

***Regional Meeting-cum-Workshop  
for  
Representatives of National Cooperative Women's  
Committees/National Coordinators of  
Cooperative Women's Activities***

**GALLE, SRI LANKA**

**JULY 4-17, 1982**

**Report**

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***International Cooperative Alliance  
Regional Office & Education Centre  
for South - East Asia, New Delhi***

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National Cooperative Women's Committee/National  
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Regional Office & Education Centre for South-East Asia  
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## **Introduction**

In July 1975 the ICA ROEC in collaboration with the Cooperative Union of Malaysia held a Regional Conference in Kuala Lumpur on "The Role of Women in Cooperative Development". Since then much has been done in many countries in the Region to enable women to play an increasingly effective role in cooperatives. In most countries, committees have been set up at the national level, and they are now in the process of organizing the women from the base level upwards. In some countries even where the National Women's Committees have been set up, the progress made so far is as yet not encouraging.

The ICA ROEC has with the assistance of the concerned national cooperative organisations conducted two surveys to assess the situation on the role of women in cooperatives in the Philippines and Sri Lanka. Further, a pilot project on consumer education for women has been supported in Sri Lanka with the assistance of the Consumer Guilds in Sweden, the SCC/SIDA, the National Cooperative Council and the Government of Sri Lanka. Moreover, a Regional Seminar on "Enhancing Women's Participation in Cooperatives", was held at Galle, Sri Lanka, in September 1980 with a special focus on the pilot project, to enable participants from the region to get first hand knowledge of the experiences, methodologies and approaches of the project in Sri Lanka.

In March 1981 a Project for Enhancing Income-Generating Activities among Cooperative Members' Housewives was started in Thailand. The project is mainly concerned with three agricultural cooperative societies in Yasothorn Province in North-Eastern Thailand, where the housewives are being supported in carrying out income generating as well as education and extension activities.

Projects which lay special stress on women's participation in cooperative activities and which aim at improving living standards through an integrated approach are expected to take shape in some other countries of the Region also.

The National Cooperative Union of India has already undertaken some preliminary work in connection with a Women's Cooperative Education Project, which they are launching with support from the SCC/SIDA.

It will, of course, take a long time before illiteracy, traditional customs, social taboos, and other obstacles to women's progress are removed. As far as women's participation in cooperatives is concerned the movements need to provide increased and consistent support to women's committees and their activities. It is evident from the experience of Japan that one of the major reasons for the valuable contributions which women are making in the consumer, agricultural and fishery sectors, is the solid support which the cooperatives extend to the women, thereby making it possible for them to function effectively. Such support includes finances for activities, provision of secretariat facilities, availability of meeting rooms, demonstration kitchens and other amenities, as well as leadership and other training.

In the other countries of the Region the situation is mostly that women workers in the cooperative are honorary and they cannot devote as much time to cooperative work as is necessary. More full time workers are needed for accelerating the pace of women's participation in cooperative development.

In the light of the foregoing it was decided to hold a Regional Meeting - cum - Workshop for representatives of National Cooperative Women's Committees and national coordinators of cooperative women's committees. This was held in Hikkaduwa, Sri Lanka, from July 4-17, 1982. This event was organised by the ICA ROEC in collaboration with the National Cooperative Council of Sri Lanka and the

Women's Consumer Education Project through Cooperatives in Sri Lanka. Twenty-two women participants from eight countries attended the Meeting. The countries represented were : Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The programme and list of participants of the Regional Meeting appear at Appendices I and II.

The inaugural session was held on the morning of 6th July 1982 in the Galle District Cooperative Education Centre and was presided over by Mr. C.M.B. Bogollagama, President of the National Cooperative Council of Sri Lanka. A special message conveying his greetings and good wishes was received from the Hon'ble Mr. Saratchandra, Acting Minister of Food and Cooperatives. The Meeting was addressed by, among others, Mr. P.E. Weeraman, former Regional Director of the ICA ROEC, Mr. Austin Fernando, Commissioner for Cooperative Development, Sri Lanka, and Mr. N.V.F. Nagarathne, President of the Galle District Committee and Vice-President of the NCC.

The Regional Meeting - cum - Workshop was directed by Mrs. Margaret D'Cruz, Education Officer (Women & Youth) in the ICA ROEC.

### **Objectives :**

The objectives of the Meeting - cum - Workshop were as follows :—

- i. To review the progress made in the setting up of women's committees at national and other levels and to assess their performance and effectiveness ;
- ii. To identify constraints in the setting up of women's committees and to find ways and means of establishing a recognised status for such committees ;
- iii. To identify meaningful programmes as will help the education of women and the development of leaders and as will enhance their increased involvement in cooperative activities."



