

YOUTH AND COOPERATIVES

**Report of
Open Asian Conference,
1984**



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Eighth Open Asian Conference on **"YOUTH AND COOPERATIVES"**

Bangkok, Thailand

12-16 NOVEMBER 1984

REPORT

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OPEN ASIAN CONFERENCE
ON
YOUTH AND COOPERATIVES
REPORT

I. Introduction

The Eighth Open Asian Conference on Cooperative Management was held at the Bangkok Palace Hotel, Bangkok (Thailand), from 11th to 17th November, 1984. The theme of the Conference was "Youth and Cooperatives". The Conference was organised by the International Cooperative Alliance Regional Office & Education Centre for South-East Asia (ICA ROEC) in collaboration with the Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT) on a self-financing basis. It was attended by about 200 participants from seven countries of the South-East Asian Region viz. India, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Singapore and Thailand. In addition, observers from international organisations such as International Labour Organisation (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the Asian Confederation of Credit Unions (ACCU) participated in the Conference.

The Conference was inaugurated by Mr. Chern Bamrungwong, Director General of Cooperatives, on behalf of the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives of the Royal Thai Government. The inauguration was presided over by Col. Surin Cholpraserd, President, Cooperative League of Thailand.

The Conference was chaired by Mr. Chern Bamrungwong as Chairman of the Conference and in his absence by Gen. Arcadio S. Lozada, President, Cooperative Union of the Philippines, who was elected Vice-Chairman of the Conference.

The Conference was directed by Mr. R. B. Rajaguru, Regional Director, ICA ROEC. He was assisted by officers of ICA ROEC and the CLT.

Names of participants, resource persons, observers, members of the secretariat and the members of the drafting committee are given in Annexes V & VI.

II. The Theme of the Conference and its Participants

The Eighth Open Asian Conference focussed on "Youth and Cooperatives" and was intended to be a preliminary exchange of ideas and experiences in this field which would lead to the initiation of more concrete action within the respective national situations during the course of 1985, which had been designated "The International Year of the Youth" by the United Nations. The conference was fortunate that a very large percentage of conference participants were from school and teachers cooperatives and were those already involved in working in the field of youth. There were also many from cooperative banking, thrift and credit society and agricultural cooperative sources who also had developed some programmes to assist youth.

The keenness displayed by the participants and the wealth of knowledge which they were able to share were a great asset to the conference and enabled the conference to arrive at several useful conclusions and recommendations.

III. Methodology of the Conference

The conference was conducted on the basis of Plenary Sessions at which four resource persons presented specialised papers; Commission sittings where the participants were divided into three Commissions to examine in depth some issues raised for Commission discussions, and to make suitable recommendations; a Plenary to discuss the Commission Recommendations and a final Plenary to arrive at the final Conclusions and Recommendations of the conference.

A two day field visit was made by some of the participants after the final plenary.

The following specialised papers were presented at the conference :—

1. Cooperatives and Youth—Mr. R. B. Rajaguru, Regional Director, ICA ROEC

2. **KOBENA—A Case Study**
from Malaysia— Mr. Wahiduddin Wahab,
Managing Director, KOBENA
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
3. **Preparing Youth for Co-**
operative Development— Dr. D. Vir
Joint Director (E)
ICA ROEC
4. **Youth & Cooperatives—**
Experience from Thailand—Mr. Panom Kawkamnerd
Deputy Under-Secretary of State
Ministry of Education, Bangkok

In addition to the above, several background papers on various experiences in this field were circulated by the participants of the conference.

IV. Brief Synopsis of Papers Presented

A. Mr. Rajaguru in his paper highlighted the following :

- i. In his view youth should be treated as an integral part of the society at large—not as a separate entity—however there was a need to have a special focus on youth.
- ii. Youths face many problems—and all too often the institutional framework which is resorted to to solve the problems is that of a cooperative.
- iii. In many countries in the Region, governments, various voluntary agencies, have had, for several years, a special focus on youth and have developed various special programmes for the involvement of youth not only in economic activity, but also in socio-cultural and other activity.

