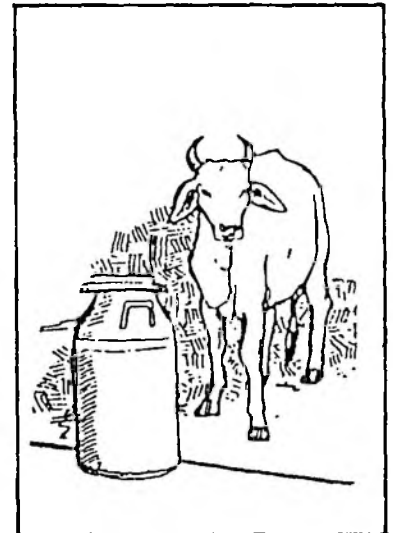
In 1981, families began to resettle in the area and were provided with pregnant cows. In establishing the dairy project these settlers encountered problems such as lack of dairy extension services (e.g. artificial insemination, veterinary services etc.) roads, water supply, and a local milk processing centre. The programme manager was sent to Australia and New Zealand for extensive training on dairying to provide the needed extension services for the community. A project was set up to build ponds and roads in the village. Once electricity reached the village in 1987, a milk collection and processing plant was built in the village, saving the farmers time and money. The funds for the construction were supplied by CEBEMO (a church organisation in Netherlands).

Another obstacle recognised by this community was the lack of necessary inputs such as pasture seed and milking equipment. A revolving fund was established, again with the financial support of CEBEMO. This fund provided the capital to purchase these inputs. Currently, the Zonta dairying community consists of 43 families and a total of 432 heads of cattle. Average annual gross income per family is 169,000 baht (\$ 6000). As of 1990, the plant processed approximately 325,000 kg of milk a year. The majority of the raw milk is pasteurized and sold as homogenized and flavored milk. A small percentage is processed into cream, butter and cheese. These products are sold to Bangkok area schools and hostels.

Farmers have found dairying provides a steady source of income. The project has prospered and is now a renowned demonstration and training facility. Project Director looks after the general administration and financial matters and the Project Manager is responsible for supervision of the dairy farm, processing plant and marketing of products. She also looks after the training programmes, and extension work for the community. The Processing plant is responsible for collection of raw milk, quality control, processing, packaging and distribution of products. Staff report to the Project Manager. The dairy farm unit consists of the Zonta Dairy herd which is used as a model herd for training in milking techniques and herd health care. This unit also serves for the teaching of pasture management and includes experimental plots of tropical grasses.

Zonta Dairy Project was instrumental in the following developmental work in the area:

*Dairy Farm Unit:* Selection and purchase of quality dairy cows from abroad, designing of farm buildings, development of pasture land, breeding programme and training of farmers and staff.





*Processing Plant:* Use of new and used equipment in the formation of an efficient processing system, designing the laboratory for quality control, training of staff in the production of pasteurized dairy products, designing of the packaging of products and initiation of product marketing.

*Dairy Extension Programme:* Training of village farmers and veterinary students, acting as consultant to dairy corporations in the Philippines and Cambodia, training to women in dairy farming for about 300 women from all over the country and publishing of booklets on small scale dairy farming.

## VIETNAM

### *Involvement of Women in Agri. Coop Sector in Vietnam*

Vietnam is an agricultural economy and is considered as a major rice producing country. Nearly 80% of the population lives in rural areas. Out of a total labour force of 30 million, 21 million are employed in agriculture. In 1989, for the first time, Vietnam became an exporter of rice. Cooperatives play a central role in the agricultural sector. At present agricultural cooperatives function at the village level only. Secondary and tertiary level cooperatives are yet to be formed. Presently on a national level there are 18,340 cooperatives in the agricultural sector with a total membership of about one million households. This represents approximately 69% of the total farm/rural households.

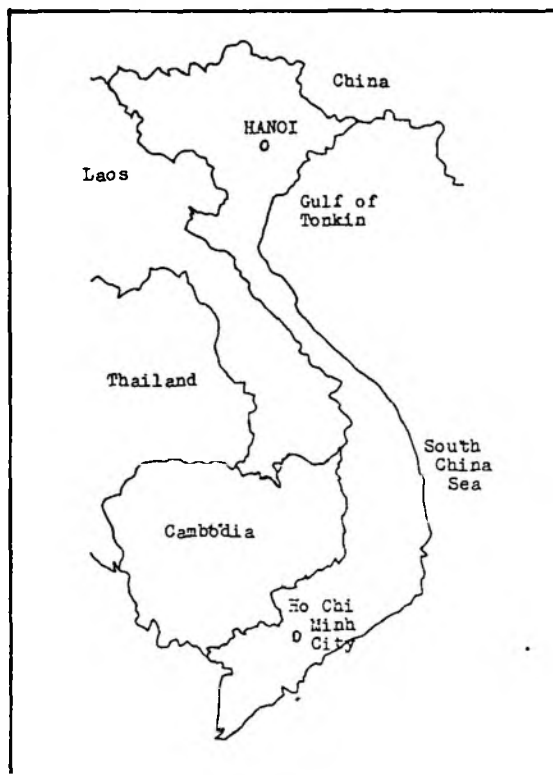
Presently there are three types of agricultural cooperatives in Vietnam, The agricultural cooperatives carry out the following main activities:

- \* Production and sale of agricultural inputs,
- \* Provision of credit facilities to members through revolving funds or acting as an agent to agricultural bank,
- \* Providing agricultural machinery services such as tractors, water pumps, transport etc.
- \* Conducting farmers savings schemes, investment and insurance,
- \* Marketing of agricultural produce, and
- \* Undertaking various agro-industries e.g. coffee, cashew, fruits etc.

In the new system, the role of agriculture or multipurpose cooperative is to distribute land, supply services, promote agricultural development, promote agro-processing, and to ensure a solid revenue base for commune and the state. It is also the responsibility of the cooperative to ensure that agricultural development takes place by disseminating information to its members on new or more appropriate technologies and the like as well as by promoting new farm activities as animal husbandry, sericulture, forestry etc. Multipurpose cooperatives should also provide production inputs, basic consumer goods marketing facilities, credit and support for small scale industries. Farm credit cooperatives also will play an increasingly important role in the rural economy.

The process of building a strong, independent agricultural cooperative sector in Vietnam is one of transformation, rather than reconstruction. Despite the many failures and shortcomings of the existing cooperatives in the country a skeletal structure of a potential cooperative network does exist.

Cooperatives in the agricultural sector are considered very weak, resulting from a shortage of capital, lack of qualified manpower, lack of managerial skills, member apathy, lack of member education and the absence of a legal and institutional framework for development.



Women headed households are having considerable presence in Vietnam. The cooperative sector claims higher participation of women. The number of women workers in agricultural cooperatives has been 60.2% in 1986 and handicrafts and small industries cooperatives claimed 67%. Considerable number of chairpersons and other officials in cooperatives too are women.

#### *Role of women in consumer cooperative sector*

The movement of trade and consumer cooperatives of Ho Chi Minh City came into being very early right after the south of Vietnam was just liberated. Acting as the distributor of goods of fixed quality and prices fixed by the state much lower than those in the market, the cooperative holds a strong tool to attract all levels of people to join it. Most of households are its members. The Coop itself is one of the pioneers in implementing flexible price system.

Saigon Coop realizes that the people have a demand on a coop but it must be a coop with shops which meets the taste and demand of the people and devoted to them. This determines the existence of the Trade Coop.

#### *Functions and activities*

Two main functions of the coop are: organising the movement - Saigon Coop is an association of entire trade and consumer cooperatives located in Ho Chi Minh City, a representative of the whole system to protect its rights by submitting to the organisation and operation of cooperatives. As for its members, Saigon Coop promotes, organises and develops cooperative movement in the city and controls, inspects and assists in very respects of the operations of the units for achieving efficiency.

Direct business on import and export, production, trade. services to meet partly the requirements on living needs and daily lives of members and labour.

#### *Main activities of the Coop*

Import and export: handling directly general import and export with foreign companies. Main export products consist of agricultural products, dried marine products, forestry products and fresh vegetables. Main import products consist of material, raw material for production, equipment and machineries, and small quantity of necessary consumer goods. Acting as a sales agent for foreign companies, organising exhibitions, introducing and marketing products in Saigon and in Vietnam.

*Investment:* Participating in investment projects on production, real estate, hotels, apartments, offices etc.

*Production:* Producing and processing products of agriculture, forestry, seafood for export, food and process foodstuff.