**Proceedings :**

The Workshop passed its evaluation and discussions on a series of background papers presented by the participants and the special papers presented at the Workshop on :

- i. An overview of women's committee activities in the Region. by Mrs.M.D' Cruz, Education Officer ,ICA.
- ii. Sri Lanka experiences based on the on-going Cooperative Women's Consumer Education Project by Ms. Jayantha Tennekoon, Project Director, Women's Project.
- iii. "Importance of Nutrition Education for Motivating Women in Cooperatives and Community Development Activities" by Mrs. A Weerasuriya, Farm Women's Extension Programme, Sri Lanka.

There were three Workshop sessions.

In workshop session I, participants were given the assignment of drawing up model guidelines for the formation of women's committees. In workshop session II, they were asked : What are the best ways of motivating women members to participate in community development activities?" In Group III they were asked the following :

- i. Evaluate the present position of the national women's committees in the South-East Asian Region subsequent to the Regional Seminar on "Enhancing Women's Participation in Cooperative Activities", held in 1980 in Sri Lanka, countrywise.
- ii. Identify problems and constraints encountered by the women's committees in carrying out their programmes.
- iii. What organisational structure within the cooperative movement would best ensure increased women's involvement in cooperatives ?
- iv. Suggest meaningful action programmes which can be undertaken through women's committees (or other women's cooperative bodies in the short and the long run).

The consolidated reports of the three groups in each Workshop Session which were adopted by the Workshop appear in the main document.

### **Study Visits :**

To enable the participants to see women's activities in cooperatives study visits were organised to several cooperative societies in and around Galle, inclusive of the Baddegama Society, which is a society being served by the Women's Project.

The Baddegama Multipurpose Cooperative Society (MPCS) started 24 centres for women, in 1981, to educate them in how to prepare a full protein meal at low cost, how to preserve food, how to make a cheap home-made oven using only sand and an empty tin, how best to feed infants. In addition the society also has arrangements for 52 young girls to be given training in sewing for nine months by a government instructor. This training is given free of charge. The Baddegama society already had a Women's Committee prior to 1981, and in August 1981, project activities were started under Phase III of the Women's Consumer Project.

Participants were able to visit two women's activities under the project : (a) a cooking class where the teacher was dealing with the subject of preparing nutritious and economical meals with soya beans, and (b) a sewing class where young girls were being given instructions by a teacher from the Small Industries Department.

Later the participants visited the Galu Gangabada Korale Tea Producers Cooperative Society. Members of the Society are holders of small tea plantations (generally around one to five acres) in the area. The Society, which was formed in 1946, has its own factory and three vehicles which are used to transport the processed tea to the city.

Other institutions of cooperative interest visited were Galle MPCS, which was formed in 1975, by the amalgamation of two societies previously known as "Galle West" and "Galle East". As of 30th June 1982, the membership of Galle MPCS was 10,414. The society's main function is the distribution of consumer goods, but it has several other activities including a printing press which we also visited. The society is running

successfully. There is a woman on the Board of Directors and a women's committee which arranges activities for women.

The Galle Cooperative Hospital was started in 1954 on a very small scale. It now has 52 beds, and a large and qualified staff including many specialists. Cooperative members pay 10% less for consultations and 5% less for hospitalisation than other people. The hospital is well equipped and well maintained.

The participants also visited the Galle Bope Cooperative Thrift & Credit Society which was formed in 1936 with an initial membership of 23. Today there are 180 members. The first loan granted by the society was for an amount of Rs. 3/- Now loans upto Rs. 10,000/- are given at an interest rate of 6% per annum. Two personal sureties are required to be furnished for obtaining a loan. The maximum period for which loans can be granted is 60 months. The society is running very successfully.

Participants also visited a Home for Retarded Children in Megalle. This home which is a private venture was started and is run by a well known philanthropist, Mr. P. R. Dissanayaka, it accommodates about 150 children. We were struck by the cleanliness of the home and the efficiency of the staff, but what appealed to us most of all was the loving care which the children receive.

Recommendations which the Workshop reiterated from the 1975 Regional Conference and the 1980 Regional Seminar are given in Appendix III.

The new Recommendations made by the Workshop appear in the main text.

We would like to thank the NCC, the Galle District Cooperative Union, the Women's Consumer Project, the societies visited, and all the men and women cooperators who through their support made this Regional Meeting possible. We are also grateful for the many kindnesses, courtesies and all the hospitality extended to the participants during their stay in Sri Lanka. We would like to say a special word of thanks to Mr. N.V.F.

Nagarathna, President of the Galle District Committee, who besides hosting a luncheon at his home for the participants, also accompanied them on all study visits.

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN WOMEN'S COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES :

### **Bangladesh**

There has been increased activity in the field of women in cooperatives :

- i. The number of Central Societies has increased from 36 (1980) to 44 (1982).
- ii. The number of primary societies has increased from 1412 to 1920 during same period.
- iii. Individual membership of women and girls over 18 has increased from 45,698 to 79,650 (1982).
- iv. A show-room-cum-sales centre to sell the handicrafts produced by women's cooperatives was opened in January, 81.
- v. The Jatiya Mahila Samabaya Samiti has submitted a proposal to the Government for "The Development of Small-Scale Industries for Women Cooperatives". This scheme has been approved in September 1980 and will provide training in several crafts to over 2,500 women and will provide direct employment to a further 300.

