

M. D'CRUZ

**Women's Associations
of
Fishery Cooperatives
in Japan**



**International Cooperative Alliance
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Women's Associations of Fishery Cooperatives in Japan

Margaret D'Cruz

Education Officer (Women & Youth)

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INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE

Regional Office & Education Centre for South-East Asia

Bonow House, 43 Friends Colony,

New Delhi-110065



INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE

Headquarters :

**35, rue des Paquis, B.P. 862,
C.H. 1211, Geneva. 1. Switzerland**

**Regional Office & Education Centre for South-East Asia
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Preface

The Cooperative Movement in Japan is a highly developed one, and women are active in the fisheries, consumers and agricultural sectors, in all of which they are making very valuable contributions towards better living through a variety of activities, which have great relevance for women in other countries of the Region.¹ This is why I chose to visit Japan to study how women are contributing to the work of the Cooperative Movement in the different sectors.

Two Reports, one on "Member Activities in the Japanese Consumer Cooperative Movement", and the other on "The Role of Women in the Japanese Agricultural Cooperative Movement" have already appeared in print. I am now presenting here my Report on "The Women's Associations of Fishery Cooperatives".

At the very outset I would like to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to ZENGYOREN, the National Federation of Fishery Cooperative Associations in Japan who arranged my programme, and provided me with numerous facilities including excellent interpretation facilities, and made available the services of two of their senior staff members who accompanied me on all my visits.

After a day's orientation at ZENGYOREN, I visited three Prefectures, namely, Aomori, Iwate and Chiba. In each of these I visited the Prefectural level fishery organizations and some selected primary fishery cooperatives. I talked with cooperative leaders—both men and women and with the staff of the primary cooperatives and members of the Women's Associations, and from my discussions with them, and the opportunity I had to be present at two Women's Regional Group Meetings, I was able to understand and appreciate better the valuable contribution

1. The word "Region" refers to the 14 countries in South-East Asia which are served by the International Cooperative Alliance Regional Office & Education Centre for South-East Asia, viz., Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Japan, Rep. of Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

which women's groups in the fishery sector are making towards bringing about improved living conditions in the fishing villages.

Part I of my report deals with the Fishery Cooperative Movement, and Part II with the Women's Associations of Fishery Cooperatives. Most of the information (including the charts) in the first part of the report have been drawn from ZENGYOREN's two publications, namely, "Fishery Cooperative Associations in Japan"—September 1981, and "Outline of ZENGYOREN", the National Federation of Fisheries' Cooperative Associations of Japan"—1981.

Besides ZENGYOREN, I would also like to thank the staff of the Prefectural-level cooperative fishery organisations and the primary societies visited, as well as the many women leaders and members of the Women's Associations whom I met, for all their assistance, and for the many courtesies and kindnesses extended to me.

New Delhi
10th August, 1983

MARGARET D'CRUZ
Education Officer (Women & Youth)

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Preface	v
PART I: THE FISHERY COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT IN JAPAN	
Early History and Development	1
Developments After World War II	3
Fishery Cooperative Associations—Structure and Functions	4
Membership	6
Prefectural Credit Federations of Fishery Cooperative Associations (Shingyorens)	7
The National Federation of Fishery Cooperative Associations (Zengyorens)	8
Linkage with Government Fishery Administration	10
PART II: WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS OF FISHERIES COOPERATIVES	
History and Development	11
Activities of the Women's Associations	15
STUDY VISITS	
Aomori Prefecture:	
Noheji Primary Fisheries Cooperative Society	20
Tohoku Regional Meeting	26

Iwate Prefecture

Iwate Prefectural Credit Federation of Fisheries Cooperative Associations	30
Ozuchi Cho Primary Fishery Cooperative	32

Chiba Prefecture :

Chiba Prefectural Federation of Fisheries Cooperatives	38
Chikuracho-Nanbu Primary Fishery Cooperative	40
Amatsu Primary Fishery Cooperative	44
Kanto-Tokai Regional Meeting	46

Conclusion	49
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Note on "Life Cycle Programme" of Women's Groups	54
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CHARTS

I Organisational Structure of the Fishery Cooperative Associations in Japan	9
II Channels of Fishery Administration	10
III Organisational Chart of Women's Associa- tions of Fishery Cooperatives	13
IV Women's Associations at Primary Level with Individual Membership	14
V Noheji Primary Fishery Cooperative	21
VI Noheji Primary Fishery Cooperative— Total Proceeds by Section by Year (Yen)	22

PART—I

The Fishery Cooperative Movement In Japan

Early History and Development

Fishery administration in feudal times was carried out as follows: Coastal villages were divided into “Jikata” (farming villages) and “Urakata” (fishing villages). People living in the “Jikata” villages were not permitted to engage in fishing operations even if their villages faced the sea. They were only allowed to collect seaweed for use as fertilizer for farming. People in the “Urakata” (fishing villages) were engaged in fishing and had to pay a certain amount of tribute to the feudal lords in return for being allowed to fish.

Even in feudal times fishing rights existed. The waters up to a certain distance from the coast were common fishing grounds for the village people and corresponded in general to the fishing grounds under the common fishing right today. The waters beyond the common fishing grounds were fished by larger boats from any of the fishing villages along the coast. Owners of the larger boats formed guilds to which fishing rights were granted by feudal lords in return for payment of tribute. In addition there were some cases of specific fishing rights being granted to large-scale fishermen whose fishing was concentrated in certain areas.¹

With the collapse of the feudal system many changes took place in the country, including the fishery sector. There were often controversies among fishermen about fishing rights and such controversies increased in the 1880's as a result of the depression in the fishing industry. This situation was further aggravated as the new government adopted a deflation policy to curb

1. Fishing rights as they exist today are dealt with on pages 6 & 7.

inflation caused by the Civil War. In 1884 the government established Standard Rules for Fishery Associations so that the fishery associations set up under these rules could coordinate the utilization of fishing grounds. This was followed by the enactment of the Fisheries Law in 1901 which provided for fishing rights, fishing licences and fishery cooperative associations. In 1910 the Fisheries Law was amended to allow the fishery cooperative associations to carry on economic activities in addition to administering fishing rights.

Other Developments—Prior to the Second World War

The idea of establishing fish markets which could be operated by the fishermen themselves originated about 200 years ago. While at that time many fishing villages were dominated by landlords and influential fish dealers and large-scale fishermen, there were other cases where the village landlord or village chiefs expanded their own private funds to set up fish markets so that individual fishermen would not be exploited by fish dealers, and could therefore improve their standard of living.

The World Depression—which started around 1929—dealt Japanese agriculture and fisheries a big blow. Products in both sectors dropped in price as compared to manufactured products. As a result farmers and fishermen were adversely affected.

Fishermen were exploited by unscrupulous fish wholesalers and dealers from whom they borrowed money to buy fishing boats, fishing gears and similar fishing equipment, as well as for other necessities such as housing, food, clothing, etc. Although in most cases no interest was charged, the fishermen were made to pay heavily in other ways. They were compelled to sell their fish catch to the dealers and wholesalers at about 60% of the normal market price. In addition, they had to purchase all their fishing requisites from them at exorbitant prices. Thus, their plight was a miserable one, and was further aggravated by the falling fish prices due to the great depression.

To help the fishermen to come out of this situation the Government started to encourage them to build and operate their own cooperative fish markets. There was, of course, strong opposition from the private fish wholesalers and dealers, but the cooperatives survived.

As mentioned earlier, the Fishery Law was amended in 1910 to allow the cooperatives to carry on economic activities in addition to administering fishing rights. As a result, several cooperatives started to undertake cooperative marketing. By the 1920's, however, their operations slackened considerably, but picked up again in the 1930's as a result of government's encouragement. Today both cooperative and private markets operate in many of the larger fish landing centres. However, 90 per cent of these are owned by the cooperatives.

Other developments also occurred which directly affected the fishery cooperatives. During the start of the Second World War period (around 1937 onwards) Government took over food distribution. At the same time many fish wholesalers/dealers who were not drafted to the fighting forces, were instead drafted to work in the ammunition factories, and thus they vanished from the fishing centres. As a consequence, the fishery cooperatives came to monopolise fish distribution. There was, however, another major development which totally deprived the fishery cooperatives of their democratic character. They were completely taken over by the Government and became a part of the government machinery. A fishery association was established in each town or village, and the President of the association was appointed by the Prefectural Governor without any voting by the members. Still, there were some gains. Fishermen were now free from the clutches of private fish wholesalers and dealers, and they were able to retain the profits from their operations. Also, the Government placed great emphasis on the construction of fishing ports, and this made the use of mechanized fishing boats possible in many places. Fishing port construction and cooperative marketing flourished side by side.

Developments after World War II

Fishery policies implemented by the Government immediately after the war included measures for increased fish production as well as fishery reform; the Fishery Law was amended and the new Fishery Cooperative Associations Law was enacted in 1949. The central idea was the democratic control of fishing grounds by the fishery cooperatives. In keeping with this idea, the fishery associations which had served the purpose of war-time control

were dissolved and reorganised as fishery cooperative associations based on democratic principles. The new Fishery Cooperative Associations Law laid the basis for the future development of the fishery cooperatives.

When the War ended the fish wholesalers and dealers returned to the fishing villages, but they were now in a very different position as compared to the one they held prior to the war. They no longer had any influence over the fishermen and could no longer exploit them. They did not have the money to advance the fishermen loans, nor were they required to do so, as the fishery cooperatives had long since taken over all the functions which the wholesalers and dealers used to perform in pre-war days. Hence they now had no choice but to bid in the same way as other interested parties at the auctions where fish were being sold in the cooperative fish markets.