*Home trade:* Wholesale and retail of goods, food and foodstuff, vegetables, fresh food, industrial products, daily needs and other commodities.

*Services:* organising and rendering services on trade, tourism, real estate, transportation.

*Personnel:* Total 3070, males 894 and females 2176.

#### *Some future projections*

The following activities are being planned by the Saigon coop for future developments

- Concentration in specialised food trade on food and foodstuff serving daily necessities of the people,
- Establishing Coop shop models strongly marked with Coop's features in accordance with the standard of the Saigon Coop,
- Improvement of service by way of mobile sales teams serving people and home delivery or phone orders.,
- Establishment of pilot self-service shops/self-selection shops.

## Observations made by the Participants

After having gone through the programme of studies, study of training materials, study visits, ~~and~~ discussions held with women leaders in the field, the participants made the following observations:

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

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

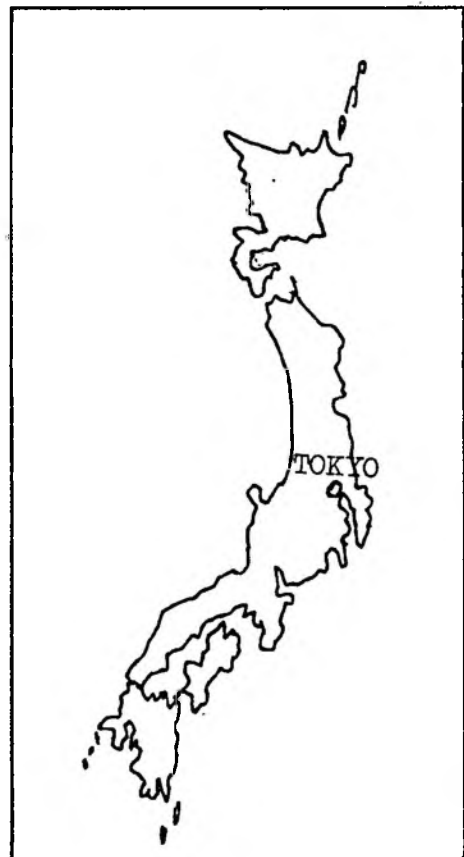
Five principles adopted by WAAC were:

1. Promotion of agricultural cooperative movement;
2. Members are to be women who are engaged in farming;
3. Autonomous management;
4. Solidarity; and
5. Political neutrality.

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

The WAAC covers better living activities adequately. The living styles of rural and urban women in Japan are almost equal. The WAAC members are assisted in book-keeping, dressing, up-keep of house, introduction of new kitchen utensils, safe and healthy environment in inculcating civic sense and behaviour pattern of members within the society. Encouragement by WAAC to develop kitchen gardens in almost every farmer's house has helped the home economy. Health care of family members is another important contribution of WAAC. Better-living activities like joint cooking, common bath, piggy bank, laundry place, group saving, water supply, group activities and joint purchasing activities were the other factors.

Study meetings of group farming and means to find jobs other than seasonal work was another important activity of WAAC. The exchange with



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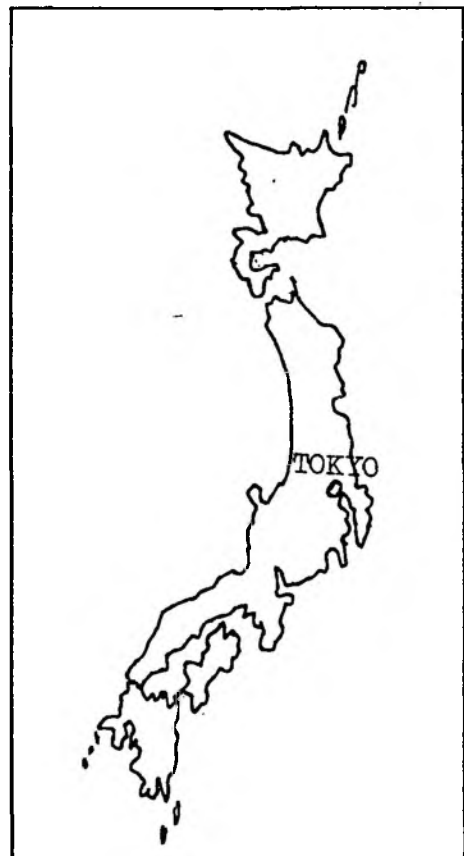
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overseas women associations made the WAAC members more informative. The WAAC is financially independent and has autonomous management.

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

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

Given below is a brief description of the various activities that are carried out by the Women's Associations in the agricultural cooperative sector of Japan.

I. In the year 1990, there were 667,668 regular women members in agricultural cooperatives out of which 70 were the board members. According to a recent survey conducted by the WAAC, 27% of women wanted to be the regular members of cooperatives, while 24% were not interested to be members. 41.7% wanted to be the regular members to improve the status of women while 25.9% wanted to be the promoters of agriculture, 40.7% did not want to be the regular members as they felt that the WAAC could adequately reflect their views and 27.7% saw no merit in being regular members. In spite of this trend, women have been involved in large numbers in women's associations which are supplementing and complimenting the work and activities of agricultural cooperatives. The 19th Congress of agricultural cooperatives held in 1991 passed a resolution which said, "we will promote participation of farm successors and women as regular members by setting-up targets to expand and rejuvenate the organisation and business bases" and "we will promote selection of representative members and directors from among youth associations and women's associations".

II. The organisational structure of the Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives-Japan (JA ZEN FUKYO) is that of three tier - primary level, prefectural level and national level. As of 1991, there were 2,169,200 members of women associations representing 3,092 organisations in 47 prefectures. In conjunction with its 40 years anniversary held in 1991, the WAAC had established a plan entitled 'the Path towards 21st Century for WAAC'. Under this three-year plan of action, 'the Plan for Vitalization of National Council of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives (San San Plan)' is now currently under way. Under this plan, a 'study campaign for three million women' is under implementation. The following four major activities have been developed under this plan:

- Securing safety in dieting habits to protect health of family members;
- Support to and care of aged people of the society;
- Care and protection of environment through the protection of immediate living environment;
- Uplifting the status of women.

The programme of the WAAC has been built on three principal pillars e.g. 'Let's Create', 'Let's Protect', and 'Let's Get'.

These are:

*i. Let's Create:*

Let us create and produce healthy and high quality food;

Let us create local environment where it is comfortable to live and to participate in the activities of WAAC;

Let us establish vigorous and active associations.

*ii. Let's Protect:*

Let us protect domestic agricultural products and healthy foods to eat;

Let us protect local and global environment;

Let us protect weaker sections of the society such as children and aged persons.

iii. Let's Get:

Let us get a place where women participate in farm management, agricultural cooperatives and local administration;

Let us get the way of life by our own hands;

Let us get a cordial life.

These tasks are sought to be promoted at three levels - at the level of individual members, at the level of WAAC and at the level of local community.

It has been envisaged that all JA Women Associations shall cover the following subjects besides their regular subjects:

1. Safety of Foods (production and distribution of safe and high quality foods)- Campaign against harmful and chemical additives, dangerous food colours, imported foods containing residues of agricultural chemicals and other questionable foods, preparation of locally grown foods, chemical-free food items, and improvement of local farm practices.

2. Support to and care of aged people of the society - It is important to create a local community where human rights of the aged is respected and provide them cordial, bright and worthy life.

3. Care and protection of environment through the protection of immediate living environments - Promotion of recycling of waste resources, curtailment of wastes, energy conservation, enhancing interest in global environment protection issues.

4. Enhancement of status of women - Organisation of promotional groups to provide special knowledge, technology and systems necessary for agriculture and renovation of agricultural management, enriching social life and to create conditions for leisure and recreation for women. Also to work for the safety of women against 'overwork', 'less evaluation in management' and 'few opportunities to speak or express'.

III. Women in Japan, through their associations, have influenced positively the life styles of people and working operations of their cooperatives. Women have participated in the following main activities besides undertaking several social functions:

1. Participation in the organisational structure of their cooperatives, individually as well as through their associations. They have helped the image of their cooperatives, increased the membership, activities for family members e.g., collecting information on elderly people, young

wives, children and household needs, encourage participation of younger generation in cooperative and farm activities, holding seminars for farm successors, publications and publicity work of the cooperative, exchanges among branch level groups, identifying roles for directors to strengthen their consciousness as leaders of women associations.