(Note : It is regretted that for reasons of economy, the complete papers are not included in the report. These papers were, however, made available to all participants during the conference)

- (iv) In many situations there is a definition of youth by age limit—unless integrated programmes are worked out, there is a possibility of superannuating 'youth' finding themselves in a difficult position.
- (v) In many situations, the cooperative movements have made only feeble attempts to provide a cooperative forum for youth. Many of the efforts have been confined to such activities as school, college and university cooperatives, teaching of cooperation in schools and in some cases youth settlement cooperatives. The mainstream of cooperatives have generally not had a special focus except in Japan and Korea where youth has a special interest group and a lively forum for youth involvement and development. Nor have meaningful steps been taken by the mainstream cooperatives to forge linkages with and provide support to the on going government programmes for youth, even where the institutional framework was the cooperative form.
- (vi) There was a need for a more conscious and wholehearted effort by the mainstream cooperatives in all countries to keep youth on a special focus and to develop integrated approaches which will help strengthen cooperative effort in the long run.

B. Mr. Wahiduddin Wahab in his Case Study on KOBENA—the National Youth Cooperative Society of Malaysia emphasized the following :—

- (i) The youth movement in Malaysia was quite an active one.
- (ii) The youth movement received support and encouragement from the Government of Malaysia—there was a separate Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports.
- (iii) Youth organisations were voluntary and catered to many of the 1.3 million youths in the country.

- (iv) The programmes for youth were development oriented and included a large measure of skills training for youth.
- (v) The cooperative form of organisation for youth involvement and development was of recent origin—only from about 1970. The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports has worked in collaboration with the Ministry of Cooperatives to promote cooperatives for youth. There were several youth cooperatives operating at local levels.
- (vi) The National Youth Cooperative Society (KOBENA) is the apex body, affiliating all youth cooperatives. The setting up of this apex body was initiated by the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports and was very strongly supported by the youth movement. KOBENA has a membership constituted as follows :—
 - (a) Individual youth who are registered members of any registered youth organisation
 - (b) Youth Cooperatives
 - (c) Other individuals/cooperatives approved by the Board.

It has a membership of 12,000 individuals and almost all youth cooperatives, which means an indirect membership of 50,000.

It has a representative General Body and a Board which was originally half elected and half nominated by the Ministry of Youth-but which is now wholly elected by the Annual General Meeting. It undertakes a wide variety of Commercial Activities like Housing Construction, Motor Training, Insurance, Warehousing, Quarry, Public Relations and Advertising, Forwarding Services, Travel Tours and Investment Savings Scheme.

Through its various projects KOBENA has provided employment to over 3500 youth.

The surplus from its commercial operations are used for the benefit of the members and the community.

C. Dr. Dharm Vir in his paper made general review of the various approaches being used in different countries for Preparing

Youth for Cooperative Development and involving them in various kinds of educational and development activities :

- i. He referred to the coordinated approach being used by the cooperative movement in United Kingdom where various autonomous youth organisations are trying to involve youth in cooperative educational and social activities. These organisations are members of the British Federation of Youth Cooperatives (BFYC) which works in close collaboration with the consumer cooperative movement in U.K.
- ii. He gave examples of collaborative efforts through school cooperatives and other youth cooperatives in Malaysia which are actively assisting in-school and out-of-school youth in solving some of the socio-economic problems. These special cooperatives have their own federations which collaborate with the government agencies and the national cooperative organisation i.e. ANGKASA.
- iii. He mentioned the noteworthy efforts being made by several state governments in the Federation of Australia which were using cooperative approach and programmes to solve the unemployment problems among youth in the country.
- iv. He made special reference to the integrated approaches made by the agricultural and fisheries cooperative movements in Japan and Republic of Korea where they undertake promotional activities for youth as a part of their business. Future farmers/fishermen were trained and provided with special assistance for establishing themselves. In addition, the Agricultural Cooperative Colleges of Japan and the Republic of Korea conduct special training courses for selected youth sponsored by the agricultural cooperatives. These courses were residential and of about 2 years duration. The youth trained at the colleges were later employed by the sponsoring cooperatives.