### **India**

A Women's Cooperative Mobilising Action Project has been initiated in India. The Project will start functioning from 1st July, 1983, and during the first three years will be financially assisted by the Swedish Cooperative Centre.

Two areas, one urban and one rural, have been chosen as the project areas, and the overall objective of the project is to enable the women belonging to the target groups to improve their social and economic status through cooperative action.

The Project will be operated by the National Cooperative Union of India and the concerned cooperative agencies in the

selected areas. It is envisaged that after a period of three years the women should have become self-reliant and they should not require further external project inputs.

It is hoped that the experience gained will enable similar projects to be started in other parts of the country as well.

### **Indonesia**

i. There is in Indonesia strong Government support for involving women in various fields of activity—including co-operatives—to enable them to contribute to the development process. In 1978 a Junior Minister for Women's Affairs was appointed.

ii. A women's organization, known as Dharma Wanita, has been formed by the wives of civil servants engaged in different government agencies. This women's organization—though not a cooperative—promotes women's cooperatives in the rural and urban areas. In 1980 Dharma Wanita drew up plans for the development of women's cooperatives under its own auspices. The programmes were based on successful cooperatives. In 1981 Dharma Wanita decided to assist these cooperatives with financial outlay and many women's cooperatives were formed by Dharma Wanita's provincial units.

The activities of Dharma Wanita include enabling women's cooperatives under their auspices to obtain legal status, strengthening women's cooperatives, promoting loan and savings activities, providing guidance and assistance with the formation of new cooperative, assistance with marketing of products of women's cooperatives, evaluation and collection of data pertaining to women's cooperatives and other related matters.

iii. Efforts are being made to involve women in the KUD (village cooperative units) which number about 5,000 out of a total of 19,136 cooperative organisations. Apart from these there are 106 women's cooperative societies, the members of which are mostly engaged in thrift and credit activities.

iv. Dewan Koperasi Indonesia (The Indonesian Cooperative Council) set up a women's committee for coordinating and promoting the involvement of women in the cooperative move-

ment in the country. The Committee was founded as the result of a decision taken by the Board in February 1980. The Women's Committee has a structure similar to that of the Council with branches at regional and district level.

The Council provides the Women's Committee with funds for their day-to-day activities. If necessary, and in cases where the work of the Committee is seen as being directly related to the national development plans, the Government agencies concerned also contribute financially to the activities of the Committee.

The Women's Committee also acts as a coordinating body between women's cooperatives, and between them and private and government business agencies in respect of marketing and processing of raw materials, provides information and guidance collects data on women's cooperatives, conducts evaluations of their performance helps them to fulfil their legal obligations, and performs other tasks aimed at the promotion and development of women's cooperatives.

v. The Government has initiated integrated and comprehensive development programmes in various provinces in the country, including in West Java, and role of women in family welfare, cooperative and other activities has been taken into account.

vi. Women's cooperatives face many problems such as lack of capital outlay, skilled workers, knowledge of business management to enable the members to run their cooperative successfully, lack of trained leaders and of marketing facilities for the goods provided by the women, etc. Most of all, women are unaware of the role which cooperatives can play in assisting them to raise their social and economic status and achieve a better standard of living through self cooperative projects.

vii. There is a Project for the development of role of women in cooperatives, which is under the supervision of the office of the Directorate General of Cooperatives. This project is carried out in collaboration with other concerned agencies. The

target group is women who undertake economic production. In the budget year 1982/83 there were 24 projects at provincial level.

### **Philippines**

i. In the Philippines there is, at present at national level, the Philippine Federation of Women for Cooperatives, Inc. and this body has chapters in 10 out of 12 Regions in the country. A General Assembly-with the different Regions represented-was held on April 4, 1982-and Office-bearers of the Federation were elected. In April 1983 the second General Assembly was held.

ii. The Cooperative Union of the Philippines (CUP) has also set up a Women's Committee at national level.

iii. The Bureau of Cooperatives Development under the Ministry of Agriculture has plans to start a Women's Bank, and also to convert the Rural Improvement Clubs (RICs), which are composed of women, into cooperatives. The Women's Federation holds orientation seminars for prospective cooperative members of the Rural Improvement Clubs.

### **Sri Lanka**

i. In Sri Lanka there are women's committees within the Multipurpose Cooperative Societies. These Committees have been set up at branch level, society level, district level and national level. In collaboration with the Women's Consumer Education Project, the Department of Cooperative Development, the National Cooperative Council of Sri Lanka and other agencies working in the field of nutrition, health, child-care, etc. the Women's Committees undertake activities similar to those being undertaken by the Women's Project.

ii. The Women's Consumer Education Project which started in 1979 has now completed its third stage of expansion. The project initially covered 5 MPCS in the financial year 1979-80. In 1980-81 another 10 MPCS were covered. In 1981-82 the project was further expanded to cover another 15 societies, making a total of 30 societies in the three phases. In 1983 project activities have been integrated with the programmes carried out by the NCC (National Cooperative Council of Sri

Lanka), and is now responsible for coordinating all women's cooperative activities in the Island.