2. Health care activities, health screening, health education, improving diet, agro-processing without food additives, production of vegetables and fruits without agricultural chemicals, mother care, child care, social hygiene, environment consciousness, volley ball tournaments, regular exercises etc.

3. Concern for Seniors, organisation of mutual help for the

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「JA」ジェイエイは、新しい農協の愛称です。  
"JA" is the new logo of Japan's Agricultural Cooperatives.

elders, welfare activities e.g. visits to elders, food delivery, provision of healthy pillows, questions relating to succession, nursing etc.

4. Participation in consumer activities, enhancing use of rice through preparation of a variety of rice-oriented dishes, care of perishable foods, purchasing from A-Coops, joint purchasing, 'han' groups, identifying household needs, emphasis on quality goods, environment-friendly foods, kitchen gardening, recycling of waste resources, family budgeting etc.

5. Cultural and educational activities, enhancing interest in national culture, and traditions, songs, drama, reading groups, calligraphy, dancing, exhibitions, propaganda in favour of cooperatives etc., holding meetings of 'han' groups, study circles and lecture series etc., dissemination and use of *Ie-No-Hikari* publications, get-together of mothers, organisation of rainbow groups etc.

IV. Women organisations are available right from the primary level upto the national level as autonomous organisations supplementing and complimenting the work and activities of cooperatives. Women associations are voluntary in character and composed of farm women and housewives. These associations aim at improving not only the farm activities but also the family conditions through a programme of better living which, in turn, is supported by cooperatives through their activities. These associations have been able to organise, support and participate in better living activities by initiating a number of programmes. They have not only helped the farm community in improving the living standards and work conditions but have also created positive climate and goodwill for the cooperative institutions. Women associations have given useful information to the cooperatives aimed at improving its services for the community.

V. These associations promote a thorough understanding and awareness of better living programmes through holding hamlet level meetings, general meetings, joint cooking, joint purchasing, balance dieting programmes, food supply and cultural activities in the community.

VI. They encourage the participation of rural women in better living activities and invigoration of organisations to realise 'cordial life with rich communication' by: (i) centering on younger generation; (ii) strengthening social activities among the young ladies groups; and (iii) organising cooking classes, English language sessions, and introducing western dancing etc.

VII. They aim at developing comprehensive promotion of business and committees to live up with the needs of members and local residents through receiving orders from members through computers and distribution centre, food ingredients centre, kitchen gardening and by holding morning and evening markets.

VIII. They organise better living centres as key stations for promotion of harmony, cordial life through organising joint purchasing, joint food distribution, food ingredient centre, exhibitions.

At the prefectural level, the women associations provide the networking for all women associations within the area. Some of the principal functions of women associations at the prefectural level are:

- help and support in the preparation of business plans through surveys, home visits and consultations;
- help in the process of amalgamation and restructuring of agricultural cooperatives;
- enhancing personal exchange of experiences between the primary cooperatives and prefectural level cooperative organisations and federations;
- networking of computerisation;
- developing public relationship;
- establishing and furthering environment-friendly agriculture;
- creation of cordial life with effective communication;
- setting-up and operating distribution centres;
- food ingredients centres;
- rice milling;
- laundry machine centre;



- food processing centre;
- self-supply systems;
- kitchen gardening promotion and advisory services; and
- establishing legislative activities to establish fundamental agricultural policies.

In general, women's associations cover almost all aspects of human life and try to correlate them with the working of their agricultural cooperatives. Of special attention are the environment-related activities e.g., emphasis on recycling of waste resources i.e. collection and systematic handling of glass bottles, waste paper, empty cans, use of left-over cooking oil for washing-soap making, general cleanliness, waste water disposal, care of plants and trees, discouraging use of high salt-contents in food items, reduction of sugar consumption in food articles, avoiding high fat contents, regular exercises, etc. Great attention is being paid by these associations in encouraging the younger generation to take part in cooperative activities through contests, music, social service, and also enhancing interest in national culture and traditions e.g., traditional dresses, traditional foods, traditional music and arts etc.



## Recommendations & Suggestions

Countrywise recommendations and lessons that could be learnt from the Japanese experience, as analyzed by the participants, are given below.

### *Bangladesh*

The two participants from Bangladesh felt that the activities of women associations in Japan are of special interest to the cooperative movement in Bangladesh. The participants, therefore, made their recommendations under two headings: (1) recommendations for their own organisations, and (2) recommendations for the National Cooperative Union of Bangladesh (Bangladesh Jatiya Samabaya Union).

#### *i) Recommendations for their own Organisations*

1. The National Women's Cooperative Society Ltd. of Bangladesh, as a national apex organisation of women cooperatives, should organise regional and national level meetings or workshops to listen to the reports of the two participants who would explain in detail the activities of women associations in Japan, and their contributions to the cooperatives. To these workshops should be invited local women leaders, local cooperative leaders and officials from the local administrations.
2. The National Women's Cooperative Society should organise a central level workshop or a committee which could produce a plan of action for the development of women activities for a period of three years to begin with.
3. The National Women's Cooperative Society should develop close relations with the Bangladesh Jatiya Samabaya Union (BJSU) to enlist support of national and international organisations in the further development of women activities in the country.
4. The National Women's Cooperative Society and its affiliates should focus on the following key issues:
  - involvement of women in cooperative activity,
  - safe food for mothers and children,
  - clean and healthy environment for the family,
  - income-generating activities for women through local cottage industries and market channels of cooperatives.
5. The affiliates of the National Women's Cooperative Society and the National Women's Cooperative Society should encourage and undertake the implementation of the following activities-
  - extension programmes in rural farming,
  - leadership training programmes for women leaders,
  - group joint purchasing of household needs,
  - safe and balanced food programme,
  - better control and application of natural resources, e.g. water, soil through environment-friendly campaigns,

- better living activities,
- promotion of kitchen gardening in rural and urban areas,
- extension of savings groups in women associations,
- information on income-generating activities among women.

ii) *Recommendations for the National Union (BJSU)*

For the consideration of the Bangladesh Jatiya Samabaya Union (BJSU) the participants recommended the following plan of action.

1. BJSU should urgently initiate steps to propose a plan of action for involvement of women in agricultural cooperatives.

2. The plan of three years, to begin with, be prepared, approved and launched for the country which could cover the following subject areas:

- involvement of women in cooperative activities,
- safe food for mothers and children,
- clean and healthy environment for the family.
- income-generating activities for the women through local cottage industry and appropriate marketing channels,
- dissemination of information on women's associations of Japan among the leaders of women associations in the country,
- soliciting cooperation and collaboration of national and international organisations in the promotion of women in cooperatives by organising or proposing national and international support in pilot projects or exchange of experience and expertise.
- the BJSU to support the women cooperatives in providing training in book-keeping and basic management practices.

The participants noted with satisfaction that in Bangladesh the basic organisational structure exists where women are organised through a cooperative network e.g. the National Women's Cooperative Society with its affiliates. The network is also connected with the National Cooperative Union of Bangladesh (BJSU). It is therefore, easy and logical that the two organisations get together and work to enhance the participation of women in cooperative activities. The main aim should be to provide the women with additional income-generating opportunities as well as to protect the national culture, heritage and traditions. The women's organisations should come forward to improve the image of cooperative institutions and thereby creating goodwill for them.

**Thailand**

The two participants from Thailand, one from the Cooperative League of Thailand and the other from a voluntary agency made the following recommendations:

i) *National Level:*

The national level organisation i.e. the Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT), in collaboration with the Cooperative Promotion Department and other relevant agencies should develop a national level programme exclusively for the involvement of women in cooperatives with the following aims:

- A national cooperative policy with emphasis on participation of women in the management of cooperatives should be formulated. It was considered appropriate to appoint an ad hoc Advisory Group from among the women board members of agricultural cooperatives in the country. This Advisory Group may be appointed by the CLT as a first step and be assigned the task of formulating an appropriate policy for women and to suggest the formation of an eventual National Women's Committee of the CLT.
- A systematic development of a national level committee within the CLT responsible for promotion of women in cooperatives, identifying opportunities of work for women in cooperatives, safeguarding the interests of women, finding appropriate funds for carrying

- out the work of the women national committee, and developing suitable courses and programmes for the training and education of women members in cooperative activities,
- The CLT should collaborate with national and international voluntary and governmental agencies in locating suitable development projects for mobilising women in cooperative sector,
  - The CLT to promote environmental consciousness among the people and encouraging women to undertake better living activities for cooperative households in the country,
  - The CLT to organise a national level workshop at which Japanese experience of women association could be discussed and, on the basis of the discussions, a national plan of action is evolved. In the organisation of such a meeting collaboration of Japanese cooperatives and the ICA ROAP may be enlisted.
  - Cooperatives at the primary level may also collaborate with local governmental programmes which offer a variety of development opportunities in women development programmes. Some of the government programmes offer skill training opportunities, family planning and family welfare assistance, loans for handicraft activities, on low interest etc. The primary cooperatives should, therefore, help mobilisation of women in undertaking activities which are relevant for better living and family welfare activities. The national cooperative organisation of Thailand should, therefore, develop as soon as possible, a women development unit within its structure to collect information on such aspects and disseminate it among its constituents.