Members pay the cooperatives a commission of between 3 to 6% for selling their catch. This is very low when compared to what they had to pay the fish wholesalers and dealers in pre-war days, namely, between 30 and 40 per cent commission. Thus it is plainly evident that cooperative marketing has contributed greatly to bringing about improved living standards among fishing families.

Also because of the substantial subsidies being given to the cooperatives by the government for harbour facilities and other operations in connection with wholesale marketing of fish, the cooperatives' share of expenses is low, and the surplus they earn can be accumulated and used for other service activities for member fishermen.

In 1960 the Fishery Cooperatives Consolidation Law was enacted to provide for the merger of small cooperatives to make them more viable.

Fishery Cooperative Associations—Structure & Functions

Fishery organizations originated in Japan as fishery associations to administer fishing rights, and this function still remains an important one for the fishery cooperatives. The use of fishing grounds, based on fishing rights, is controlled by the fishery cooperatives in such a way that the scale of fishing operations and the income therefrom do not vary greatly from one member

to another.

The Fishery Cooperative Movement has a three-tier structure with the primaries at the base, the Prefectural Federations of Fishery Cooperative Associations and the Prefectural Credit Federation of Fishery Cooperative Associations at the secondary level, and the National Federation of Fishery Cooperative Associations at the apex level.

Primary Cooperatives are the Area Fishery Cooperatives and the Specific Fishery Cooperatives.

Area Cooperatives must have 20 or more fishermen members in a given area. The size of the area varies, but does not exceed the area of a municipality (city, town or village). Members include certain fishing enterprises, fishermen and fish production cooperative associations. An area cooperative takes the name of the area in which it operates.

Area fishery cooperatives are of two types: sea area cooperatives and fresh water cooperatives. The latter are usually small, whereas the most important fishery cooperatives in Japan are the fishery cooperatives along the sea coasts.

Specific fishery cooperatives are formed by fishermen and fishing enterprises engaged in the same kind of fishery. These cooperatives are again of two types: one for owner fishermen and medium or small-scale fishing enterprises, and the other for fishermen engaged in aquaculture. The former is meant more for extending loans to its members. Specific fishery cooperatives for inland aquaculture are formed by small-scale aquaculturists and they conduct economic activities such as joint shipment of cultured fish. Their membership includes individual fishermen as well as fish production cooperatives and fishing companies. In addition to the supply business, credit and marketing, a few of the specific cooperatives carry out ice-making, freezing and/or cold storage activities. At the end of March 1980 there were 308 specific cooperatives. These cooperatives have their own federation at national level.

There are, in addition to these types of cooperatives, Fish Production Cooperative Associations which are meant to assist the merger of the operations of small-scale fishermen to enable them to have joint fishing operations on a larger scale. Seven persons can form such a cooperative, but two-thirds of the members must be engaged in the fishing activities of the coope-

rative. These cooperatives are eligible to become full members of the area cooperative and specific fishery cooperatives. At the end of March 1980 fish production cooperatives totalled 812.

Then there are the Fish Processors' Cooperative Associations, Fish Processors' Cooperatives can be formed either under the Fisheries' Cooperative Association Law or the Medium and Small Enterprises Cooperative Associations Law, but the majority of them choose to be formed under the Fisheries' Cooperatives Associations Law. These cooperatives numbered 195 at the end of March 1980. They are associate members of the Prefectural Federation of Fishery Cooperative Associations and the Prefectural Credit Federation of Fishery Cooperative Association, and have their own federation at national level. Total number of primary cooperatives of all types as of 31st March 1980 was 3,408.

The primary fishery cooperatives form their federations at the prefectural level. These are the Prefectural Federations of Fishery Cooperative Associations (Kengyorens) and the Prefectural Credit Federations of Fishery Cooperative Associations (Shingyorens). The fishery federations form the National Federation of Fishery Cooperative Associations (Zengyoren), while the Prefectural Credit Federations, together with cooperatives in the agricultural and forestry sectors form the Central Co-operative Bank for Agriculture and Forestry (Norin-Chukin).

Membership

As regards membership of the primaries, according to the Fishery Cooperative Associations Law, individual fishermen as well as fishing enterprises are eligible to be members of the fishery cooperatives. However, before being accepted as members there are certain conditions they must fulfill. Individual fishermen and fishing enterprises must have fishing boats upto a total of 3,000 gross tons; secondly, they must have in their employment upto 300 fishing workers. These workers are usually not the members of the fishery cooperatives.

The rate of organisational coverage by the fishery cooperatives in Japan is extremely high, and the reason for this is that the Government has granted the "common fishing right" solely to the fishery cooperatives. This is the right for fishing, or for

collecting animals or plants which are comparatively immobile in coastal waters. Hence, as far as coastal fishing is concerned, no fisherman can carry out fishing which is regulated by fishing rights unless he is a member of the fishery cooperatives. Then there is the "demarcated fishing right" which is primarily for aquaculture. The third type of fishing right is the "set-net fishing right".

Fishing rights are required only if set-nets are placed in the waters at a depth of 27 m. or more. If, however, set-nets are placed at a depth of less than 27 m. they come under the common fishing right. Even with regard to the granting of demarcated fishing rights and set-net fishing rights, the Government gives preference to the cooperatives. Almost all owner fishermen and fishing enterprises operating in coastal as well as off-shore waters are the members of the fishery cooperatives, which are thus large in size and have many and varied activities.

Prefectural Federations of Fishery Cooperative Associations (Kengyorens)

At the end of March 1980 there were 157 fishery federations. Usually the area fishery cooperatives in each Prefecture join together to form a federation. In prefectures where aquaculture has been developed, the fresh water cooperatives will also form a federation. Prefectures which face the sea on two sides may have two federations—one for each coastal area. There are also Bay Federations of Fishery Cooperatives to which fishery rights may be granted, and which may operate fish markets as in the case of the area fishery cooperatives.

The Federations of Fisheries Cooperative Associations do not administer fishing rights, and are therefore not concerned with fish production. Their main business is marketing and supply, and educational and informational activities for their members. They also undertake ice-making, freezing and cold storage as these are connected with marketing and supply, but these activities are not conducted on a very large scale.

Prefectural Credit Federations of Fishery Cooperative Associations (Shingyorens)

Prior to World War II, credit business was included in the

activities of the Prefectural Fishery Federations. However, after the War, Credit Fishery Federations were set up to perform this function. They are closely linked to the credit departments of the area fishery cooperatives.

The Credit Federations receive deposits from their members and a part of these are in turn deposited with the Central Co-operative Bank for Agriculture and Forestry. The Credit Federations also make available loans to members. In addition, surplus funds accumulated with the Central Co-operative Bank can be made available to the fishing industry for its use, and are channelled through the Prefectural Credit Federations and the primary cooperatives. At the end of March 1980 there were 35 Prefectural Credit Federations of Fishery Co-operative Associations. Usually one federation is established in each prefecture.

The National Federation of Fishery Co-operative Associations (Zengyoren)

In February 1949 the Fisheries Co-operative Law was enacted, and it provided for the setting up of new and democratic fishery cooperatives as well as fisheries federations and fisheries credit federations. However, this law did not provide for the establishment of a central national organisation which would unite and serve all the fishery cooperatives in the country. Under the circumstances, the National Fisheries Economic Association was organized to play the role of such a central organisation, and it began its activities as a guiding body.

In 1952 as a result of strong pressure from the fishery cooperatives the law was partially amended to enable the establishment of a national federation, which would cover fishery cooperatives all over the country. On 25th October, 1952 the long awaited national body Zengyoren was established and it commenced its activities on 1st December 1952.

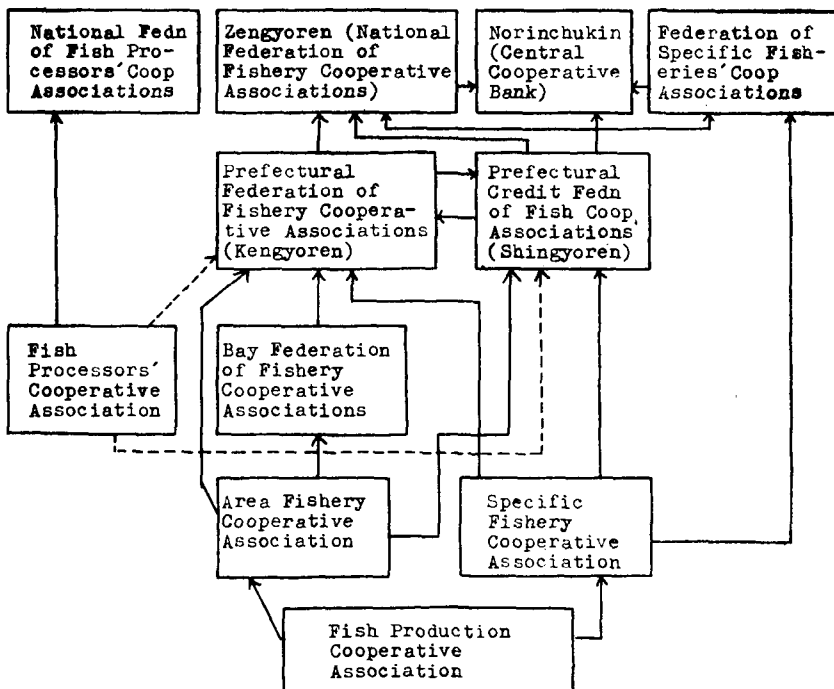
During the first four years Zengyoren was busy with organizational work and concentrated mainly on providing its members with education and information. Soon, however, it started to expand its activities into various fields including the supply business, marketing of members' fish, ice-making, freezing and fish processing. Young staff in the fisheries movement are trained in the Co-operative School.