The Project programmes lay emphasis on : Nutrition, family health, consumer protection, home economics, cooperation, savings and home gardening. In addition to these main subject areas, special needs of the participants are also catered to. Stress has also been laid on training for leadership development and this is carried out through workshops, discussions etc at various levels.

Provision of guidance and information especially of consumer interest is a continuous process. Project personnel also receive continuous training. Project activities are mainly carried out in rural communities.

All societies attached to the project have rural banks attached to them, and in collaboration with these banks rural women leaders have carried out successful savings promotion programmes.

iii. Under the ICA sponsored campaign of "Buy A Bucket of Water", 20 wells for providing clean drinking water were built by various cooperatives at the initiative of the project and the women's committees.

Nursery classes for children are run in rural areas by trained women leaders, and varied activities which enable women to contribute to better living in the areas covered by the Project are in progress.

*iv. Women's Cooperative Activities in the Fisheries' Sector :*

The coastline in Sri Lanka is approximately 1,100 miles in length. There are about 400 fishery centres around the coast. The fishing population engaged in various types of fishing is about 244,642 and around 79,000 persons belonging to 43,352 households are engaged in fishing and allied occupations, such as fish production (including in inland waters) marketing of fish and fish processing. There are 969 fishing villages in the country.



Statistics show that over 50% of the fishing population live in deplorable conditions and there is an urgent need to improve houses, roads and the overall standard of living. The fishery cooperative movement in Sri Lanka is trying to follow the examples of Japan and Korea who have modernized their fishing industry, and where the fishery cooperatives and the women's fishery cooperative associations work together to improve standard of living for the fishing communities.

The Sri Lanka Fishermen's Cooperative Federation at the end of 1981 started a few women's cooperatives (to be expanded in the future) to work in support of the policies and programmes of the government and the fishery cooperatives. The women's cooperatives run pre-schools, and undertake lace-making and coir production to increase family incomes. As of July 1982 there were 7 women's fishery cooperatives in Galle, Matara, Kalutara and Negambo.

v. As a further extension of its activities, the Project for Cooperative Consumer Education for Women has submitted through the National Council, a Project proposal for Income Generating Activities for Women. A feasibility study on the project proposal has been completed and the proposal is now with the ICA/SCC pending formal acceptance for technical assistance.

### **Thailand**

The Income Generating Project carried out by the Cooperative League of Thailand and the Cooperative Promotion Department in the Yasothorn Province has had considerable success with many of the housewives in the neighbouring villages also clamouring to join in.

The CLT/CPD have now submitted fresh proposals to expand the project to 20 more villages covered by an additional six agricultural cooperative societies.

The project is awaiting acceptance by a suitable donor.

There were no significant developments reported in respect of other countries represented at the Workshop.

### **Guidelines for the Formation of Women's Committees**

The Workshop session I, was devoted to preparing suitable guidelines as will help the movements in the Region to accelerate the pace of setting up women's committees at all levels.

The workshop took note of the fact that after the 1975 Conference, many movements initiated action in this sector by setting up Women's Committees at the national level. These were expected to work towards setting up of a representative structure from the field level upwards. It was noticed, however, that in some countries, the National Level Women's Committees were still not able to build up their bases from the field level upwards.

In drawing up the guidelines the workshop based its recommendations on the need to establish a truly representative and democratic structure, and infact went on to design a detailed constitution for a National Level Women's Committee, which would be democratic and representative. As the nature of the constitution and the way in which it is structured will vary from country to country, the draft constitution itself is not included in the text. However, some details in regard to the major areas of emphasis are given below.

To facilitate the setting up of women's committees at all levels, the workshop made some specific recommendations for inclusion in the various by-laws of the societies at different levels. They are as follows:—

I. Bye-law amendments necessary to provide for Women's representation :

Having regard to the present social position of women in some of the countries of South-East Asia, the workshop recognised the urgent need of giving women members of cooperative societies in the Region more opportunities than obtaining now of participating directly in the activities of their societies and of taking responsibility for the furtherence of women's interest through measures designed for their social and economic betterment and therefore recommend that :—

i. every primary cooperative society which is not exclusively for women and in which women constitute not less than twenty per cent of its total membership should provide in its bylaws for the following :

- (a) the election of a standing Committee for Women's Activities by the women members of the society from among themselves,
- (b) the election by such Standing Committee and from among its members of a number of member to the Managing Committee/Board of Directors in proportion to the number of women members in the total membership of the society,
- (c) the allocation of funds in the society's budget for the furtherance of women's activities recommended by the Standing Committee and approved by the General Meeting of the society,
- (d) the management of such funds by the said Standing Committee,
- (e) the making of Working Rules by the said Standing Committee for its purpose. and
- (f) the accountability of the said Standing Committee to the Managing Committee/Board of Directors and the General Meeting.