- v. The cooperative movements in Sri Lanka, Thailand and India were having special projects to assist young women in improving their incomes with the help of local cooperative and educational efforts. The National Cooperative Council of Sri Lanka has been conducting a special programme of consumer education and income generating activities among rural women through multipurpose cooperative societies. The programme was started five years ago on a pilot basis with the help of Swedish Cooperative Centre (SCC) and the ICA ROEC.
- vi. The consumer cooperative movement of Sweden through study circle and other educational activities educate young men and women in consumer questions and involve them in cooperative activities. The movement has recently started a pilot project 'Young in the Coop'. Under the project membership of selected cooperatives was open for young people and cooperative business has been adjusted to meet their special needs.
- vii. As in France and some other European countries in-school youth cooperative education and school cooperatives have been promoted in educational institutions in Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Sri Lanka and India. In Japan at the university level, the consumer cooperative movement has established deep roots in the student community. Most of the university cooperatives are affiliated to the National Federation of University Cooperative Associations (NFUCA). Approximately 41 per cent of all students and teachers in universities belong to the movement, and Tokyo University Cooperative which is a pioneering organisation has 99.7 per cent students and 90 per cent of teachers and non-teaching employees as its members. A large number of citizens consumer cooperative in Japan have been initiated by students in their community after completion of their education.
- viii. He emphasized the need for developing a comprehensive approach for preparation of youth for cooperative develop-

ment. The cooperative movements in different countries should take initiative to attract youth to the cooperative idea at the earliest possible stage and systematically bring them to the mainstream of cooperation. Other organisations should also coordinate their efforts to ensure that main problems of youth are successfully tackled through cooperative approach.

D. Mr. Panom Kawkamnerd captioned his presentation as “Youth as a Major Force for National Development Through Cooperative Movement”. He highlighted the following :

- i. Many of the countries in Asia like in Thailand, had a predominantly rural population; and the rural population was facing numerous problems due to industrialisation, inflation, unemployment, lack of skills to meet modern needs etc. The youth shared many of these problems.
- ii. There is a need for institutionalised approaches to solve these problems. They cannot be solved on an individual basis.
- iii. The Cooperative approach was one that had very good potential to tackle many of the problems like full utilisation of existing resources, transfer of technology, organisation of production and marketing. However success of cooperative effort depended on its acceptance by a change of attitude and outlook—changes take time and one must have a gradual approach as all depended on the faith and trust people have in cooperative effort.
- iv. Education institutions have a major role to play. Consequently the Ministry of Education in Thailand decided that school children, youth and teachers should be used as change agents to work on cooperative principles.
- v. Teacher Training Colleges now have programmes to equip teachers with cooperative knowledge, while cooperatives in many schools and colleges provide the forum for involving all inclusive of parents in cooperative effort.

- vi. To strengthen college cooperative stores, the Department of Teacher Education was planning to set up a College Cooperative Union which would function as the Apex organisation to and support cooperative effort within schools and colleges.
- vii. The Royal Thai Government had positive support for cooperatives. This backed by the efforts made by the Ministry of Education would go a long way in strengthening cooperative effort among students and youth in Thailand.

V. Issues for Commission Discussions

Three main issues were identified for discussions in the Commissions, which were as follows—with one Commission concentrating on one of the issues :—

- I. There is an urgent need to inculcate the spirit of Cooperation amongst the young (those in school and out of school). Would you agree with this ? If so, what recommendations would you make in this regard ?

(Commission I)

- II. In a situation of increasing unemployment and scarcity of investment capital on an individual basis, youth should be motivated and encouraged to find cooperative solutions to their multifarious problems. Please enumerate the problems of youth and indicate possible strategies in this regard.

(Commission II)

- III. Though the cooperative form of organisation has often been resorted to in programmes devised by governments and other organisations for youth, as yet there are no visible signs of the generality of cooperative movements in many countries in Asia taking meaningful steps to assist and support the greater involvement of youth in the mainstream of cooperative activity.