The members of Zengyoren are mainly the prefectural Fishery Associations and the Fishery Credit Federations. As of the end of March 1981 Zengyoren's membership totalled 82.

It is the Guidance Department in Zengyoren which deals with women's groups in the fisheries sector, and there is a woman in the head-office to look after women's affairs.

Chart I shows the Organisational Structure of the Fishery Cooperative Associations in Japan.

CHART : I
ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE
FISHERY COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATIONS IN JAPAN



Full Membership —————→
Associate Membership - - - - -→

Linkage with Government Fishery Administration

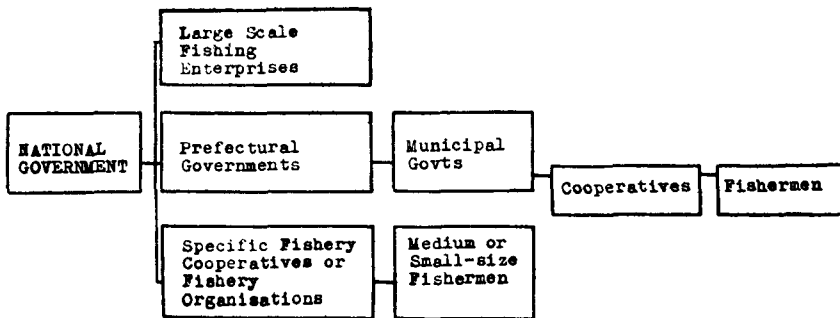
There is a close working relationship between the Government Fishery Administration and the Fishery Cooperative Movement. Subsidies given by the national government to the coastal fisheries are normally channelled through the prefectural and municipal governments. In addition, the prefectural governments also appropriate monies from their own funds to assist the fishing industry.

The officers in charge of fisheries in the prefectural government make it a rule to consult the presidents of the fishery cooperatives in their prefecture about the fishery budget, subsidies, etc., in order to obtain their agreement on the implementation of any proposed fishery projects, as it is mainly the prefectural governments and the fishery cooperatives who implement such projects.

Coastal and off-shore fishermen are usually small-scale operators; they are weak financially, as well as in terms of education. It is but natural, therefore, for the national and prefectural governments to help them to improve their position in both respects, but in order to be able to reach individual fishermen who live scattered along the coast, it is necessary to have intermediate organizations which can organize them into groups and work with them. In Japan the fishery cooperatives perform this function.

Chart II shows the Channels of Fishery Administration.

CHART II : CHANNELS OF FISHERY ADMINISTRATION



PART--II

The Women's Associations of Fisheries Cooperatives

History and Development

In 1951 the first women's activity was undertaken in the fishing villages of Sakazuki District in Shakotan Peninsula in Hokkaido. The fishing communities there were impoverished owing to successively poor catch of herring, upon which their livelihood depended. To extricate themselves from poverty, the women decided to launch a savings campaign. They, therefore, formed the Women's Savings Drive of Sakazuki Fisheries' Cooperative, and started to deposit monthly savings out of their meagre family income with the Hokkaido Credit Federation of Fisheries Cooperatives. Their savings grew, and the campaign proved so successful that the idea soon spread to other districts of Hokkaido, as well as to other fishing villages in the different prefectures in the country. The spread of the systematic habit of savings through group action on the part of women led to the formation of women's associations at all levels in the fisheries cooperative sector.

The primary-level Women's Associations of Fisheries Cooperatives in each prefecture established their own Prefectural Liaison Councils. In September 1957 the first national Conference of the Prefectural Liaison Councils of Women's Associations of Fisheries' Cooperatives was held in Tokyo, and a resolution was adopted to make the Conference an annual event in the future. The question of forming a National-level Liaison Council was also taken up for discussion. At the third annual National Conference of Prefectural Liaison Councils in 1959, which was attended by representatives from 24 prefectures, by unanimous consent the National Liaison Council of Women's Associations of Fisheries Cooperatives was established.

As of 1st June, 1981 there were 1,395 Women's Associations of Fisheries' Cooperatives at the primary level, with an individual membership of 188,491 and 37 Prefectural Liaison Councils of Women's Associations of Fisheries Cooperatives, some of which are affiliated to the National Liaison Council of Women's Association of Fisheries Cooperatives. Approximately half the Women's Associations at primary level are affiliated to the National Women's Liaison Councils. There are approximately 400,000 fishing families in the country and about 200,000 women from these families are members of the women's associations. Women's associations at primary level are usually formed on the initiative of the primary fishery cooperatives. Support is also given by the prefectural Fishery and prefectural Credit Federations, depending upon which of these the Women's Councils are attached with.

There are 47 Prefectures in Japan, but not all of them have fisheries cooperatives. Some are landlocked and therefore have no fishing industry. In others, as for instance in Osaka, the fishing industry is not an important one. In Tokyo Prefecture fishing is undertaken in the many islands which lie scattered over the prefecture, and it has not been possible to consolidate women's activities in the various islands.

Chart III shows the organizational structure of the Women's Associations of Fisheries' Cooperatives and their Liaison Councils.

Chart IV shows the number of Women's Associations at primary level in each of the 37 Prefectures which have such associations and the individual membership in each primary-level association. In eleven prefectures the Women's Associations are linked, through their Prefectural Liaison Councils, to the Prefectural Federations of Fisheries' Cooperatives. In 24 Prefectures they are linked to the Prefectural Credit Federations of Fisheries' Cooperatives, and in two cases they are linked to the Prefectural Guidance Federations of Fisheries' Cooperatives.

Budget

The subsidy which Zengyoren (the National Federation of Fishery Cooperative Associations) gives to the National Women's Liaison Council per year is about Yen 1.8 million. In addition

CHART III : ORGANISATIONAL CHART OF WOMEN'S
ASSOCIATIONS OF FISHERY COOPERATIVES

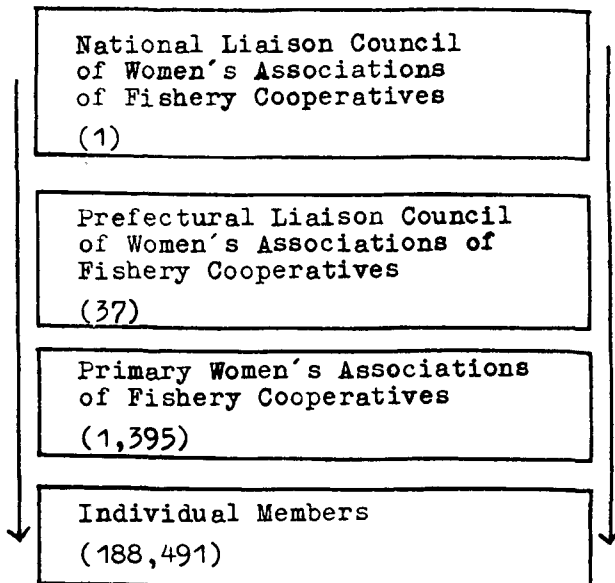


Chart IV
WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS AT PRIMARY LEVEL WITH
INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP

Information given as of 1st June, 1981

Name of Prefecture	No. of Women's Associations at primary level	No. of Members	Affiliated to:		
			Pref. Fisheries Federation(A)	Pref. Credit Federation(B)	Pref. Guidance Federation(C)
Hokkaido	139	23,553	—	—	C
Aomori	30	5,339	—	B	—
Iwate	42	13,653	—	B	—
Miyagi	53	7,554	—	B	—
Akita	3	674	A	—	—
Yamagata	8	839	A	—	—
Fukushima	19	1,411	—	B	—
Ibaragi	13	966	—	B	—
Chiba	44	8,884	A	—	—
Kanagawa	29	2,370	—	B	—
Niigata	25	1,782	A	—	—
Toyama	12	1,943	A	—	—
Ishikawa	20	2,622	A	—	—
Fukui	24	1,838	—	—	C
Shizuoka	43	7,440	A	—	—
Aichi	26	5,083	—	B	—
Mie	68	10,318	—	B	—
Kyoto	8	723	—	B	—
Hyogo	50	5,050	A	—	—
Wakayama	46	5,722	—	B	—
Tottori	11	1,505	—	B	—
Shimane	43	4,140	—	B	—
Okayama	10	750	A	—	—
Hiroshima	36	2,612	—	B	—
Yamaguchi	101	12,098	—	B	—
Kagawa	38	3,362	—	B	—
Tokushima	35	4,580	—	B	—
Ehime	56	7,124	—	B	—
Kochi	51	5,984	—	B	—
Fukuoka	64	7,042	—	B	—
Saga	45	4,633	—	B	—
Nagasaki	109	13,764	—	B	—
Ooita	20	3,442	—	B	—
Kumamoto	8	1,190	A	—	—
Miyazaki	22	4,441	—	B	—
Kagoshima	33	3,490	A	—	—
Okinawa	11	570	—	B	—
Total	1,395	188,491	11	24	2

to this, the Government gives them a further subsidy of approximately Yen 10 million annually.

At primary level, each member of the Womens' Association pays a subscription fee of around Yen 1,000 per year, but this varies from one primary to another. The amount collected is then subsidized by the primary and used for women's activities. Women's activities are also subsidized at prefectural level by the Prefectural Federation of Fishery Cooperative Associations and the Prefectural Credit Federations. In Aomori Prefecture, for instance, the Prefectural Credit Federation donates Yen 800,000 a year, and the Prefectural Fisheries Federation between Yen 100,000 and Yen 200,000 annually for women's activities. In Aomori Prefecture total donations from the two federations would be in the region of 21 million to which would be added subsidies from the primaries and membership fees.