ii) Every secondary society to which primary societies described in Clause (i) are affiliated should provide in its bylaws for the following :

- (a) the election of a Standing Committee for Women's Activities from among and by the members of (i) the Standing Committees for Women's Activities of the primary societies mentioned in clause (i) and (if the managing committees of women's primary societies as are affiliated to it)
- (b) the election of a number of members of the said Standing Committee to the Managing Committee/Board of Directors by the said Standing Committee from among its members in proportion to the number of women members in the total membership of the primary societies affiliated to it. (c), d), (e) and (f) as in Clause I above.

iii. Every tertiary society to which secondary societies described in Clause (ii) are affiliated should provide in its bylaws for the following :—

- (a) the election of a Standing Committee for Women's activities from among and by the members of the Standing Committees for Women's Activities of its affiliated secondary societies;
- (b) the election of a number of members of the said Standing Committee/to the Managing Committee/Board of Directors by the said Standing Committee from among its members in proportion to the total membership of the primary societies affiliated to its member secondary societies;
- (c), (d), (e) and (f) as in Clause (i) above;

iv. Every National Organisation to which are affiliated tertiary societies described in Clause (iii) above should provide in its bylaws for the following :—

- (a) the election of a Standing Committee for women's activities from among and by the members of the Standing Committees for women's activities of its affiliated tertiary societies;
- (b) election of a number of members of the said Standing Committee to the Managing Committee/ Board of Directors by the said Standing Committee from among its members in proportion to the number of women members in the total membership of the primary societies which are affiliated to secondary societies which are members of tertiary societies affiliated to the Confederation;
- (c), (d), (e) and (f) as in Clause (i) above.

## **II. Guidelines for drawing up the Constitution for a Representative National Women's Committee :**

i. It is presumed that the organisational structure for Women's involvement would be two tier or three tier or more as the case may be and that law/by-law or other provision is

available for setting up women's committees at the primary, secondary and other levels.

ii. It would be necessary to provide for the representative character of the National Women's Committee and vest it with the authority to work in the interest of and speak on behalf of women's involvement in cooperatives.

iii. Objective : The overall objective of the National Women's Committee would be to achieve maximum involvement of women in cooperatives.

Specific Objectives :— The specific objectives of the NWC must be stated. It is suggested, among others, the following may also be included:

- a. To inculcate in women the social values and economic benefits of cooperation.
- b. To take necessary steps to increase the extent of women's participation in the affairs of the cooperatives both nationally and internationally.
- c. To implement a continuous programme of education for women and the family in order to improve the quality of life.
- d. To undertake feasibility studies, project identification formulation and implementation, to assist member organisations to carry out income generating and educational projects for women.
- e. To establish contacts with government and non-governmental bodies working in the area of women's programmes in collaboration with such bodies.
- f. To build up a fund to assist in activities concerned with women in cooperatives.

iv. An important aspect would be to define what the NWC is, how it is constituted and how one acquires and loses membership—also whether membership is individual or institutional, shares, subscriptions etc. It is suggested that provision be made in the constitution to set up the structure from the primary level

upwards and for the constitution of the Representative Body of the National Women's Committee, which will at its General Meeting, elect annually or otherwise, as the case may be, the National Women's Committee, its President, Vice-President and other officials. (It may be that in some countries the officials are elected by the Committee and not by the general meeting).

v. It is suggested that the by-law provides also for various functional committees like Planning, Education, Internal Audit etc. in accordance with the needs and that their constitution, role and functions be defined in the by-law.

vi. It is also suggested that the by-law provide for the holding of periodical convocations/congresses of women, either annually or biannually, to enable the women's committee to keep in touch with the mass of the membership and to discuss matters of common interest in a wider forum.

vii. The constitution should spell out the way in which the various meetings of the various bodies, like the committee, the functional committees, the general body, the conventions, etc. will be summoned and held; the powers and responsibilities of each of these, and the manner in which their decisions would be acted and reported upon.

This would entail also a careful explanation of the way the funds of the organisations will be collected and disbursed, and the various checks and balances to ensure proper management of funds.

viii. The NWC is bound to have several officials, like the President, Secretary, Treasurer etc. It is suggested that these be carefully defined and the respective roles, duties and responsibilities be spelt out in detail, to facilitate the working of the NWC.

ix. The NWC would require funds-the details in regard to membership fees, annual subscriptions, and other methods of raising funds would have to be spelt out in detail.

The NWC may decide to compensate its office bearers by

paying them honorarium / per diem, as the case may be. It is suggested that these also be included in the constitution itself.

These are some of main aspects which were considered to be necessary for inclusion in drawing up the constitution for a National Women's Committee. As mentioned earlier the detailed provisions under each head are not included in the text.