Further, the interlinkages that exist between the mainstream of cooperative effort and cooperative effort in the youth sector appears to be rather slender.

Please examine this situation. What recommendations would you have to improve the present position and strengthen cooperative effort in this regard ?

(Commission III)

(Commission findings and recommendations are at Annexes II, III, IV).

VI. Conclusions and Recommendations of the Conference

Introduction

The Conference feels there is a pressing need for greater involvement of the youth in national development. There is need to implement the programme to inculcate the spirit of cooperation amongst the youth in to-day's world. The cooperative organisation is a suitable vehicle towards achieving the objectives. The cooperative movement should take greater initiative to bring the youths into the mainstream of the cooperative movement at national, regional and international levels.

The aim of greater involvement of youths in cooperative activities is to attain a better standard of living and improve the quality of life.

Major Issues Confronting Youth

The Conference recognises the existence of rural and urban youth with different needs, aspirations and deferring situations in any individual country. In view of these diversifying needs and problems specific strategies have to be evolved to overcome them. Some of these problems are unemployment, under-employment, low level of education, lack of skills, migration of youth, lack of opportunities for social and economic development, juvenile delinquency, crimes, drug abuse and other undesirable activities. Furthermore, the Conference recognised the special needs of the youth for opportunity to express themselves in decision-making and operations of community and national development activities.

1. Unemployment and Under-Employment

The most important problem in all countries is the high level of unemployment and under-employment of youth. The low level of

education and lack of skills specially among rural youth creates lack of opportunity for successful employment. The unskilled youth are liable to be exploited in the present depressed economic situation.

2. *Low level of Education*

There still exist in the region large number of youth who possess low level of education and in some instances are functionally illiterate. This is more predominant in the rural areas and especially among the female population.

3. *Lack of Skills*

The youth specially in rural areas are lacking useful skills and they do not have adequate means to sustain themselves in their surroundings.

4. *Migration of Youth*

With the hope of a wider scope of employment and of the opportunity for a wide range of social activities, youth are attracted to urban centres. This creates imbalances in labour situations in the rural areas. Economic and social problems arise in over populated urban areas.

5. *Undesirable activities*

Unemployed youth both in rural and urban areas create traits for crime, drug abuse, vandalism and other undesirable activities.

6. *Limited Opportunity for Expression*

In an adult dominated society young people do not have adequate opportunities to express themselves and participate in decision-making process within the family and community in general.

7. *Cooperative Responses*

It was the general consensus that the involvement of youth in cooperative activities would be an avenue to overcome the above problems. Steps should be taken to evolve a planned programme to infuse the spirit of cooperation into organised activities of youth

for a beneficial and purposeful involvement for their personal and overall community development. Therefore, formation of youth cooperatives in urban and rural areas should be given greater emphasis. In this regard the government, the cooperative movement and the youth movement should be the key institutions to promote and organise the youth towards self-reliance, self-employment and upgrading their socio-economic well being.

Recommendations

1. The idea of cooperation should be imparted to children and youth at the school level. While organised group activities at the pre-kindergarten stage upto the primary school level would be one form to expose them to cooperative spirit, positive awareness of cooperative principles must be exposed at the upper primary level. This could be by means of school cooperatives and other informal and extra curricular activities.

2. At the secondary school stage formal cooperative subjects need to be included in school curriculum with some aspects for practical application of cooperative principles.

3. At the higher education level specialised courses on cooperative management and allied subjects should be offered.

4. Sufficient training and involvement of teachers are essential for imparting positive attitudes towards cooperatives among youth. The teachers working at different levels should receive special training in cooperative education and subject curricula should be developed by the school authorities concerned.

5. The parent-teacher association should play a complementary and supportive role to the development of school cooperatives. The practical aspect for information and training opportunities of the youth could be supported by the successful local cooperatives.

6. Other youth organisations should also be encouraged to consider and include cooperative activities for a more diversified roles of the youth.