To encourage members of the fishing community to improve their homes, the government has set up the Life Improvement Fund under which long and short-term loans are given, free of interest. Members of the Women's Associations sometimes avail of these funds.

Education and Training

In response to my query about education and training for members and office-bearers I was told that this depends upon the requirements. Generally, education and training are imparted at primary level by qualified instructors and the primaries bear the costs involved. The Women's Associations and the Women's Liaison Councils plan their own education and training needs which are then arranged by the fishery cooperatives. The local cooperatives provide information and study material on nutrition, balanced diet and any other subject dealt with in the programmes arranged for women. They also provide the necessary expertise.

Activities of the Women's Associations

The Women's Associations work in conformity with the principles as laid down by the National Liaison Council of Women's Associations of Fisheries Cooperatives:

1. Let us be cognizant of our duties we women have in the fishing communities and cultivate ourselves better;
2. Let us improve our social and economic standards by combining our forces for united action;
3. Let us contribute to the sound development of the Fisheries' Cooperatives and thereby establish good-to-live-in and happy fishing communities.

Activities are geared to achieving the above objectives. One of the most important tasks of the National Women's Liaison Council is the training of group leaders, to ensure effective leadership. Since 1959 seminars have been held for the leaders of women's groups, with the aim of making them aware of the necessity to gear their efforts to the diversifying needs of fishing households, enabling them to set targets, and find out how these targets can be met.

In addition, annual conferences are held at national level at which statements are presented on the work conducted by the women's associations, and the achievements which have resulted therefrom. Such presentations provide a platform for exchange of information and sharing of experiences, and serve to encourage and motivate women to further action.

Since 1977 such annual seminars and conferences have been integrated into the Government Subsidized Assistance Programme for Women's Activities in the Fishing Industry. This has also made it possible for the National Liaison Council of Women's Associations of Fisheries Cooperatives to issue a quarterly bulletin to its members. The bulletin, besides providing information to members, also serves as an instrument for public relations.

In February each year a meeting is held at national level on "Health and Life Improvement" and from the Women's Primaries Associations representatives are selected to attend this meeting. Here they present reports on what they have done re: health and improved living and prizes are awarded for the best contributions. Women from different districts come to Tokyo for this meet. Results of the best reports are then published in booklet form and distributed by the Prefectural Women's Liaison Councils to the primary level women's associations. This serves as a feed-back to individual members all of whom could



A meeting of women engaged in group activities in fisheries sponsored by the National Women's Liaison Council of Fisheries Cooperatives and the Zengyoren.



Women leaders study meeting held under the auspices of the Zengyoren



A meeting of a women's group of a primary fishery cooperative in progress



Display and sale of natural soap by the members of the women's group of a primary fishery coop.

not attend the national meeting.

Discussions for unified action are an important part of the women's activities, and are aimed at reflecting the viewpoints of individual members and securing their active participation. Members of the women's associations—in addition to their own meetings—also participate in meetings held by the fisheries cooperatives. In this way they are informed about the policies and programmes of the Fisheries Cooperatives, and of changing trends. Such knowledge enables them to better chart out their programmes in support of the fisheries cooperatives, with whom they work in close coordination.

Soon after the inception of the National Liaison Council of Women's Associations of Fisheries' Cooperatives, many fishing families were hard hit by a series of natural disasters which occurred in the country, such as the Isewan Typhoon, a tidal wave which was caused by an earthquake in Chili in 1960, the second Muroto Typhoon in 1961, heavy snowfall in the districts along the Sea of Japan in 1963, and the earthquake which hit Niigata area in 1964. It goes to the credit of the National Liaison Council that one of their first tasks was to dedicate all their efforts to providing relief to the affected families, and this continues to be one of the activities of the Council.

In addition to such relief work, the National Liaison Council proposed an idea to Zengyoren suggesting it to establish a fund for providing scholarships to children whose fathers had perished in shipwrecks, to enable them to complete their schooling.

In 1969, "the National Council for Encouraging Bereaved Children whose Fathers Died in Shipwrecks" was established. The National Women's Liaison Council has from the very start of this foundation continued to engage in promoting fund-raising activities.

As the national economy improved, and with it the standard of living, new problems arose, as for instance, the pollution of sea and river waters caused by the outflow of oil, contaminated drainage water, sewage, and the disposal of waste material all of which find their way into the rivers, and eventually into the sea.

Realizing that the sea is one of their greatest assets, fishing communities throughout the country sought for early legislation against pollution in the form of an anti-pollution law. As

a first step towards achieving their objective, an All Japan Fishermen's Conference was held in 1970 on the theme: "Stemp Out Pollution". This gave rise to an organised national anti-pollution movement which is strongly supported by the women's associations.

In order to preserve cleanliness on the beaches and to protect the sea from pollution members of the women's associations periodically clean the shoreline of all debris which is tossed overboard by passing ships or is washed ashore from other sources.

Another way in which the women try to protect the sea from impurities is by actively discouraging the use of synthetic detergents in the home, as the outflow of water from such detergents is harmful for marine and plant life; it can also cause skin eruptions. In 1975 at one of the Ordinary General Meetings of the National Liaison Council of Women's Associations of Fisheries Associations a resolution was adopted to start a campaign to "Boycott Harmful Synthetic Detergents". To support this campaign, which aims to replace harmful detergents with harmless soaps, it was agreed that a sum of Yen 10 per annum would be collected from each member of the National Liaison Council. This donation (or subscription) by the members began from 1975 and when I visited Japan it was in its first year of the third three-year plan.

The National Women's Council utilised this money to produce brochures, slides and banners explaining the dangers of synthetic detergents to the human body and environment in order to enlighten the public.

It may be mentioned here that many families in the fishing communities also cultivate their own farms, hence the women are often members of the women's associations in the fisheries as well as the agricultural sector. In this connection, the prefectural level women's councils have been asking the cooperation of agricultural and consumer cooperatives' sectors on this matter.

Another instance of collaboration between the women's associations in the different sectors of the movement relates to the changing food habits in Japan. People now consume less of fish, rice, vegetables and other locally produced and processed foods. The women's associations in the different sectors therefore com-

plement and supplement each other's efforts to promote the consumption of these products.

The women's associations of fisheries cooperatives work for improved houses, better diets, and maintenance of good health. There are government Home Advisers and Extension Workers to help farm households, but none to work specifically in the fisheries' sector. However, in several cases these extension workers voluntarily help the women in the fishing villages in their efforts to bring about better social and economic conditions for the fishing communities.

Women in the fishing villages, like their counterparts elsewhere in the country, have at their disposal modern home appliances. Despite such aids, however, they have to work very hard. In addition to household chores and taking care of the children, they help with on-share work connected with fishing operations, and with the farm in cases where families cultivate their own land.

Some women also go out fishing with their husbands. Others have part-time or full-time employment in fish processing factories, textile industries or other enterprises which are located nearby. Through a combination of such activities women in the fishing villages are making very valuable contributions towards building stable, prosperous and happy fishing communities.

Study Visits

AOMORI PREFECTURE

Noheji Primary Fisheries' Cooperative Society

Noheji Primary Fisheries' Cooperative was established on 5th June, 1949. Prior to that it functioned as a Fishery Association, but after the enactment of the Fisheries Cooperative Law in 1948, it became a cooperative and took its present name. The society comprises a total of three former fishery associations.

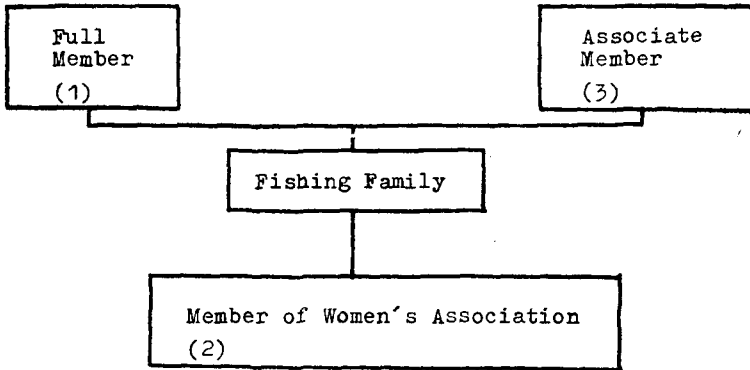
The main occupation of the members is scallop fishing and scallop culture. The society provides them with credit, and necessary inputs to enable them to carry out their fishing operations, and takes care of the marketing of the catch and produce; the society operates its own fish market. Members are allotted specifically marked out areas in the sea based upon the fishery right of the fisheries law in the shallow waters not far from the shore, where they culture scalops. They are also engaged in "common fishery" based upon the same law.

The society has a total of 381 members, of whom 249 are regular members and 132 are associate members. According to the Articles of Association, only those persons are eligible for regular membership, who engage in fishing operations for 120 days or more a year. Others can be associate members. They can make use of the services provided by the society, but have no voting rights. Every family must have at least one full member. Sons and other members of the family can be associate members. Women are usually members of the Women Associations. (See Chart V) Some women go out fishing together with their husbands, and so it is natural to find that there are also some regular women members—26 out of 249. There is only one woman associate member.

The value of an individual share is Yen 10,000* and the total paid-up share capital of the society is Yen 95,395,000.