### **Ways of Motivating Women Members**

#### *I. Identify target groups.*

#### *II. Carry out survey to identify needs.*

1. Identify motivators and enthusiastic leaders who believe in cooperative principles and who would use them to improve the quality of life of the women members.

2. Training programmes for the above leaders to equip them with the necessary know-how to initiate others by practice and demonstration to cooperative action.

#### *III. Modes of motivation.*

1. Find ways of catering to the educational aspirations of the family.

2. Identify suitable ways of joint action which would help in providing adequate food, housing and better health for the family. Note : A healthy family is an asset to the nation.

#### *IV. Methods of approach.*

1. Group approach.

2. Mass approach.

3. Face to face approach (Home visits, guidance consultation, dialogue).

4. Seminars, group discussions, meetings, preparation and use of audio visual aids etc.

### **Example of Activities to be undertaken**

1. Conduct training programmes on various topics on economic, cultural and social aspects of the family among the women committee members;

- a. Nutrition.
- b. Family welfare.
- c. Child Health care.
- d. Responsible parenthood.
- e. Better living (Health and sanitation).
- f. Skills training for income generating projects such as :
  - i. Handicraft and needlework.
  - ii. Tailoring and garment making.
  - iii. Food processing/baking and pastry making.
  - iv. Vegetable gardening (kitchen gardening).
  - v. Poultry, swine and dairy farming.
  - vi. Fish farming/Cage fish farming.
  - vii. Painting/Book binding.
  - viii. Hotel, restaurant/cafeteria management.
  - ix. Bee-keeping, silk culture.
2. Establishment of day care centres.
3. Work for the improvement of status of women.
4. Conduct socials and sports activities for members.
5. Conduct leadership training among members.
6. Conduct Radio, TV programmes to inform the public of the women's activities.
7. Raise funds to finance women's activities through cultural programmes, fashion shows, film shows, raffles, recycling activities, sports activities.
8. Where possible run a hostel to help working women.

#### *V. Evaluation.*

1. Systematic, periodic evaluation of the changes in the quality of life of the members of the family.
2. The Progressive changes in teaching methods to cater to the changing life styles of the members of the family.
3. Recognition of the improvement and providing of incentives to sustain "on-going programmes".
4. Identifying within the members leadership qualities and trade skills and encouraging maximum utilization of same.



5. Involving the members' in decision-making from time to time for full participation in cooperatives.

6. Work towards increasing the confidence of members to carry out their programmes on self-help basis and to instil a feeling of dignity in their way of life.

### **Recommendations of the Workshop**

Against the background of the talks, study visits, observations and discussions, the Regional Meeting - cum-Workshop makes the following recommendations for enhancing the participation of women in cooperative activities through women's committees.

While re-affirming some of the recommendations of the Regional Conference on the Role of Women in Cooperative Development, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 21st to 28th July 1975, and the Regional Seminar on 'Enhancing Women's Participation in Cooperative Activities' held in Sri Lanka in 1980 (Appendix IV), this Meeting makes the following recommendations :

1. Realising that no programme can be successful without adequate funds, the Meeting recommends that funds be regularly allocated by cooperative organisations at all levels for women's activities.

2. Women's committees at National Level should formulate annual action programmes and distribute them to the committees at all levels for implementation.

3. The cooperatives at the national and secondary level and at society levels, where it is possible, should appoint women training officers. The ICA ROEC should support the appointment of such training officers at least at the apex level and in the initial stages. Where it is not possible to appoint training officers; the cooperatives at all levels should have Liaison Officers to work with women cooperators.

4. Seminars for women should be held at national, sub-regional and regional levels at shorter intervals than at present.

5. Realising that to improve the quality of life of the rural women and their families, motivation, education and training are necessary, the Meeting recommends that these be achieved through the use of fully equipped mobile units and other means of education.

6. The Regional Meeting notes that in some countries of the region, women are involved in consumer, thrift and credit, fisheries and other types of cooperatives. Here too, suitable programmes should be developed to enhance their participation in these types of cooperatives, to enable them to raise social and cultural status.

7. Special training classes should be conducted to inform women about election procedures etc. to encourage them to seek representation on managing committees, boards and other responsible positions.

8. In addition to cooperative education and leadership training, women should also be given training in income generating skills, cooperative management and related subjects to enable them to play an effective role in the societies to which they belong.

9. The ICA ROEC women's wing should represent Asian Women at the ICA Regional Council Meeting, the ICA Women's Committee and other important forums.

10. The participants should follow-up the recommendations made here with the apex level cooperative organisations in their respective countries.

11. ICA should have a meaningful dialogue with its member organisations in the region regarding the implementation of the recommendations made at this meeting through correspondence, as well as its various forums at National, Regional and International levels.