7. In the initial stages governments could assist youth in setting up industrial, commercial and service institutions on a cooperative basis to enhance youth involvement in cooperatives.

8. Concerted and coordinated effort should be made between government, youth, women and other organisations to mobilise their resources towards the development of youth cooperatives.

9. Closer linkages should be established between the national youth movement and the cooperative system to enhance youth involvement in cooperatives. Where there is no national youth movement cooperatives should support the establishment of national youth movement.

10. Within the cooperative system itself there should be both horizontal and vertical collaboration for youth activity and national cooperative organisations should work towards setting up of youth wings within their framework.

Cooperatives should provide opportunities for youth to be inducted into their management committees to enable them to gain practical experience and develop their administrative skills.

11. Well established cooperatives should find ways and means of developing the skills of youth in various fields for their self-employment and cooperative employment opportunities.

12. Cooperative training institutions should play a more vital role in increasing awareness about cooperatives among youth and also in improving their management skills.

13. The national cooperative movement and government should help youth in the establishment of economically viable cooperative enterprises.

Since investment capital is a problem for youth they should be supported in the first instance by government and the Cooperative movement to enable them to become self-reliant.

14. Wherever necessary technical assistance could be sought

from international organisations like ICA, ILO, FAO and other established donor agencies.

15. The ICA RO should undertake a study to explore the possibility of regional affiliation of youth cooperatives within the region and where it is found feasible it should be taken up through the Regional Council for South-East Asia for implementation.

Conclusion

The Conference concluded that there is wide scope to bring youth programmes in the mainstream of cooperative activity and to involve them in cooperative efforts with a view to make them partners in the overall development of the cooperative movement of the country. This could be achieved through a planned process which would involve long term perspective planning in the cooperative movement as well as its coordination with the process of planning at the government level as also at the level of other non-official organisations engaged in youth programmes or activities.

PROGRAMME

12th November

- 0900–1000 Inaugural, Messages, Briefing on Methodology.
Presentation of papers :
- 1000–1130 (1) Cooperatives and Youth.
by Mr R.B. Rajaguru
- 1130–1145 Tea
- 1145–1315 (2) KOBENA—Case Study from Malaysia.
by Mr. Wahiduddin Wahab
- 1315–1415 Lunch
- 1420–1545 (3) Preparing Youth for Cooperative Deve-
lopment. by Dr. D.VIR
- 1545–1600 Tea
- 1600–1730 (4) Youth and Cooperatives—Experiences from
Thailand by Mr. Panom Kawkamnerd.

13th November

Commissions (group work)

14th November

- FN Presentation of Commission Reports.
AN Final Plenary.

*15th November**Study Visits**16th November*

REPORT OF COMMISSION - I

Chairman : Mr. K. Jayabalan,
Singapore

Rapporteurs : Ms Raja Maimon Raja Yusof,
Malaysia
Mr. Hasni Tamrin,
Malaysia

Issues for Discussion

There is an urgent need to inculcate the spirit of Cooperation amongst the young (those in school and out of school). Would you agree with this? If so, what recommendations would you make in this regard.

I. Introduction

The Commission unanimously felt that there is a positive and urgent need to implement programmes to inculcate the spirit of cooperation amongst the youth in today's world.

II. Need for Urgent Approach

Youth are the potential leaders of the future and the cooperative movement has the relevant opportunity for them to express their needs.

The immediate inculcation of cooperative spirit would help to curb or minimise the following "problems" :—

- (a) *Unemployment* : Low level of education and unskilled situations create lack of opportunity for a successful employment in the depressed economic situation.
- (b) *Migration of youths* : With the hope of a wider scope of employment and of the opportunity for a wider scope of social activities attract youth to urban centres. This creates imbalances in labour situations at rural areas. Economic and social problems arises at over populated urban areas.

- (c) *Undesirable Activities* : Unemployed youth both at rural and urban areas create traits for crimes, drug abuse, vandalism and other undesirable activities.