*270 Yen = 1 US \$ (1981)

CHART V : NOHEJI PRIMARY FISHERY COOPERATIVE



- (1) Husband as head of the family,
(2) Wife,
(3) Other adult members.

The society has a total of nine directors and three auditors. Only one director, i.e., the chairman, is full-time. The others are part-time; they attend meetings etc., and only give their services when required.

The Society has 12 employees, who are engaged as follows:

Sales or Marketing Section	—4 staff
Supply Section	—3 staff
Credit Section	—4 staff
General clerk	—1

Chart VI shows the society's business operations between 1978, 1979 and 1980.

Chart VI

NOHEJI PRIMARY FISHERY COOPERATIVE

Total Proceeds by Section by Year (in Yen)

Year	Section			
	Marketing	Scallop sales operated by the primary cooperative	Supply	Credit
1978	146,618,165 7,510,476	342,591,694	81,622,642	214,021,259 162,551,142
1979	176,746,008 130,045,628	377,288,041	101,386,587	267,483,782 150,366,142
1980	204,643,498 199,254,144	459,715,926	147,359,167	336,031,926 178,881,142

↓
Credit : Upper Column—Outstanding amount of savings and deposits.

Marketing : Lower Column—amount of loans extended.

The following three groups are functioning within the society:

- (a) The Fisheries' Study Group, which comprises mainly youth who are members of the society. They study fishing techniques, management and related topics. This group was established in June 1969, and has 39 members.
- (b) The Taxation Strategy Group, which studies tax problems vis-a-vis the fishing community. In Japan fishing is classed as a free enterprise, hence fishermen are not taxed in the same way as salaried persons. They submit their own profit and loss statements to the local tax authorities, and are helped in their task by the Taxation Strategy Group. The Taxation Strategy Group was established in May 1975 and has 127 members.
- (c) The Women's Group, which comprises members of the Women's Association of Noheji Primary Fisheries' Cooperative.

This group was established in 1976 and has 170 members.

Each of these three groups receive an annual subsidy of Yen 250,000 from Noheji Primary Fisheries' Cooperative, as per a unanimous decision taken at one of the General Body Meetings of the Society.

Life is very hard for families in a fishing village. The day starts very early, and the fishing boats go out irrespective of whether it is cold, snowing or raining. Fishermen and their crew—especially those who go far out into the sea for deep-sea fishing—run constant risks because of rough seas caused by sudden storms, tidal waves, etc. and there is grave danger as they can lose their lives as a result of shipwreck. The fishing boats set out in the small hours of the morning, and are not always certain when they will be back. Normally the fishermen in Noheji, whose main occupation is scallop fishing and scallop culture, return to shore between the hours of 1 and 3 p.m., but that is not the end of their work day, as there is still work to be done. The catch has to be unloaded, fishing gears, nets and other equipment have to be cleaned; repairs of boats, fishing nets and other equipment become necessary from time to time. Some

preparatory work has to be done before the next day's fishing operations start because once the boats set out, the crew will be busy. In between their fishing operations they will return at some stage, unload their catch, and return to sea; this process may be repeated several times. The work day will end somewhere between 4 and 5 p.m. after which they can relax. In the case of the President's husband, however, as he is the Vice-Chairman of the Noheji primary society he goes to the society's premises daily in connection with cooperative work.

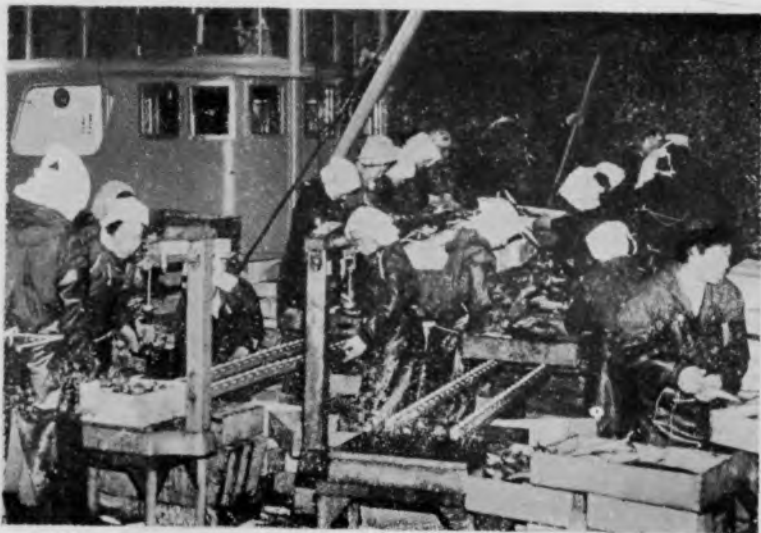
Since deep-sea fishing is not undertaken in Noheji—which means that boats do not go very far out into the sea—some women are also engaged in fishing along with their husbands. In the President's case, she does not do so as her son and his wife go along with her husband and act as the crew, nor is she employed outside the home, so she is a housewife. However, her day also begins very early. She wakes up at 5 a.m. to prepare breakfast for her husband and his crew, and in addition she packs milk, fruit, bread etc., for them in case they are not back for lunch. Then she has to attend to all her household chores, see to her two grand-children aged 3 and 5 respectively, and also attend to her cooperative work.

Women's Association

The Women's Association was formed in 1976 and has 170 members. Each member pays an annual subscription fee of Yen 500 and, as mentioned before, the Association receives a yearly subsidy of Yen 250,000 from Noheji Primary Fishery Cooperative. These funds are used to finance women's activities at local level. The Prefectural Credit Federation gives subsidies for women's activities at the prefectural level.

The Women's Association of N.P.C. has been provided accommodation in the premises of the primary cooperative itself. Here the 17 directors and 2 auditors can carry on their work. These 19 persons are categorized as follows:

- 1 President
- 2 Vice-Presidents
- 3 Directors who look after the General Affairs Department
- 4 Directors who look after the Economic Activities Department



Members of women's group of a primary fishery coop working at a fishing port.



Woman diver helping her husband in fishing.



Scenes from fish markets of a primary fishery cooperative.



- 4 Directors who look after the Cultural Affairs Department which also deals with life improvement and welfare, and
- 2 Directors* for Liaison work, and
- 2 Auditors

Joint buying, as well as the other activities carried out by the Women's Association of Noheji Primary Fisheries' Cooperative are patterned on the same lines as those outlined by the National Liaison Council of Women's Associations of Fisheries' Cooperatives throughout the country, and include promotion of savings, campaigns against pollution, cleaning the shoreline, nutrition, health control, etc. Each member of the Women's Association saves approximately 1,000 Yen to 2,000 Yen annually. This money is deposited with the primary and is used for joint excursions.

With regard to the main problems faced by the Women's Association in Noheji the President said that planning and programming of the work to be undertaken by the Association are done at the beginning of the fiscal year. She explained that as she is a housewife she can manage to find time for cooperative work; however, many women are busy with fishing operations, or are working women, and in addition to caring for their homes and families, some of them also help with the family farms, hence it is very difficult for them to find time for cooperative work, and quite often the Women's Association meetings have to be postponed.

In an effort to try and overcome this problem, in 1977 one of the representatives of the Women's Association asked the Director of Noheji Primary Fisheries' Cooperative to designate a certain day in the month as an "off day" for fishing, so that members of the Association can come together. As a result, the 15th of each month was declared an "off day" for fishermen during the period April to September. In the other months of the year because of unfavourable climatic conditions and rough seas fishing is not undertaken on some days, and at such times

* Their husbands are members of Noheji Primary Cooperative but they live far away and so cannot attend meetings etc., so often. However, the Women's Association values their services and so they have requested them to be on the Board.

too the members of the Women's Associations try to meet.

The President was sad that although the Women's Association members would like to expand some of their activities, as for instance, joint buying, they could not do so because of paucity of funds, staff and other limitations.

I asked how mothers with small children were able to go out fishing with their husbands, or take up employment. I was told that the Municipality runs a nursery and a Kindergarten. There are about 8 or 9 trained staff, including those who take special care of children under the age of one year, one nutritionist and trained teachers, since pre-school education is imparted in the kindergarten. The creche and kindergarten are open from 7.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. and parents pay according to their means. An average family in Noheji would have an annual income of between 5 and 6 million Yen after deducting expenses, and they would pay between Yen 500 and 1,000 per child per month. The President added that as business was poor for her family during the previous year (1980) they did not have to pay any fees, but this year (1981) they were paying Yen 17,000 per month. Parents sometimes hire women to take their children to the creche and kindergarten and bring them back. In other cases members of the Women's Association offer their services. Whenever possible mothers themselves take their children back and forth. Since the President is at home she takes her grandchildren to the kindergarten herself.

Some families in the fishing community also have their own farms, hence women are sometimes members of the women's associations both in the fishery and the agricultural sectors. Generally speaking, about 1/4 of the members of the Women's Associations of Noheji primary fishery cooperative are also engaged in agriculture, and at a rough estimate, the average family income from agriculture is about two million yen per year whereas that from fishing is approximately eleven million yen.

AOMORI PREFECTURE

Tohoku Regional Meeting

The Prefectural Liaison Councils of the Women's Associations of Fishery Cooperatives hold Regional Meetings in different

parts of the country; these meetings are held annually. At the regional meetings reports are presented on the activities carried out by the women's groups during the past year in the various prefectures represented. The work undertaken is in line with the annual work programme of the National Liaison Council of Women's Associations of Fishery Cooperative Associations. The programme for the next year, as well as the dates and venue for the next meeting are also discussed and decided upon.