## *ii) Cooperative level*

At the level of the cooperative society (and/or voluntary agencies e.g. Zonta) the following activities may be initiated:

- Mobilising women to become members, and women members to take active part in the business operations of their cooperatives;
- Women groups to be formed which should identify their activities and these groups be provided with adequate funds;
- Women should be encouraged to sit on the boards of management of cooperatives;
- Women groups to be autonomous, voluntary and be complimentary and supplementary to cooperative work. They should learn to work independently and with freedom;
- Cooperatives to help women groups to have training opportunities in the required skills;
- Women groups to undertake a variety of activities e.g. environment-related, family food habits, healthy and balanced food, care of elders, literacy, cultural participation e.g. dances, arts and crafts, community purchasing, first aid etc.;
- Agencies like Zonta are involved in a variety of community service activities. Such agencies, although not cooperative, are providing assistance to women in rural areas, and have, therefore, the potential to collaborate with cooperative institutions. Such a collaboration be viewed positively and pursued.

## *Vietnam*

The two participants from Vietnam represented the Saigon Coop., an association of entire trade and consumer cooperatives in Ho Chi Minh city. They were sponsored through the courtesy of the Vietnam Central Council of Supply and Marketing Cooperatives, member-organisation of the ICA. The cooperative structure of Vietnam does not have any special parallel organisation for women who are involved in cooperatives. Nor is there any special women committees within the Central Council. The Saigon Coop in Ho Chi Minh City, however, has some women groups and women activists who support the work of the Saigon Coop. These women groups act as advisory organs to improve the service of the cooperative and are voluntary in character without any active link with the cooperative. The Saigon Coop, however, has a number of women employees at various levels. The two participants were, therefore, from among the employees of the Cooperative.

The recommendations made for the country by the participants were as follows:

*i) National Level Organisation*

- A national level advisory committee be urgently set up within the national organisation to initiate activities for involvement of women in cooperatives and to develop an appropriate plan of action in this sector.
- The plan of action should include the following main points:
  - promotional activities among women to become members of cooperatives,
  - to develop a strategy for women to undertake activities which help generate additional income for them,
  - to undertake better living activities,
  - to participate in environment protection activities,
  - to promote family planning and welfare activities,
  - to provide appropriate technology, training and skills among women,
  - to create opportunities for women to help enhance national culture, traditions and arts and crafts.

The National organisation should take into consideration the useful work done by women's associations in the agricultural cooperative sector and the role played by housewives in the consumer cooperatives in Japan. The promotional work done by women in conjunction with A-Coops in Japan is of great value and of direct relevance to family life in rural areas. Farm women undertake and participate in better living activities which compliment and supplement the work and activities of agricultural cooperatives. Similarly within the Japanese consumer cooperative sector women or housewives have been playing an extremely important role through the 'Han' groups which have become the centre-points for the success of the consumer cooperative movement.

Taking advantage of these experiences, it is relevant that the Central Council urgently initiates plans for the mobilization of women in agricultural cooperative sector and help the women associations or women committees to undertake better living activities. It is, therefore, strongly recommended that the Central Council views the involvement of women in cooperatives with urgency.

At the same time, the Saigon Coop, which is a strong consumer cooperative organisation, fields study missions to Japan, to further investigate the relevance of 'Han' groups and tries to replicate those experiences for Vietnam. Through such a programme, women in Vietnam will work towards a better family life, healthy and safe foods, and environment-friendly products for the children and elderly persons within the community.

The Saigon Coop, may, as a first step, constitute women advisory groups to provide it with information on the needs of the community, stocking of safe and environment-friendly food stocks, and suggest a system of joint buying of household goods thereby saving costs for the consumer groups. The Saigon Coop may also set up consumer suggestions system which could help Coop in obtaining first-hand information and reaction from the consumers on the items sold. The women groups could be encouraged to do such tasks.

*ii) Saigon Coop:*

The following recommendations were made by the participants for the consideration of the Saigon Coop.

- Women advisory groups may be set up formally within the structure of the Saigon Coop which could provide information and suggestions on the type of items to be stocked which are safe for consumers;
- The Saigon Coop may establish joint buying system with the help of women advisory groups thus saving costs for the consumer groups;

- The Saigon Coop could undertake studies of the Han Groups which operate with great success within the consumer cooperatives movement of Japan and consider its replication for Vietnam;
- The system of 'consumer suggestion' be introduced to invite suggestions from consumers;
- The Saigon Coop could consider introduction of waste recycling by setting up special areas for collection of waste paper, empty cans, bottles and iron scrap, the earning from which could exclusively be used to promote women's programmes;
- Women members, activists and prominent leaders from among the members of Saigon coop could be mobilised to undertake cultural activities for the enrichment of the society and enhancing interest in national traditions, culture, arts and crafts; and
- Women be encouraged to demonstrate traditional and healthy cooking methods by making use of national food ingredients, less oils and fats and giving prominence to locally-grown agricultural products.



すてきな兄弟、姉妹がマスコミをにぎわしています。相撲界の兄弟、100歳の双子、ゴルフ界の兄弟…あなたの身近なところにも、そしてあなたご自身もすてきな兄弟(姉妹)がいらっしゃるのではありませんか。キューピーとアヲハタもとても仲のいい姉妹です。毎日の必需品マヨネーズとドレッシングなどはキューピー、ジャムやフルーツ缶詰などはアヲハタ。お互いの個性を尊重しながらそれぞれに新しい商品の研究開発に燃えています。


**キューピー**

**アヲハタ**

## General Recommendations and Suggestions

The participants made the following general suggestions and recommendations:

1. Appreciating the contribution made by the Government of Japan (MAFF) through the ICA in the implementation of Rural Women Leaders Training Project, the participants recommended that these training programmes should be continued and further expanded in scope and numbers.
2. A follow-up of previous participants of these training programmes be organised after four courses so as to exchange experiences and information and benefit from each other.
3. Although the invitation from the ICA ROAP is usually issued sufficiently well in advance, the national nominating organisations should finalise the selection of candidates sufficiently in advance so that they are able to collect relevant information and produce their country papers in a comprehensive manner and in time.
4. The course contents of the training programme be retained as they are except that more time be given for study visits and greater interaction with women leaders.
5. Although all the residential, training and working facilities provided at the IDACA were excellent, yet it was suggested that a small microwave cooker be installed in the kitchen for the participants to warm or cook foods at odd hours and on sundays and holidays.





## Concluding Session

The concluding session of the third training course for rural women leaders of agricultural cooperatives attended by six women leaders from Bangladesh, Thailand and Vietnam, was held at the IDACA on 7th of July 1993.

At the successful completion of their training in Japan, the participants were awarded Certificates of Participation by the Managing Director of IDACA. The concluding session was addressed by Ms Masako Saito of the International Cooperation Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Mr Yoshitada Nakaoka, General Manager of the International Department of the JA-Zenchu; Dr Daman Prakash, Project Director of the ICA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific; and Mr Shiro Futagami, Managing Director of IDACA.