In this regard, the involvement of youth in cooperative activities would overcome the above problems. Steps have to be taken to evolve a planned programme to infuse the spirit of cooperation into organised activities of youth for a beneficial and purposeful involvement for their personal and community developments. The cooperative movement has the avenue to provide these requirements.

III. Recommendations

- (a) The Commission agreed that the idea of cooperation should be imparted to youth at school level. While organised group activities at pre-kindergarten stage upto primary school level would be one form to expose cooperation, positive awareness of cooperation must be exposed at upper primary level. This could be by means of informal and extra curricular activities.
- (b) At secondary school stage, formal education need to be included in school curriculum with some aspects for practical application of cooperative principles.
- (c) At this stage, when youths are geared for an independent and economically gainful life, their aspiration and need are manifold. Specified interests of these youth have to be identified at an early stage.

This would enable a proper and pragmatic concept of cooperative movement to be imparted to them.

- (d) The Commission identified that teachers should be conversant with cooperative principles and its applications. Sufficient training and involvement by teachers are essential to impart the positive need of cooperative to youth. While teachers have formed cooperatives for their own benefits, national awareness has to be created for all teachers and

educators to understand the potential of cooperative for the development of youth organisations.

- (e) One other form to support could be the follow up by the parent-teachers associations. While the cooperative subject is learnt at school level, its practical aspects could be enhanced at the youth families and the immediate neighbourhoods. Cooperative organisation can step in to provide further practical information and training opportunities for youths by setting up small scale school cooperative enterprises.
- (f) Limitation to objectives of school cooperatives and age criteria should be geared for a viable enterprise by youths for their own involvement.
- (g) Other youth organisations should also be encouraged to consider and include cooperative activities for a more diversified role of the youths.
- (h) Coordinated effort by cooperative bodies with government, youth, women and related organisations must be undertaken for the continued expression of cooperative ideals and applications by the youths after completion of their education.
- (i) Well established cooperatives should conduct meaningful courses to train youths in skilled works for their self-employment opportunities.
- (j) The need to form youth wings under established cooperatives helps to sustain the cooperative applications.
- (k) The induction of youths into the management committees of successful cooperatives helps to develop their administrative skills.
- (l) The establishment of youth cooperatives with a viable business enterprise helps them to fully operate a business with the total complement of management and risk involvement.

Guidance by the national cooperative movement or appropriate government ministries may be required.

- (m) National youth movements could also be set up to cater for employment of youths and to determine their progress in cooperative ventures. Successful organisation like KOBENA exists. Other industry-oriented or service-oriented business should be encouraged.
- (n) Government assistance to promote small scale industry or cottage industry for traditional enterprises would be one form to enhance cooperative ventures.
- (o) Cooperative training institutions or other consultancy agencies would be called upon to provide training on administrative/management skills and member education.

IV. Conclusion

The Commission concluded that for an extensive programme of youth involvement in cooperative activities provisions has to be catered for linkage from school cooperative level to higher stages of participation in district, state and national level.

Regional associations would be appropriate among member countries. This could lead to a forum for international discussions with other developed countries to further exchange ideas of youth oriented cooperative activities.

REPORT OF COMMISSION - II

Chairman : Mr. Zaghlol Haji Hanafiah,
Malaysia

Rapporteur : Mr. Robert Koh,
Singapore

COOPERATIVE STRATEGIES FOR YOUTH

Issues for Discussion

In a situation of increasing unemployment and scarcity of investment capital on an individual basis youth should be motivated and encouraged to find cooperative solutions to their multifarious problems. Please enumerate the problems of youth and indicate possible strategies in this regard.

1. Introduction

The Commission sets its sights on the issues enumerated by the secretariat that "in a situation of increasing unemployment and scarcity of investment capital on an individual basis, youth should be motivated and encouraged to find cooperative solutions to their multifarious problems. Please enumerate the problems of youth and indicate possible strategies in this regard".

The Commission recognises the existence of rural and urban youth with different needs, aspirations and deferring situations in the individual country. In view of these diversifying needs, it makes the works of the Commission that much harder to recommend specific strategies to suit the situation in individual country. However, the Commission could only dwell itself on the general principles and concepts of the issue.