I attended the Tohoku Regional Meeting of the Prefectural Women's Liaison Councils from 7 prefectures. This meeting was held on 28th October, 1981 in Asamushi, Aomori Prefecture, and the following prefectures were represented:

- | | |
|-----------|--------------|
| 1. Aomori | 4. Miyagi |
| 2. Akita | 5. Yamagata |
| 3. Iwate | 6. Fukushima |
| | 7. Ibaragi |

There were 47 participants.

Reports were presented by the participants on the main activities undertaken by the Women's Associations in their respective prefectures. Below is a summary of the presentations made:

Activities undertaken included:

Aomori

- (a) Training courses for leaders of women's groups.
- (b) Joint meetings of women and youth groups, where work programmes of one group were made known to the other, and exchanges of experiences and ideas took place.
- (c) Home port protection activity: the women's groups organized protests against the proposed stationing of a Japanese nuclear powered vessel "MUTSU" in the port of Oominato, for the purpose of atomic power drive testing.
- (d) Special campaigns organized for the promotion of current deposit savings and time deposit savings, in connection with the celebrations to mark the 30th Anni-

- versary of the fisheries' cooperatives savings movement.
- (e) Campaigns organized against the use of synthetic detergents. These were combined with study courses giving information about the harmful effects caused by using synthetic detergents, and advocating the use of natural soaps instead.

Akita

- (a) Participation of the women's groups in the Fourth Akita Prefectural Fisheries Festival.
- (b) Participation of women's groups in the Cooperative Festival of Akita city.
- (c) Participation of Women's groups in the fishery sector in a joint meeting with women's groups in the consumers and agricultural sectors, at which there were exchanges of experiences and views.

Iwate

- (a) Campaigns for assisting bereaved children whose fathers had perished in shipwreck.
- (b) Continuing the efforts to abolish the enforcement of greetings by bowing to older and senior people, as the women's groups feel this is unnecessary, and sometimes even humiliating.
- (c) Campaigns for conservation of the sea.
- (d) A training course for leaders.
- (e) A training course on "Life Cycle" i.e., how to plan and implement long and short-term savings schemes geared to foreseeable future needs.
- (f) District-level courses held on various themes.
- (g) Issuance of a Newsletter from the Iwate Prefectural Women's Liaison Council office.

Miyagi

- (a) Holding of "Life Cycle" planning courses.
- (b) Training courses for women group leaders.
- (c) Bulk deposit savings campaign.

- (d) Participation of Women's groups in the 8th Children's Scholarship Campaign for bereaved children whose fathers had perished in shipwreck.
- (e) Representatives of women's groups met the Prefectural Governor in a discussion forum at which women's activities in the prefecture were taken up.

Yamagata

- (a) The Yamagata Prefectural Women's Liaison Council celebrated their 20th Anniversary.
- (b) Joint meetings held between women's groups and youth groups at which there were exchanges re : work done by each group, experiences gained, new ideas, etc.
- (c) Campaigns against the use of synthetic detergents and promotion of the use of natural washing soaps and powders.
- (d) Promotion of savings.
- (e) Campaign for collecting increased donations for assisting bereaved children who have lost their fathers as a result of shipwreck.

Fukushima

- (a) Discussions re-consolidation and institutionalization of women's activities.
- (b) Campaign to increase fish consumption by fishing community and others.
- (c) Campaign against the use of synthetic detergents.
- (d) Campaigns to collect increased donations for assisting children who have lost their fathers in shipwreck.
- (e) Holding of "Life Cycle" planning courses (long and short-term savings).
- (f) Trips to other prefectures for exchange of experiences and ideas with other women.

Ibaraki

- (a) Courses on Household Economy and Home Book-keeping.

- (b) Promotion of savings.
- (c) Discussions re: consolidation and institutionalization of women's activities.

This Regional Meeting was—it seemed to me—an almost festive occasion. There were smiling faces everywhere; many a warm greeting was exchanged and many a friendship renewed. There were animated discussions going on, and even at the end of the work day, when the evening's social began, with songs and dances by some of the delegates, accompanied by a sumptuous dinner, it seemed that the women still had many things in common to talk about.

The meeting itself was very well organised, and the proceedings were conducted smoothly and efficiently. Delegates arrived well in advance and everything worked to time. Representatives had come well prepared, and all listened with interest as reports were presented from the various prefectures. The delegates expressed a desire to know how women in other countries are involved in cooperatives, and I was glad to have an opportunity to tell them about the activities and interests of women co-operators in the countries of South-East Asia which are served by the ICA ROEC.

IWATE PREFECTURE

Iwate Prefectural Credit Federation of Fisheries Cooperatives Associations

Iwate Prefecture has a coastline which is 669 km. long. The coastline is very indented—similar to the coastline of Norway. Generally speaking, the fishing ports are very well constructed, and the off-shore sea waters are abundant in fish.

The total population of Iwate Prefecture is approximately 1,420,000, and the density of population is 93.12 per sq. km. while the average density of population in Japan is 311 per sq. km. The primary industries are fishing, agriculture and forestry, in which 29 per cent of the population are engaged, and the output from which is 34 per cent of the total output of Iwate Prefecture. The second largest industry is the processing industry, which adds monetary value to the products from fishing, agriculture and forestry; this occupies about 22.9 per cent of the

population. About 42 per cent of the population are engaged in engineering and other services.

As at the end of the fiscal year 1979, total fish production (excluding by aquaculture) amounted to Yen 54.6 billion. In addition, fish production from marine aquaculture was 61,000 metric tons, equivalent to Yen 5.3 billion. Hence the total income from fishing and marine aquaculture was worth approximately Yen 59.9 billion.

The total number of fishing households in Iwate Prefecture is 19,800. The total membership of Iwate Prefectural Credit Federation of Fishery Cooperatives is 22,610 out of which approximately 18,000 are full members and 4,600 associate members. Due to the severe economic conditions prevailing in the fishing industry, the number of fishing households has been declining in recent years.

Women's Associations

As of June 1, 1981, there were 42 Women's Associations at primary level, with a total individual membership of 13,653. These primaries are affiliated to the Prefectural Women's Liaison Council of Fishery Cooperatives.

The President and Vice-Presidents are elected from among the Directors who are elected from among the general membership.

In keeping with the principles of the National Women's Liaison Council of Fishery Cooperatives, the women work to increase the incomes of fishing households, and build better and happier fishing villages. They work to protect the sea from pollution. They work to promote the health care programmes of the fisheries' cooperatives under which fishing families can have regular medical checks. They have various study groups on such matters as balanced diet, planning for Life Cycle (long & short term savings) cutting down on unnecessary expenditure in connection with festivals and other occasions, etc.

The total income of the Women's Associations in Iwate Prefecture for the fiscal year 1980-81 (1st August 1980 to 31st July, 1981) was Yen 7.4 million, of which subscriptions from members amounted to approximately 2.2 million, and subsidies from the Prefectural Federations (Fisheries and Credit federations) to

Yen 1.8 million. In addition, there was a contribution in the form of a subsidy from the Prefectural Government of Yen 710,000, and other miscellaneous incomes.

At the primary level each member pays to the Women's Association a subscription fee of Yen 130 per year. The primary fisheries' cooperatives give the Women's Associations a sum of Yen 10,000 per year as subsidy. In addition to this, the primaries also have an appropriation budget for women's activities. All this money is used to finance women's activities at local level. The Women's Associations have some business activities, e.g., they buy natural detergents in bulk and sell to their members on commission. The money so derived is also added to the budget for activities.

Other monies such as the subsidies from the Fisheries and Credit Federations and the Prefectural Government are used to finance women's activities at prefectural level.

The women's groups are very active in Iwate Prefecture, and have been particularly successful with their savings drives. The total amount of savings by all women members in the Prefecture, as at the end of September 1981, was Yen 5.92 billion. These savings were accumulated under the "Life Cycle" Movement, and are meant to cover the long-term needs of fishing families, such as: children's schooling and higher education including university, marriage, new house construction, buying new boats and fishing gears, etc.

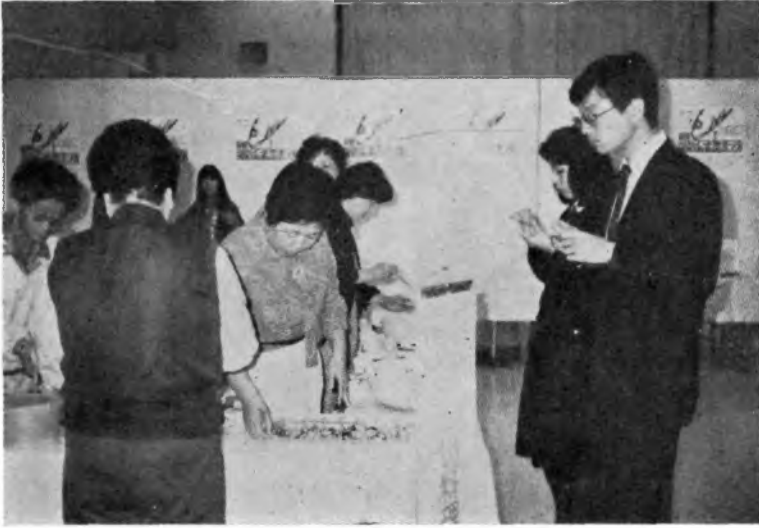
In addition to the Annual General Body Meeting, at which the Annual Report and work plan for the next year are adopted by the members, the Board of Auditors also meet annually. Regional and District-level meetings too are held annually, whereas Directors' Meetings are held frequently.