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



## Programme

Sat, June 12	Arrival of participants
Sun, June 13	Free
Mon, June 14	Inauguration Country Reports Presentation
Tue, June 15	History of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives and its activities - Ms Keiko Suzuki, JA Zenfukyo.
Wed, June 16	Japanese Culture and Society - Mr Yukio Abe, IDACA
Thu, June 17	Outline of Agriculture in Japan - Mr Hiroshi Terunuma, IDACA
Fri, June 18	Organisation and Business of Agricultural Cooperatives in Japan - Mr Shiro Futagami, IDACA
Sat, June 19	Review and Report writing
Sun, June 20	Free
Mon, June 21	Travel to Fukuoka
Tue, June 22	Visit to Fukuoka Prefectural Union of Agricultural Cooperatives. Observation of facilities of Prefectural Economic Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives, Fukuoka.
Wed, June 23	Visit to JA Kurume Observation of facilities
Thu, June 24	Visit to JA Fukuoka Yoshii - Activities of Women's Associations. Observation of facilities Exchange with WAAC. Home Stay.
Fri, June 25	Observation of Food Ingredient Delivery Centre Cooking class. Move to Beppu
Sat, June 26	Sightseeing in Beppu and Aso mountain area Move to Kumamoto
Sun, June 27	Travel Kumamoto/Tokyo
Mon, June 28	Review of study visits Long-term prospects of WAAC - Mr Wataru Hirose, JA Zenfukyo
Tue, June 29	Role of Government on Women's Programme and Better Living - Ms Hiroko Tanabe, MAFF
Wed, June 30	Case study on Activities of WAAC - Ms Sachiko Bouno, JA Tsukuigun.
Thu, July 01	Exchange with WAAC, JA Tsukuigun.

Fri, July 02 Observation of activities of Kanagawa  
Welfare Federation of Agricultural Cooperatives.

Sat, July 03 Free

Sun, July 04 Free

Mon, July 05 Cultural Activities of Ie-No-Hikari Association  
- Mr Yoshiaki Ohgane, Ie No Hikari  
Women's activities in Fishery Cooperatives  
- Mr Shizuko Kuratsu, Zengyoren.

Tue, July 06 Report Writing

Wed, July 07 Report Presentation  
Evaluation  
Closing Function.

Thu, July 08 Departure of Participants.

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Participants of the 3rd course on the laws of IDACA in the company of IDACA and ICA officials



Family Welfare and Health care activities conducted by Women's Associations in Japan





During their study visits, the participants were received by Mr Adachi, General Manager and Mrs Danura, Chairperson of the Women's Association of JA Fukuoka Yoshii.

The participants were received by the members of the Women's Association at the Agro-processing Centre of the JA Fukuoka Yoshii.



Two Thai participants trying their hand at a cooking demonstration class.



The participants observing the Potato Processing Centre activities of the JA Fukuoka Yoshii.



Another cooking session at JA Fukuoka Yoshii. Participants from Vietnam exhibiting their talents.

Two participants from Bangladesh keenly engrossed in Japanese style cooking.







Women's Association, through their activities, aim at enriching family life. Values of Japanese traditions are highlighted.





## Participants

### BANGLADESH

Mrs Anjaman Ara Bhuya  
Director  
Bangladesh National Women's Coop Society Ltd,  
7 K B Shaha Road, Amlapara  
Narayanganj. Dhaka. Bangladesh

Mrs Seheli Haque  
Chairperson  
Ramna Thana Central Women's Coop Society Ltd  
12/KLHA/3, Siddeswari Road  
Siddeswary, Dhaka. Bangladesh.

### THAILAND

Mrs Chamaipron Tutasukitwanit  
Technician  
Cooperative League of Thailand  
13, Pichai Road, Dusit  
Bangkok 10330, Thailand

Ms Supasiri Intarasooksri  
Project Manager  
Zonta Dairy Village, Chombung  
Ratchaburi 70150, Thailand.

### VIETNAM

Mrs Doai Ngoc Any  
SAIGON COOP  
70/148 Ben Han Tu Street, 5th district  
Ho Chi Minh City. Vietnam

Mrs Nguyen Thi Thanh Loan  
SAIGON COOP  
75 An Binh Street, 5th District  
Ho Chi Minh City. Vietnam.

### ICA ROAP

Dr Daman Prakash  
Project Director  
ICA Regional Office for Asia/Pacific  
Bonow House, 43 Friends Colony East  
New Delhi 110 065. India.

### IDACA

Mr Shiro Futagami  
Managing Director  
Institute for the Development of  
Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA).  
4771, Aiharao cho, Machida-shi  
Tokyo. 194 02. Japan

**JAPANESE SITUATION OF WOMEN'S  
ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL  
COOPERATIVES AND THE FUTURE  
PROSPECTS**

Ms Kaiko Suzuki  
JA Zenchu

3rd ICA/Japan  
Training Course for  
**Rural Women Leaders of Agricultural  
Cooperatives in Asia, 1993**  
- A Report

Japanese Situation of Women's Association of Agricultural  
Cooperatives and the Future Prospects

Presented by Ms. Keiko Suzuki  
Better Living Guidance Division,  
Better Living and Farm Guidance  
Department, JA Zenchu

1. Present situation of promotion of status of women in agricultural  
Cooperatives

Women's Associations of Agricultural Cooperatives (W.A.A.C.) established throughout the country are engaged in various activities standing their organizational bases at their agricultural cooperatives with objectives to promote social status of rural women and to create hopeful and cordial rural life.

In 1958, there were totally 3.44 million members of W.A.A.C., however, since then, the number of members has been decreased constantly with the number of 50,000~100,000 persons year after year. The current number of members in December 1991 is about 2.16 million.

The great obstacles which caused decrease of members were, decrease of population engaged in farming, aging of members and also, increasing commitment of rural women to part-time job leaving no time for activities of W.A.A.C..

Viewing from the view point of promotion of status of women in agricultural cooperatives, there are about 600,000 women participating in agricultural cooperatives as regular members (as of fiscal 1989) and the number of women regular members has been increased by 30% during the last decade. The proportion of women in total regular members is 12% , it shows slight increase compared with 9% of that of 10 years ago.

However, they have not been fully represented in agricultural cooperative movements proportionate to their substantial contributions for supporting rural life in both farm management and

better living activities.

Looking at situation of women directors in agricultural cooperatives, there are only 65 women directors in agricultural cooperatives in a whole country (fiscal 1990) and the proportion to the total number of directors is less than 0.1%.

## 2. Promotion of women's involvement in agricultural cooperatives at initial stage of establishment of agricultural cooperatives

According to the survey on cooperatives conducted by Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in 1949, in 33 prefectures surveyed, there were 11,944 agricultural cooperatives with 4,289,387 members. Of which the number of women members was 253,283 accounted for 5.9%.

Most of these members were women who inherited house or widows who represented their households. However, the record shows that a campaign to encourage women participation in agricultural cooperatives as a regular member with share capital contribution has taken steps in Fukuoka, Niigata and other prefectures as feminist movement in rural area under the boom of democratization in the post-war period.

When those newly born agricultural cooperatives faced with management difficulties, in some agricultural cooperatives, women played a central role for share capital contribution to revitalize agricultural cooperatives. These campaign made a tangible success and women were recruited as a director of cooperative.

According to the same survey, in 1949, among agricultural cooperatives in 33 prefectures, there were 64 women directors and 16 women auditors. Although the number was small, looking at the situation of women in the pre-war period it was very significant achievement showing the start of new period. However, since then, these efforts for promotion of women's participation as a regular member and recruitment as a director have come to naught under a resistance by agricultural cooperatives.

### 3. Obstacles for more women to participate in agricultural cooperatives

Why the women's involvement in Agricultural Cooperative as members was not developed in Japan? There were several factors. First of all, looking at the way of women's involvement in management of agricultural cooperative, basically one family member, in most cases husband represented from the household as a member of agricultural cooperative. Because, this practice of giving one voting right to a household equally was desirable for management of agricultural cooperative to unify members in the execution of public right in such cases of the election of officials or decision making at general assembly or general representatives assembly of cooperative.

From the view point of member's patronage of cooperative business, all family members of member household are given equal right to utilize the business of cooperative. Therefore, from the standpoint of management of cooperative, additional patronage of business can not be expected by having more than two members from one family because total family expenses are limited. Thus, cooperative has lost the benefit of having more than two members from one family.

A considerable reaction was made by enlightened rural women against these cooperative practices which intended to leave women away from cooperative management. However, later on, agricultural cooperative organizations made up policy to organize women's association of agricultural cooperatives and policy to strengthen relations between W.A.A.C. and cooperative. As the result, these women movements have changed it's stress from promotion of regular members to strengthening of W.A.A.C. which rural women can reflect their opinions to a certain extent to management of cooperative. In this process, women's status in agricultural cooperative stayed as "person having equal right as regular member in utilization of business".

Another factor is the tradition of family system which was created in the process of practice of the Civil Law during the Meiji era. Under the present Japanese Constitution, equal right is

given for men and women. However, it is widely practiced that 'husband' who has a stream of consciousness as 'householder' mentioned in old Civil Law is generally responsible for the duty of representing a family in social functions.