2. Problems of Youth

The Commission realises that problems of the youth can be defined into two dimensions, i.e. tangible and intangible elements. The tangibles are unemployment, under employment, juvenile

delinquency, petty and organised crimes, drug abuse, anti-social activities, etc. whilst the intangible elements are the needs to be heard and the right to express themselves.

3. Strategies

As regards strategies to combat these social ills, the Commission feels that the cooperative is one of the important means to provide employment and minimise such related problems. Therefore, formation of youth cooperatives in urban and rural areas should be given greater emphasis.

The Commission feels that three parties, i.e. the governments, the cooperative movement and the youth movement should be the institutions to promote and organise the youth towards self-reliance, self-employment and upgrading their socio-economic well-being.

4. Recommendations

The Commission has the following recommendations for consideration of the Conference :

- (A) **Institutional Framework** : The Commission recognises that there is sufficient legal framework in countries of the region for the development of cooperatives that the youth needs to be organised through youth manuals to meet their social needs and the formation of Youth Cooperatives to meet their economic needs. Towards these goals, both the government and cooperative organisations should place a greater emphasis on the development of youth cooperatives especially in commemoration of the International Year of Youth. The government, on the other hand, should play positive and supportive roles in launching of such youth cooperatives with financial assistance and the requisite support during its infancy stage.
- (B) **Education** : Cooperative subjects should be included in the education system for teachers and for students in order to inculcate cooperative principles and concepts to youths

while they are in schools and the rural provinces where the poor do not enjoy basic education, the cooperative movement or the cooperative promotion department could initiate programmes to create cooperative awareness and its benefits.

- (C) **Training** : It is noted that vocational and skill training are being undertaken by public and private sectors. However, the cooperative organisations should engage more actively in providing specific trainings for the youth to cope with cooperative ventures. It is noted that some countries have cooperative colleges to meet these needs.
- (D) **Resources** : Presently there are already youths who are playing active roles in cooperatives and these resources and expertise could be tapped to initiate youth cooperatives. Technical assistance could be obtained from international organisations, i. e. MATCOM, ILO, ICA, SCC, etc. or other established national organisations.
- (E) **Capital Investment** : Capital of youth cooperatives should be on the basis of self-financing. However, financial assistance could be provided in various forms by the more successful cooperatives within the movement, government sources and other local and international agencies.

5. Conclusion

In order to achieve the successful implementation of the recommendations above, the three major institutions viz. government, cooperative movement and youth movement should promote and organise the youth towards self-reliance, self-employment and upgrading of their socio-economic well-being through youth cooperatives.

REPORT OF COMMISSION - III

Chairman : Mr. M. M. Vyas,
India
Rapporteur : Mrs. Faridah Khalid,
Malaysia

Issues for Discussion ; Though the cooperative form of organisation has often been resorted to in programmes devised by governments and other organisations for youth, as yet there are no visible signs of the generality of cooperative movements in many countries in Asia taking meaningful steps to assist and support the greater involvement of youth in the mainstream of cooperative activity. Further, the interlinkages that exist between the mainstream of cooperative effort and cooperative effort in the youth sector appears to be rather slender.

Please examine this situation. What recommendations would you have to improve the present position and strengthen cooperative effort in this regard ?

Introduction

The Commission feels that there is a pressing need for greater involvement of the youth in national development. The cooperative organisation is a suitable vehicle towards achieving these objectives. The cooperative movement should take greater initiative to bring the youths to the mainstream of the cooperative movement at the national, regional and international level.

The aim of greater involvement of youths in cooperative activities is to attain a better standard of living and improved quality of life.

Rationale

Keeping the above goal in mind the Commission discussed the following issues :—

1. Various methodologies or approaches adopted by government and cooperative movement.
2. No concerted effort by government and cooperative movement to involve youths in cooperative activities.
3. Lack of interlinkages between government and cooperative movement in mobilising youths at different levels of cooperation.