## PROGRAMME

- 4th July 1982* Participants arrive in Colombo.
- 5th July 1982*
- 1.00 p.m.* Leave for Coral Sands Hotel, Hikkaduwa  
(Workshop Venue).
- 6th July 1982*
- 8 30 a.m.* Leave Coral Sands Hotel, Hikkaduwa, for Galle  
Dist. Coop. Education Centre, Pattigalawatte-  
Galle.
- 10 00 a.m.* Inauguration of the Workshop.
- 2.30 p.m.* Commencement of the Meeting-cum-Workshop  
—Methodologies of the Meeting-cum-Workshop.  
—Presentation of country reports'
- 7th July 1982*
- F. N.* Presentation of country reports
- A. N.* Presentation of country reports
- 8th July 1982*
- 9.00 a.m.* Presentation of country reports  
"Organisation and Development of Women's  
Committees in Asia'-An Overview"  
by Mrs. M. D, Cruz,  
Education Officer, ICA ROEC  
Discussion and finalisation of Draft Model  
Guidelines for the Formation of Women's  
Committees.
- 9th July 1982*
- 9.00 a.m.* "Introduction to the Women's Consumer  
Education Project, Sri Lanka"  
by Ms. J. C.Tennekoon,  
Project Director,  
Womens' Project, Sri Lanka.
- 11.00 a.m.* "Methodologies of Intervention - Problems and  
Prospects (Sri Lanka Experience)"  
by Ms J.C. Tennekoon,  
Project Director,  
Women's Project, Sri Lanka.

- 2.00 p.m.** “Importance of Nutrition Education for Motivating Women in Coop. and Community Development Work”  
by Mrs. A. Weerasooriya,  
Farm Women’s Extension Programme,  
Sri Lanka.  
Workshop Session II  
Group Discussions on above subjects.
- 10th & 11th July 1982** Study Visits-Baddegama Multipurpose Cooperative Society, Women’s Activities through the Project (Cookery class & Sewing class).  
Galu Gangabada Korale Tea Producers’ Cooperative Society.  
Galle Hospital Coop. Society,  
Galle M P C S,  
Galle Bope Cooperative Thrift & Credit Society.  
Home for Retarded Children in Megalle  
Sightseeing in Galle.
- 12th July 1982** Workshop Session III -  
Group Discussion on Women’s Committees.
- 13th July 1982**  
F. N. Group Discussion (contd.)  
A. N. Preparation of Consolidated report
- 14th July 1982**  
9.00 a.m. Plenary for Group Reports.  
2.00 p.m. Drafting Committee sessions on final conclusions and recommendations.  
4.30 p.m. Address by Mr. Austin Fernando,  
Commissioner  
for Coop. Development.
- 15th July 1982**  
F. N. Final Plenary.  
A. N. Conclusions and recommendations of the workshop.
- 16th July 1982**  
7.00a.m. Departure of participants to Colombo.
- 17th July, 1982** Departure of participants to their respective countries.

## **Participants**

- BANGLADESH**
1. Mrs. Nur Jahan Kamal  
Chairman  
Bangladesh Jatiya Mahila Samabaya  
Samity Ltd.  
27, Banga Bandu Avenue  
Dhaka-2, Bangladesh.
  2. Mrs. Ferdousi Ali  
General Secretary  
Bangladesh Jatiya Mahila Samabaya  
Samity Ltd.  
27, Banga Bandhu Avenue  
Dhaka-2, Bangladesh.
- INDIA**
3. Dr. (Mrs.) Kiran Yadav  
Ex. Director  
U.P. Cooperative Consumers Federation  
Ali Manzil  
Walaquadar Road  
Lucknow, U.P., India.
  4. Mrs. Jayanti Singh Rathore  
Road No. 2, Rajindra Nagar  
Patna- 26 (Bihar), India.
- INDONESIA**
5. Drs Siti Rahayu Binarsin  
Cooperative Regional Office of West Java  
Asia Afrika Street No. 144  
Bandung, Indonesia.
  6. Mrs. Roendarwati Soedjoko-  
Dharma Wanita Pusat,  
Department of Industry (Indonesia)  
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Jakarta, Indonesia.

7. Mrs. S. M. Abdul Rachman  
Dharma Wanita (Pusat)  
Jalan Budi Kemuliaan No. 23  
Jakarta, Indonesia

**MALAYSIA**

8. Miss Pathma Tamby Dorai  
Cooperative Union of Malaysia  
29, Leboh Ampang  
Kuala Lumpur  
Malaysia.

**NEPAL**

9. Miss Indira Prajapati  
Manager  
Women's Tailoring Cooperative Society  
Dattatraya Square  
Bhaktapur, Nepal.

**PHILIPPINES**

10. Mrs. Victoria Enojado  
Philippine Federation of Women for  
Cooperatives, Inc  
4th floor, Ablaza Bldg.  
117 E. Rodriguez Avenue  
Quezon City, Philippines.

11. Mrs. Norma Diaz  
Philippine Packing Corporation Employees  
Consumers Cooperative Inc.  
Buge  
Cagayan de Oro City  
Philippines.