Looking at situation of women's involvement in farming activities, the qualification of regular member of agricultural cooperative is to be 'a farmer'. This qualification can also be applied for women who engaged in farming in regardless with farm management right or holdings of assets. However, for rural women, it was difficult for them to consider their farm engagement as a job. Because, no direct payment proportionate to their contribution to farm work was paid to them as all in-farm income was regarded as family income or income of husband. In most cases, individual wage was not calculated. In Japan, agriculture was regarded as family work and consciousness as individual job was not developed.

As a result the cooperative movement has failed in the formation of consciousness, demand and awareness of rural women for the promotion of economic business, credit business and management of agricultural cooperatives as benefit of additional human resources which rural women could provide as regular member of cooperative.

In addition to these reasons, rural women were economically not viable to afford a big amount of money for share capital contribution to cooperative and most of them have not joined agricultural cooperative until today.

### 3. Measures for uplifting status of women by agricultural cooperative organizations

In 1979, August, the 38th General Deliberation Committee of the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives established a policy, "Regarding participation of youth and women, with the basis of one member from one family, those who substantially engaged in farm management as main labour power or those who share a part of responsibility for farm management are to be encouraged to join in agricultural cooperative as member".

With the background of a sharp decrease of farm successors and decrease of member farmhouseholds, the 49th General Deliberation

Committee made a policy in June 1986, " Among farm successors and women who are qualified to be regular member of cooperative, those who demand to join agricultural cooperative are to be encouraged by promotion of a system of plural members from one family. Also measures to reflect opinions of farm successors and women are to be strengthened".

In 1988, at the 18th National Congress of Agricultural Cooperatives, the resolution was made, " We will promote participation of farm successors and women in management of agricultural cooperative by encouraging them to join as regular member and expand farm management bodies so as to establish young and vigorous cooperative which can reflect opinions of new generation and women".

In 1991, the resolution of the 19th National Congress of Agricultural Cooperatives gave more concrete shape, "We will promote participation of farm successors and women as regular members by setting up target to expand and rejuvenate the organization and business bases". Also it said, "We will promote selection of representative member and director from among Youth Association and Women's Association".

From the view point of management of agricultural cooperatives, they are aware of the importance of involving women who are the substantial promoter of rural community to expand and strengthen management bases to cope with liberalization of financial business and distribution and the fierce competition with bank , insurance company and large super store which expanded their business in rural area. Rural women would leave the cooperative movement in patronage of business and organizational activities for farm management and better living activities if opinions of women who are actual promoters of cooperative business were not reflected to their cooperatives.

Table- 1 Ratio of participation of W.A.A.C. in the management of agricultural cooperatives

The way of participation	Ratio
Regular meeting with agri. coop.	39.2%
Director in charge of W.A.A.C.	12.4%
Women director	1.5%
Representatives are participating in meeting of each section of agri. coop.	22.5%
Attending General Meeting of agri. coop.	37.9%

Table-2 Situation of W.A.A.C. promoting participation of women in agricultural cooperative as regular members

Actively promoting	7.4%
Slowly promoting	25.9%
Under planning	19.7%
Difficult to promote at present	26.0%
No intention to promote	6.2%
Others	3.9%
No reply	11.0%

Source: Survey on organizational activities of W.A.A.C. in 1989

Table-3-1 Questionnaire to members of W.A.A.C. on intention to be a regular member

Want to be a regular member	27.0%
Do not want to be a regular member	22.4%
Not clear	20.9%
No reply	29.7%



Table-3-2 Reason, why she wants to be a regular member

To improve status of women	41.7%
As main promoter of agriculture	25.9%
To reflect opinion directly to agri. coop.	25.1%
Others	7.2%

Table-3-3 Reason why she does not want to be a regular member

W.A.A.C. can reflect will to agri. coop.	40.7%
No merits of being a regular member	27.7%
Reluctance to be outstanding	12.4%
Does not want to spend money for share capital	3.7%
Other and no reply	15.4%

Table-4 Trend of number of women directors and women regular members in agricultural cooperatives

members in agricultural cooperatives		
Year	Women regular members	Women directors
1984	554,536	33
1985	574,353	39
1986	590,860	44
1987	614,077	49
1988	620,330	69
1989	646,052	58
1990	667,668	70

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

Ms Keiko Suzuki  
WAAC-JA Zenchu

3rd ICA/Japan  
Training Course for  
**Rural Women Leaders of Agricultural  
Cooperatives in Asia, 1993**  
- A Report

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

(1) Three tier system

Primary level → Prefectural level → National level

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

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

(3) Problems to be tackled with

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

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

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

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

emphasized in the campaign are as follows.

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

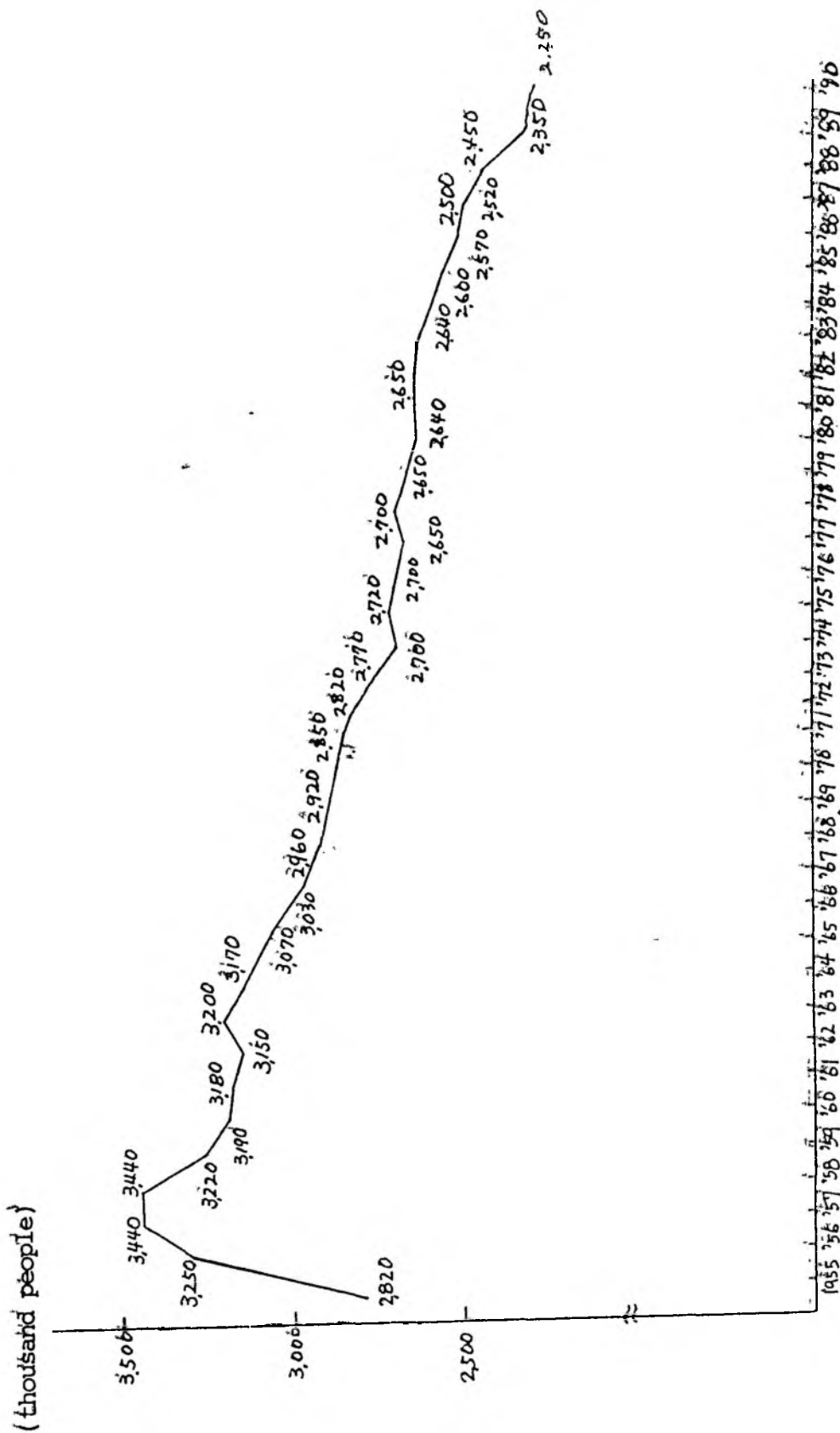
(2) Results of the activities of the National council of Women's Association of Agricultural Cooperatives in fiscal 1991

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

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

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

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





**THE PATH TO THE 21ST CENTURY**  
- Long-Term Policy of the Activities of WAAC

Mr Wataru Hirose  
General Secretary  
JA Zen Fukyo

3rd ICA/Japan  
Training Course for  
**Rural Women Leaders of Agricultural  
Cooperatives in Asia, 1993**  
- A Report

## THE PATH TO THE 21ST CENTURY

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

November 28, 1988.