Problems in Situation

Based on the issues discussed, the Commission identified the various problems concerning youth. Since the situation varies from country to country, the Commission grouped these problems into the following broad categories :—

1. Economic
2. Social
3. Political
4. Cultural
5. Ethical

The Commission gave a serious thought on the methodology or manner in which programmes on youth could possibly be brought into the mainstream of the cooperative activity of the organisation. In this connection the Commission took a review of the on-going programmes of the countries of the region. In this context the Commission felt that inspiration from Japanese Movement in regard to youth groups and their activities in training young farmers and the way in which they are brought under cooperative ideology. Yet, another aspect is university cooperatives in Japan. Similarly in Korea prospective farmers and fishermen are trained and brought under the cooperative fold. There are other examples before us, such as, cooperatives for youth activities in Malaysia

and cooperative village settlement activities in Sri Lanka. In Australia, young persons are trained in cooperation. In the Philippines also cooperative education has been introduced in schools and colleges and they have cooperation as a specialised subject at the university level. There are some other examples such as in U.K. The Consumers' Movement has forged links with youth movement which is autonomous in Britain. In France, school cooperatives have taken deep roots while Canada has developed very valuable material for bringing about cooperative development in schools and colleges. This position reveals that there are special programmes undertaken by different countries and they may be taken as a source of inspiration or guidance. However, each country will have to evolve its own programme in view of the fact that youth problems are country specific and, therefore, we may not be able to generalise programmes, except the general need to involve cooperatives in the youth programmes.

Recommendations

The Commission, therefore, recommends that each country would have to examine youth problems and draw specific programmes taking into consideration the examples indicated above and with such modifications that are relevant to their own situations to attract youth in the cooperative movement and make efforts to offer solutions to their problems and enable them to realise their aspirations and ambitions through cooperative way of life.

Nevertheless, cooperatives cannot rest content with their own programmes on youth. They will have to establish effective linkages within the cooperative movement itself with different levels of institutions such as primary, secondary and national federations. This means that youth programmes would have to be built up in such a way that there is vertical and horizontal linkages to ensure total approach to the problem of youth in the country. Further, there need be a proper link-up and coordination with the youth programmes and activities undertaken by the government and other non-government organisations. However, proper care will have

to be taken to ensure that cooperative effort and programmes are not solely dependent on government programmes or their attitude towards youth or cooperatives.

Conclusion

To sum up, the Commission emphasized that there is wide scope to bring youth programmes in the mainstream of the cooperative activity and involve them in cooperative efforts with a view to make them partners in the overall development of the cooperative movement of the country. This should be achieved through a plan process which would involve long term perspective planning in the cooperative movement as well as its coordination with the process of planning at the government level as also at the level of other non-official organisations engaged in youth programmes or activities.

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Cooperative League of Thailand

THE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE

is one of the oldest of non-governmental international organisations. It is a worldwide confederation of cooperative organisations of all types. Founded by the International Cooperative Congress held in London in 1895, it now has affiliates in 66 countries, serving over 365 million members at the primary level. It is the only international organisation entirely and exclusively dedicated to the promotion of cooperation in all parts of the world.

Besides the Head Office of the ICA, which is in Geneva, there are three regional offices, viz., the Regional Office & Education Centre for South-East Asia, New Delhi, India, started in 1960; the Regional Office for East and Central Africa, Moshi, Tanzania, started in 1968 and the Regional Office for West Africa, Bingerville, Ivory Coast, started in 1979.

The main tasks of the Regional Office & Education Centre are to develop the general activities of the Alliance in the Region, to act as a link between the ICA and its affiliated national movements, to represent the Alliance in its consultative relations with the regional establishments of the United Nations and other international organisations, to promote economic relations amongst member-movements, including trading across national boundaries, to organise and conduct technical assistance, to conduct courses, seminars and conferences, surveys and research, to bring out publications on cooperative and allied subjects and to support and supplement the educational activities of national cooperative movements. The Regional Office and Education Centre now operates on behalf of 15 countries, i. e. Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka

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