Some activities which receive more importance are training courses for women group leaders, and campaigns for increased assistance to bereaved children whose fathers have perished as a result of shipwreck.

Ozuchi-Cho Primary Fishery Cooperative

The total number of households in the area of operation of the society is 5,000 out of which 1900 are fishing households.

Ten years ago three primaries amalgamated to form the



Promotional meetings to increase fish consumption



Sun drying of Kombu (seaweed) on the beach.



Savings promotion campaign



Demonstration against the use of synthetic detergents.

present society, the total membership of which is 1,335—regular members number 1,304 and 31 are associate members.

The main occupation of members living in the coastal areas is fishing for squid. However, during the past 5 years the catch of squid has not been too good, hence fishing incomes were not as high as expected. Now the situation has improved because of aquaculture. About 300 members are engaged in aquaculture which is carried on in demarcated areas. Both, the Prefectural and the Federal Governments assist the fishing population in various ways.

Some members are engaged in breeding salmon. There is a salmon hatchery in Meiji area which is jointly operated by the municipality and the fishery cooperative. This year (1981) a new hatchery is being started. Salmon have a habit of returning to the river where they were born after 4 years migration in the ocean (in this case the Pacific Ocean): then they are put into a hatchery. The salmon augmentation programme started in 1973. At that time the salmon catch in Iwate Prefecture was approximately 2,000 metric tons and it was thought that this catch-plus production by aquaculture—would increase to 30,000 metric tons by 1985. The Chairman of Ozuchi Cho primary said he was very happy to be able to report that this target would be achieved before 1985 as last year (1980) already the salmon catch, plus production from aquaculture, was 20,000 metric tons in Iwate prefecture, and now there were strong chances of still further increase in salmon production. The Prefectural and Federal Governments were cooperating to the fullest extent with the fisheries cooperatives in their efforts to raise salmon production.

The Ozuchi Cho primary cooperative provides its members with credit, supplies of fuel, nets and other necessities for their fishing operations, marketing and guidance services. There is also a private fish market where members can unload their catch. Total proceeds from fish sales for the fiscal year 1980 was 1.7 billion Yen.

The Chairman said proudly that the contribution which the Women's Association of Ozuchi Cho primary fishery cooperative was making towards the sound development of the fishing industry and bettering the household economy of fishing families was very great. He emphasized that without this contribu-

tion from the women it would not have been possible for the society to develop the fishing industry as much as it has done in so short time. Moreover, he added, their continuing support will still be needed in the years ahead. He was of the opinion that the members of the Women's Association were more active in cooperative work than the male members of the primary.

Women's Association

The Women's Association of Ozuchi Cho primary fishery cooperative was established ten years ago, when three primaries amalgamated to form the present Ozuchi Cho primary Fishery Cooperative. As of June 1981 the Association had 902 members.

Around 1971 the fishing population in the area were so poor that they were leading a hand-to-mouth existence. Planned economy, and thrift were non-existent, hence there were no savings. The cooperative wanted to help its members, but there was no money. Therefore the society hit upon the idea of establishing a Women's Association, as it was felt that women could help to mobilise savings which could be accumulated with the society in the form of deposits, and this money could be used to develop the fishing industry. The main aims of the Women's Association are: to raise the social and economic status of women; to provide women with education to make their contribution to society more meaningful; to work for equality with men; to help increase the incomes of rural households, and to mobilise savings.

One of the first tasks of the Women's Association was to disseminate knowledge about the need for planned expenditure, thrift and savings. It took about ten years before the habit of thrift and savings by members of the primary, as well as members of the Women's Association, was firmly entrenched. Today, the promotion of savings is still one of the most important activities of the Association.

Savings are planned under the "Life Cycle" Programme. Long-term savings to cover the entire family's future needs is given great importance, and planned spending and home book-keeping are considered essential if the set targets are to be met. Maintaining of records relating to family income and expenditure serve as indicators of changing economic trends, con-

sumption patterns, and changing life-styles. They are also useful when tax returns have to be submitted at the end of each fiscal year.

The members of the Women's Association are well informed about the plans, policies, programmes and targets of the fisheries' cooperatives. They have joint meetings with the staff of the primary, during which they discuss such matters as women's involvement in social and economic affairs, children's education, employment opportunities open to men and women, social welfare, problems faced by the aged, etc.

An Advisory Group was set up in Iwate Prefecture, and the ex-President of the Ozuchi Cho primary Women's Association, who is also the ex-president of the National Women's Liaison Council of Fisheries Cooperatives was a member of this Group. At a meeting in Iwate Prefecture she presented a paper on the subject of social security entitled "From Cradle to Grave", which was given a special award. She is still very active in the Women's Association as well as in social work and is involved in running a crech and kindergarten and a home for the aged.

Women in the fisheries' sector hold joint meetings with women in the agricultural sector to discuss rationalized agriculture, to help fishing households to have increased incomes through agriculture.

Campaigns are organized against the use of synthetic detergents. The Women's Association prepares posters showing the harmful effects of such detergents and distributes them all over the area. In addition, lectures are given and slides prepared on the subject for use in anti-pollution campaigns. The Municipality and the prefectural and Federal Governments contribute greatly to this activity.

The Women's Association promote the health-care programme of the fisheries cooperative under which regular free medical checks are arranged for members.

The Women's Association, through their own efforts, started a creche and kindergarten so that small children could be taken care of while their parents are busy and away from home. The creche and kindergarten were later taken over by the Municipality which now runs them.

Other activities of the Women's Association includes cleaning

the beaches, giving of scholarships to bereaved children whose fathers have perished in shipwrecks to enable them to complete their education, cooking classes, etc. The Women's Association also invites such children and one or two close relatives of the bereaved families who have lost the main earning member, to a get-together, and by showing them sympathy and giving them encouragement, establish social solidarity with them and make them continue to feel a part of the fishing community.

Members of the Women's Association like to keep abreast of changing trends, and to do this they have discussions on a variety of themes relating to their work and their lives. They attend training courses and participate in meetings at Prefectural, Regional, District and local levels. Through such means they develop their social awareness.

In recent years the consumption of fish has declined, so even if the catch of fish increases and more fish is produced through aquaculture, fishermen cannot expect good returns. Hence, the Women's Association campaigns for the consumption of more fish as against other livestock products. Rice consumption has also dropped, so women in the fisheries and agricultural sectors have joint meetings and combine their forces to promote more consumption of rice and fish. They discuss their common problems, prepare recipes for cooking rice and fish dishes in several ways, arrange cooking demonstration etc., and invite the public to such events.

From time to time exhibitions of drawings by school-children are held, and these drawings depict the lasting importance of the sea for the fishing community.

After the Second World War the Central Government set up a Coastal Fisheries Improvement Project under which the fishing community has benefited considerably. The Project is in its third phase.

The strength of the Women's Association was further enhanced when about three years ago, a new fund—Home Life Improvement Fund—was created under the Coastal Fisheries Improvement Project. This fund provides long-term interest-free loans for improvement of fishing households including remodelling of kitchens, toilets, etc. In the first year the budget for such loans was Yen 2.5 billion—which amount was distributed to prefectures all over the country. The budget for 1982

was Yen 4.5 billion.

The members of the Women's Association said they would like to have the services of Home Life Improvement Advisers and extension workers as is available to agricultural households. Home Advisers are stationed in four counties in the Prefecture, so the Women's Association persuaded the Prefectural Government to ask some of them to work with fishing households on a voluntary part-time basis. The Women's Associations in Iwate Prefecture have also made an appeal to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in the Central Government for the regular services of Home Life Improvement Advisers.

Fishermen engage in off-shore fishing, deep-sea fishing and aquaculture. Some of them also work part-time in cold storage plants or in agriculture. In 1970 a national highway was constructed: this greatly improved transport in the area, and many more cold storage units and factories were opened. As a result many men and women were able to secure jobs.

Within Ozuchi Cho Primary Fishery Cooperative there is a lady staff member working in the General Affairs Department, and she works as liaison with the Women's Association.

I was told by the Chairman of Ozuchi Cho Primary that all problems faced by members are the joint concern of the primary and the Women's Associations.

If a fisherman is a full member of the society, and cannot attend the General Body Meeting for some reason, his wife can attend by proxy and if given a power of attorney she can also vote. This is in keeping with the articles of association, but it is rather unusual in Japan.

The main problems which Japanese fishermen are facing at present are: the high cost of fuel, fishing nets and other fishing equipment, as a result of which many fishermen are facing economic difficulties.

To qualify for full membership one must engage in fishing operations for 90 days. The Fisheries Cooperative Association Law provides as follows :

“Persons who are qualified for the membership of the fisheries cooperative shall be the fishermen who have their residence within the jurisdictional area of the cooperative and operate fishing on their own account or are otherwise engaged in

fisheries over a period of 90 to 120 days a year as determined by the cooperative's articles of association."

CHIBA PREFECTURE

Chiba Prefectural Federation of Fisheries' Cooperatives

Chiba Prefecture is located in the centre of the Japanese archipelago and faces the Pacific. Fishing is a major industry here, and the main catch are: Sardines, Mackerel, Pacific Saury, Short-necked Clam, Shell-fish and Squid. Seaweed also adds to the total income from fishing. The total catch for the fiscal year 1980 was 441,534 metric tons, equivalent in money terms to Yen 57.7 billion.