### The National Council of Women's Associations of Agricultural Cooperatives

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## I . Two Orientations of the Division

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

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

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

## II . Four Problems and Suggested Solutions

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

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

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

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

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

- (3) Are sufficient numbers of successors secured?

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

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

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

## III . Concrete Measures To Be Taken

### (1) Strengthening of Activities

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

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

#### ii) Establishment of an independent lifestyle

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

iii) Positive participation in agriculture

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

iv) For providing a comfortable life for the elderly

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

v) For a lively local community

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

vi) For broadening the scope of women

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

vii) Providing places to get together

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

viii) International exchanges

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

(2) Strengthening of the Organization

i) Provision of "arenas" for easy participation

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

ii) Broader, deeper activities

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

iii) Expansion of the number of members

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



divided according to generations or positions.

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

iv) Strengthening of directorship system

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

v) Improvement of independent financial sources

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

vi) Strengthening of the secretariat

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

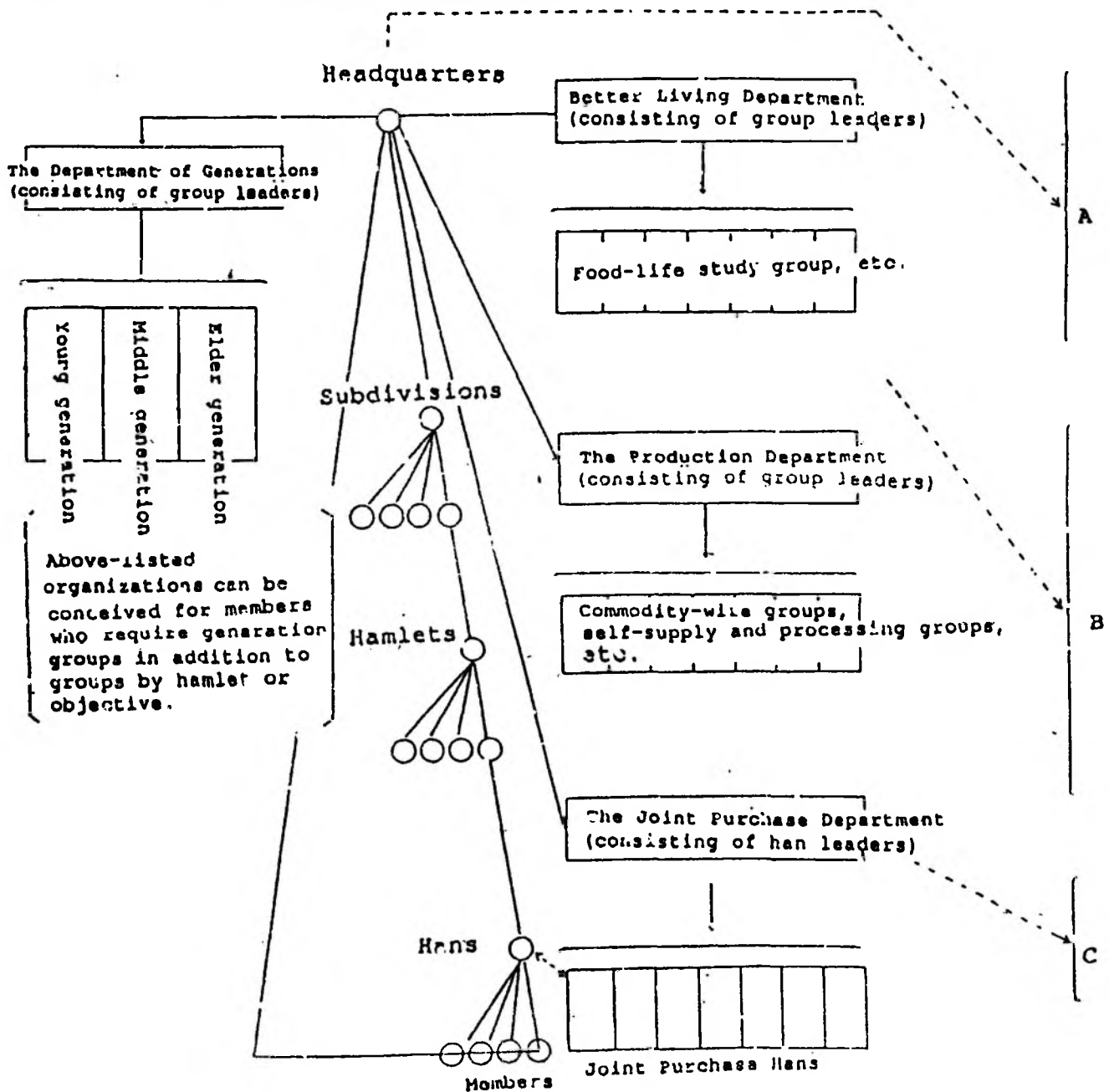
vii) Improvement of the organizational structure

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

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

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

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



## A. Headquarters

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

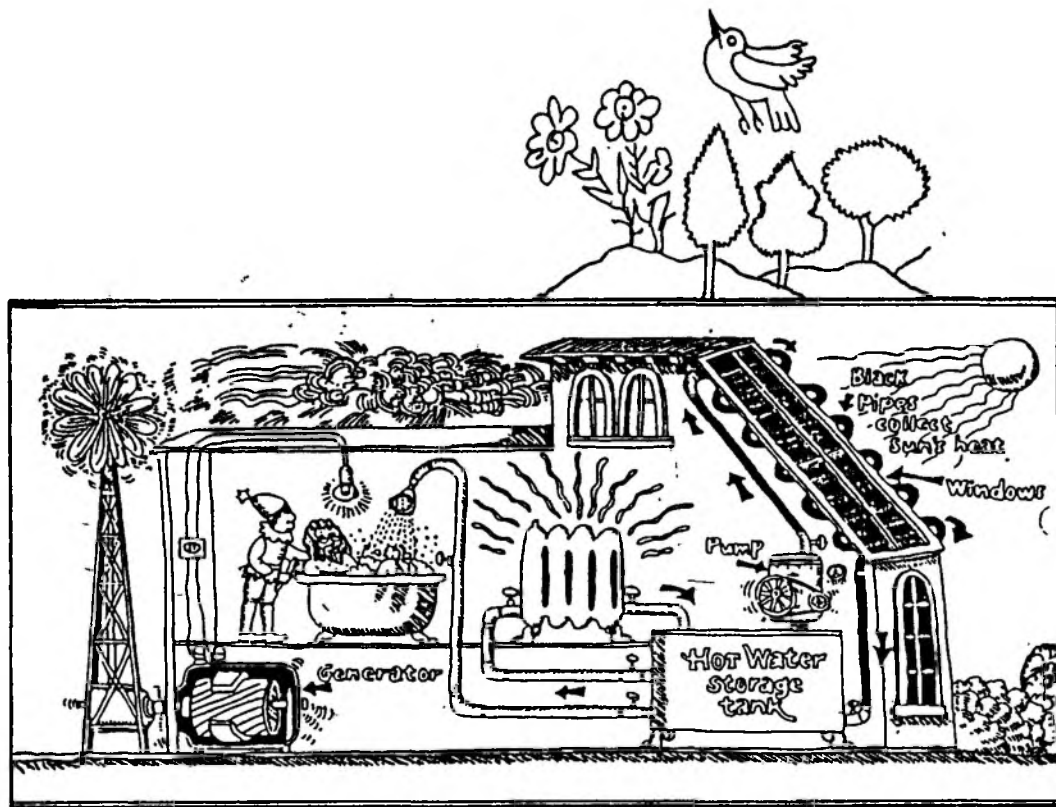
## B. Groups by objective

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

## C.

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

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



**THE VISION : Middle and Long-Term Vision  
of Women of Farming, Mountain and Fishery  
Villages - an outline of the Report**

**3rd ICA/Japan  
Training Course for  
Rural Women Leaders of Agricultural  
Cooperatives in Asia, 1993  
- A Report**

'The path for the new women of farming, mountain and fishery villages towards forward the year 2001' (Report of the committee meeting on middle and long term vision of women of farming, mountain and fishery villages)

June, 1992

Agricultural Production Bureau

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

## 1. Objectives for formulation of the vision

In recent years, women are playing a central role in promotion of agriculture, forestry and fisheries as well as development of farming, mountain and fishery villages and it is increasingly important to promote performance of capabilities owned by women. It is imperative for us to create attractive agriculture, forestry and fishery as well as farming, mountain and fishery villages to give motivations for young women to select these industries as their own occupation and also select their lives in these villages for developing these industries and invigoration of these areas.