**SRI LANKA**

12. Mrs. Sagi Devi Kandhiah  
Vice President  
Jaffna District Women's Committee  
Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

13. Mrs Enid Fernando  
Secretary  
Gampola District Women's Committee  
Gampola Sri Lanka

14. Miss A.N. Devanayagam  
President  
Vavuniya District Women's Committee  
Vavuniya, Sri Lanka.
15. Mrs S.P.L. Gunasekera  
Trainee Project Director  
Women's Consumer Education Project  
15, Kumara Vidiya  
Kandy, Sri Lanka.
16. Mrs. R.M.C.G. Udugampola  
Sr. Asstt. Commissioner  
Department of Cooperative Development  
Post Box 419  
Colombo, Sri Lanka.
17. Mrs. G.A.L.L. Wijewickrema  
Assistant Commissioner  
Department of Cooperative Development  
Post Box 419  
Colombo, Sri Lanka.
18. Mrs. Annie Mary Margaret Perera  
Negombo South Cooperative Fisheries  
Society Ltd.  
Negombo.
19. Miss D. Agnes Monica Perera  
Negombo South Cooperative Fisheries  
Society Ltd.  
Negombo

**THAILAND**

20. Mrs. Prakobsri Pecharasawang  
Chief, Administrative Division,  
Cooperative League of Thailand  
4, Pichai Road, Dusit, Bangkok, Thailand.
21. Miss Boonsam Pholparich  
District Cooperative Officer  
Cooperative Promotion Department  
Maung Minbui Dist. Coop. Office  
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Minburi, Thailand.

22. Miss Intanaï Vsance  
Administrative Division  
Cooperative League of Thailand  
4, Pichai Road,  
Dusit, Bangkok, Thailand.

**RESOURCE  
PERSONS**

- i Ms. Jayantha Tennekoon  
Project Director, Women's Project  
Colombo, Sri Lanka.
- ii Mrs. A. Weerasooriya  
Farm Women's Extension Programme  
Department of Agriculture,  
Colombo, Sri Lanka.
- iii Mrs. M.D. 'Cruz  
Director of the Regional Meeting  
Education Officer (Women and Youth)  
International Cooperative Alliance ROEC  
New Delhi



**REITERATED RECOMMENDATIONS FROM  
THE 1975 CONFERENCE & 1980  
REGIONAL SEMINAR**

The Regional Meeting-cum-Workshop for National Representatives of Women's Committees/ National Coordinators of Women's Activities (Hikkaduwa, Galle, Sri Lanka-July 4-17, 1982) re-affirms the following recommendations made at the Regional Seminar on "The Role of Women in Cooperative Development" held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from July 21-28, 1975 :

- (a) that member organisations should conduct surveys in their countries to ascertain the present situation and role of women in cooperatives and to suggest ways and means for enhancing women's participation in cooperatives.
- (b) that women's committees be set up in all countries of the Region at all the levels, to formulate policies and programmes for women cooperators.

This Seminar further realises that women must get into the main stream of the cooperative movement in order to raise the socio-economic status of women and living standards of the family and the community and recommends that if women are to be absorbed in the mainstream of the cooperative societies, Women's committees should be incorporated within the framework of the organisational structure at primary, secondary and national levels. Realising that in most countries of the region women are not members of cooperatives in their individual rights, the seminar recommends as its first priority an effective programme for enrolment of women in cooperatives in which they can actively participate.

For the effective coordination of women's activities, an Asian Women's Regional Council be set up, which should be affiliated to the ICA Women's Committee.

That there should be greater representation from the Region,

Realising that Cooperative Education is vital for the social and economic advancement of the people and the movement, that the vast human resources available be correctly estimated so that programmes are specially designed to improve and increase the quality and quantity of cooperative leaders and cooperators, with sound attitude to face the future with confidence.

That each country revises its National Policy in education to include cooperation as a subject in the syllabi of all educational institutions at all levels.

Realising that women are recent entrants into the cooperative movement, that special programmes of cooperative education, leadership development, skill and management training etc. be made available for women cooperators.

Recognising that the needs of the family can no longer be met on the income of the male members alone, that income generating activities such as handicrafts, agro-based activities etc., for women be intensified and encouraged.

Realising that the cooperative societies play an important role in improving the living standards of the members and the community, that the combination of cooperative education programmes with activities aimed at family welfare, namely nutrition, health, child care, home management, consumer protection etc.

That effective coordination be ensured between cooperative, government and other agencies which also aim at improving socio-economic conditions of women.

That national and international agencies, should extend support to projects aimed at improving socio-economic conditions of women in the Region.

That in the spirit of a cooperatives and in keeping with that, international agencies such as FAO, ILO etc. be approached to provide technical and financial assistance.

## **THE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE**

is one of the oldest of non-governmental international organisations. It is a world-wide 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, Abidjan, 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, Maldives, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and T

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