In response to these requests, in a bid to promote various measures in all organizations concerned, we aim at realization of the guideline of 'New Domestic Action Plan towards the year 2000 (1st modification)' posed by the Government last year in farming, mountain and fishery villages.

This vision intends to suggest ideal features of women of farming, mountain and fishery villages and identify directions of all the efforts to be made by women, government, municipalities and relating institutions against the target, simultaneously it also asks promotion of measures by relating organizations based on this vision.

2.

(Notes) Committee meeting on middle and long vision of women of farming, mountain and fishery villages.

This committee is composed of 18 learned and experienced persons (female 10, male, 8, Chairman Mr. Mamoru Sawanabe) and established in June, 1991. After the establishment, 7 times of committee meetings and 4 times of drafting committee meetings were held till June, 1992 and then results of examination were finally compounded.

## 2. Outline of the report

### Chapter 1. The ideal features to be realized

#### (1) Establishment of farming, mountain and fishery village type life style

Farming, mountain and fishery village type life style here means a way of life



which put priority in life to make use of special properties of these villages. as seen in wondrous nature, to be a symbiotic relation with nature and to bring up human warmheartedness and cordial life. This new life style is to be created by the hands of women together with men.

## (2) The ideal features of women to be realized

The ideal features of woman are, selecting her way of life freely according to her will, designing life by herself, to that end, living with confidence and a sense of satisfaction.

It's concrete features are:

(In the scene of engagement in agriculture, forestry and fishery)

- 1) Being proud of her job and to have a sense of satisfaction
- 2) Fully displaying her ability in the job
- 3) Participating in the place of policy making of regional agriculture, forestry and fishery.

(In the scene of home life and rural community life)

- 1) Living with true sense of goodness of farming, mountain and fishery villages.
- 2) Participating in the place of decision of policy for village development
- 3) Having daily exchanges with other rural communities

## Chapter 2 For realization of the vision

### Section 1 The current of the time for women of farming, mountain and fishery villages

- 1) It is necessary to convert from 'Economy oriented society' to 'Life oriented society'. There are increasing expectations for farming, mountain and fishery villages, on the other hand, efforts for creation of vigorous rural community by making full use of special properties of these villages are insufficient.
- 2) There are increasing expectations for roles of women for changing society, however, there are many obstacles for social participation of women such as fixed idea on division of roles for women remained, insufficient set up of public or private service for house keeping, child rearing and nursing

## Section 2 Present situation of women of farming, mountain and fishery villages and problems

1) Playing important role as bearers of agriculture, forestry and fishery

(Female population engaged in agriculture 60%, forestry 30%, fishery 20%)

However, there are many problems as such;

Position of women in management is not identified, insufficient vocational training, no regular holiday, less payment of remuneration to suit labour, less chance to participate in the place for deciding policy for regional agriculture, forestry and fishery and etc.

2) Playing important role as bearers of home life • rural community in farming, mountain and fishery village

(Major bearers in home life management and child rearing, conservation of local environment, diffusion and development of local dieting culture, exchange with consumers and urban residents)

However, there are many problems as such;

It tends to be, heavy burden for women as there are many duties, as human relations are fixed and unsociable, there are excess interference and those being obstacles for free and diversified individual activities, less chance to participate in public place such as decision of policy of the region.

## Section 3 Tasks to be implemented and methods for promotion

(1) Innovation of consciousness and behaviors at all occasions

1) To secure independence of women as 'individual'

Engagement in agriculture, forestry and fishery as a result of free selection of occupation.

Participate in regional community as 'individual'.

2) Reform of fixed idea of division of roles

ef: Participation of men in house keeping, child rearing and nursing

3) Family of rural community should recognize women as 'bearer'

In family management, they should recognize women s 'Comanager' of 'Manager'  
To recognize women as important bearers of rural community activities

4) Promotion of participation of women in the place of deciding policy for agriculture, forestry and fishery and village development

Create actual place for participation through enlightenment and fostering human resources, ef: to join agricultural cooperative as regular member and to be selected as board member

5) Ripping time and enhancement in a society through various methods  
(Day for women of farming, mountain and fishery villages)

2) Enhancement of economical status and improvement of working conditions and working environment

1) Obtaining proper remuneration to suit labour and formation of assets

Obtaining remuneration is the bases of economical independence of women, constant money should be paid for each individual regularly.

2) Economical guarantee for elderly life

Promotion of participation in pension scheme

3) Improvement of various condition for comfortable work

Improvement of working conditions such as working hours, remuneration and it' stipulation (establish rules among family members, promotion of corporation)

Improvement of working conditions giving consideration on physical power, body type, motherhood and menstruation and development and modification of machines.

(3) Creation of comfortable environment for women for living and activities

1) Formation of labour helper system to support autonomous activities

The system to release women from heavy labour and secure them to participate in occupations or social activities is the consolidation of social infrastructure to help independence of women. Therefore, it is imperative to establish comprehensive helper system to facilitate child rearing, nursing elderlies, do away with peak for labour, obtain regular holiday and to cope with disease and accident.

2) Creation of comfortable living environment

Promotion of improvement of living environment with putting emphasis in comfortable living by making use of rich nature.

Supplying place of exchange by making use of special property of the region such as beautiful village and tasty foods.

3) Formulation of wide area network of women for exchange

Promotion of exchange among women in rural area and urban area and with women in overseas and establishment of the key stations. Fostering obtaining human resources to promote international contribution.

(4) Improvement of ability and establishment of various ability development system

1) Improvement of vocational ability

To support women who are willingly engaged in agriculture, forestry and fishery to improve their talent.

2) Improving ability to uplift quality of living

To realize rich and cordial life, the local traditional living techniques are to be handed down with modifications.

3) Development of ability improvement system

To develop a system for women to participate easily (contents of training, level and period for various ability development courses, training course with nursery facility, etc.)

(5) Establishment of structures to adopt and implement this vision

1) Establishment of structures for implementation at prefectural governments and municipalities

2) Establishment of structures for implementation in non-governmental institutions by strengthening collaborations among organizations and women.

3. Response of MAFF

This vision is compounded based on the role of women posed in 'Direction of new foods · agriculture · agricultural policy' and MAFF decided to promote examinations and implementation of each policies in line with the concrete measures of this vision.

**NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION  
TOWARDS 2000**

**- Basic Direction and Development of Measures**

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry  
and Fisheries, Government of Japan

3rd ICA/Japan  
Training Course for  
**Rural Women Leaders of Agricultural  
Cooperatives in Asia, 1993**  
- A Report

## Basic Direction and Development of Measures

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

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

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

## Goal

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

### Basic Measures (Fiscal 1987- 2000)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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



The International Cooperative Alliance is one of the oldest non-governmental international organisations. It is a world-wide confederation of cooperative organisations of all types. Founded in London on 18th August, 1985, the ICA has affiliates in 70 countries with more than 200 national and eight international level cooperative organisations as members serving over 700 million individual members at the primary level. The ICA is the only international organisation entirely and exclusively dedicated to the promotion of Cooperation in all parts of the world. It enjoys Consultative Status of Category 'A' with the UN/ECOSOC.

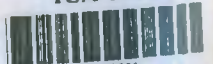
Besides the head office in Geneva, Switzerland, there are five regional offices, viz. the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in New Delhi, India (established in 1960); the Regional Office for East, Central and Southern Africa at Moshi, Tanzania (established in 1968); the Regional Office for West Africa at Abidjan, Ivory Coast (established in 1979); the Regional Office for Central America and the Caribbean at San Jose, Costa Rica (established in 1989) and the Regional Office for South America (established in 1993).

The ICA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific serves 63 national level organisations from 25 countries, and one international organisation, representing nearly 450 million individual cooperators. These countries are : Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Democratic Republic of Korea, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, The Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Turkmenistan, Vietnam, Uzbekistan and ACCU.

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

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