The total number of fishing households in the Prefecture, as at the end of the fiscal year 1980, was 6,870. All of them are affiliated to the fisheries' cooperatives. There are 58 primary fishery cooperatives in Chiba Prefecture having 16,600 regular members and 3,600 associate members: in addition to these, there are 14 primaries which are engaged in fish processing and/or aquaculture. The largest number of fishermen are to be found in the Boso Peninsula the coastline of which extends along the greater part of Chiba Prefecture. Besides earning their livelihood by fishing, the fishermen provide an important service of supplying fishery products to the nearby urban areas. Those who benefit from animal protein obtained from fish caught in Chiba Prefecture number approximately 30 million in Kanto District.

About 70 fishing ports are used by the members of the fisheries cooperatives in Chiba Prefecture. The total number of fishing boats is 13,000.

Out of the 58 Primary Fishery Cooperatives, only 45 have Women's Associations.

Prefectural Women's Liaison Council

The Chiba Prefectural Women's Liaison Council was established on 9th March, 1956. The total number of Women's Associations in the Prefecture, as of 1st June 1981 was 44 with a total

membership of 8,884.

The budget of the Prefectural Women's Liaison Council, for the fiscal year (1st April 1981 to 31st March, 1982) was 1.1 million of which Yen 434,000 was accounted for by member subscriptions from the primary-level Women's Associations. Those primary-level Women's Associations which pay Yen 8,000 per year have a membership of less than 100 women. Those which subscribe Yen 10,000 have a membership ranging from 100-300. Those subscribing Yen 12,000 per year have a membership of upto 5,000 and those having more than 5,000 members pay Yen 14,000 per year. In addition to such subscriptions, the Prefectural Women's Liaison Council receives a subsidy from the Chiba Prefectural Federation of Fisheries Cooperatives of Yen 300,000. Last year the Prefectural Women's Council had a carry-over of Yen 425,843 from the previous year. They also receive Yen 15,000 as bank interest.

The Prefectural Women's Council has its own Articles of Association which stress help to the primary fisheries' cooperative with their business activities. Major activities can be divided into:

1. Movement to protect the sea from pollution.
2. "Life Cycle" Movement (Savings Movement).
3. Organisational activities.

Under these three heads various activities are undertaken.

In January of each year a meeting is held at prefectural level to review the activities of the primary-level Women's Associations, all of which are affiliated to the Prefectural Women's Liaison Council. At this meeting the activities for the next year are also planned. The women's groups feel that their activities have become too routine, so they discard those which they feel are no longer useful under present-day conditions, and replace them with activities which are more meaningful for present-day living conditions. Youth groups are invited to participate in this meeting, so that there can be an exchange of information, experiences and ideas between the two groups.

In June every year the Prefectural Women's Liaison Council holds its General Body Meeting. First the necessary number of Directors—which is 7—are elected. They in turn elect the President and two Vice-Presidents and two Auditors. The term of

office for all is two years and office-bearers can be re-elected.

In July of each year activities are undertaken in connection with work for children who have lost their fathers in shipwreck. At national as well as prefectural level, independent campaigns are carried out for donations to provide needy children with funds to enable them to complete their schooling. The Prefectural Women's Liaison Council also organises an annual outing to recreational centres, parks, etc. for bereaved children from fishing families.

Leaders' Training Courses are organised in October at prefectural level. In remote areas where no educational opportunities are available the Women's Associations at primary level try to arrange training courses with the help of the Prefectural Women's Liaison Council.

In recent years land reclamation along the coasts of Chiba and Tokyo have adversely affected the fishing industry. The Women's Associations are therefore campaigning against the reclamation of land by the big industries through their Anti-Pollution Campaign. Twice a year a Fishermen's Rally is held at prefectural level and the women's groups also participate in the rally, which is organised to campaign for protection of the sea against pollution, so as to enable the fishing community to continue to earn their livelihood from the sea. The Women's Associations are also actively fighting against the use of harmful synthetic detergents, the out-flow from which finds its way into the rivers and eventually into the sea, causing damage to fish and marine plant life. The women are advocating the use of natural soaps.

Women's groups in the fisheries' sector are active in health care programmes, home book-keeping, promoting the consumption of more fish, etc. Special courses are organised to enable housewives to cope with the realities of life.

The "Life Cycle" Movement and other saving campaigns still remain a major activity of the Women's Associations.

Chikuracho-Nanbu Primary Fishery Cooperative

In March 1979 two primary fishery cooperatives, namely, the Nana-Ura Tobu primary and the Kawaguchi primary were amalgamated to form the present Chikuracho Nanbu Primary



Meeting to encourage children whose fathers perished due to shipwrecks



Donation collection campaigns held to raise funds for the above children.



Regular health checks are undertaken by primary fishery cooperatives for their members.



Health exercises are taught as a part of health education by the primary fishery coops.

Fishery Cooperative. The Women's Associations of these primaries were also amalgamated at the same time.

This primary has five branches at: Shiramazu, Okawa, Sendai, Kawaguchi and Hiraiso, and each branch has one leader, one sub-leader, one sub-leader-cum-accountant and 15 Directors. This cooperative owns its own building.

The primary has a total of 803 members, of whom 778 are regular members and 25 are associate members. The Board consists of a Chairman, 4 Vice-Chairmen, two of whom are also Accountants, 2 Auditors and 8 Directors, making a total of 15 Directors.

About 30-40% of the fishing households in the society's area of operation are exclusively engaged in fishing from which they derive their family income. The other households earn 50% or more from fishing but are at the same time engaged in other works as employees of companies, shops etc. They are termed "No 1 type part-time fishermen". Those whose income from fishing are less than 50% are known as "No. 2 type part-time fishermen". They also find employment in the hotels in summer-time. In recent years less people earn the major part of their livelihood from fishing and this is not considered to be a good trend.

Women's Association

When the Women's Association of Chikuracho-Nanbu Primary Fishery Cooperative was established on 1st March, 1979—after amalgamation, there were 758 members. As of 16th April, 1981, the membership had increased to 845. This Women's Association has five branches and each branch has its own leader, sub-leader and accountant plus staff, following the same pattern as the primary fishery cooperative.

The Women's Association at primary level has 15 directors, comprising three from each branch.

The Chikuracho-Nanbu Primary Fishery Cooperative belongs to Tateyama District, and so does the primary Women's Association. When the Association is required to send representatives to the prefectural level, they select two from the area facing Tokyo Bay and two from the area facing the Pacific. The area facing Tokyo Bay consists of one city and four towns, and

that facing the Pacific consists of two towns.

Elections are held at primary level prior to the General Body Meeting, and each branch elects its own office-bearers. Then at the General Meeting these elections are ratified. Those elected are the leaders of the primary-level Associations. General Body Meetings are held every two years, usually at the end of March and the term of office for office-bearers is two years.

Members of the Women's Association do not pay any subscriptions. The primary fishery cooperative gives the Women's Association about Yen 500,000 a year for their activities.

One of the branch-level women representatives said that although women did not pay subscriptions in the way of membership fees, they devote their time and labour to earn money for their activities. The primary cooperatives ask the women to dry sea-weed in the sun. This seaweed is then sold at a high price to the private companies. In this way the women earn as much as Yen 400,000 a year. This money is turned over to the Women's Association at branch level and is used to supplement the money given by the fishery cooperatives for women's activities.

Another way in which members of the Women's Association earn supplementary income for their activities is through joint buying. They buy in bulk foodstuffs, garments, etc., from the wholesalers and mobile vans and sell to their members at 10% commission. The money thus earned is used for women's activities.

This primary Women's Association is active in anti-pollution campaigns to protect the sea from pollution; in fighting against the use of synthetic detergents, advocating the use of natural soaps instead; its members work to assist bereaved children who have lost their fathers in shipwrecks; the women campaign for rationalization of expenditure on ceremonial and other occasions and for promoting savings.

The representative from Kawaguchi said their activities include an annual excursion for members. They also celebrate certain occasions; for instance, on 15th September each year there is a national holiday in honour of old people and on this day the Women's Association arranges a special function for the aged. Again, in early February each year it is the custom to celebrate the 13th birthday of children, so on a certain day the

Women's Association arrange a special function for children aged 13 and their parents. The Women's Association also holds cooking classes, classes in Ikebana and undertakes other cultural activities.

In the case of fishing households who also own agricultural land the women grow rice and this is harvested at the end of August. From early September to the end of March they grow flowers, which are sold commercially and used for decoration.

From about the 20th of April to 5th September the women collect abalones and seaweed; seaweed is collected from the end of April to the end of October. They also grow vegetables nearly all the year round as the climate is fairly warm.

Some women whose husbands are divers go out in boats as crew to help their husbands. These women are called 'KAJIKO'—meaning assistant women workers who help in diving operations.

The plan of action for the Women's Association and its branches is worked out in the following way: at primary level women leaders and members meet and decide on the activities they would like to undertake. Their ideas and suggestions are summarized and sent to the Prefectural Women's Liaison Council. The Prefectural Women's Liaison Council holds four meetings a year to discuss the work programme for the next year: at each of these meetings representatives from the different branches express the views of members of the primary Women's Associations. The planned activities for the next year are then sent to the national level women's organisation. The Board of Directors of the National Women's Liaison Council meet about four times in a year to finalize the plan of action for the next year.

The Prefectural Women's Liaison Council hold their General Body Meeting once a year, around 10th June. In addition to the four representatives from Tateyama District, two representatives are sent from each of the Women's Associations at town and city level in the prefecture. There are approximately 100 representatives and the President is elected from among these. Officers from the Prefectural Government and the prefectural-level co-operatives, who are concerned with women's questions, are observers.

Amatsu Primary Fishery Cooperative

This primary is located in Amatsu in Kominato District. The total population in the area is 9,500 of which approximately 40% are engaged in work connected with the fishing industry, e.g., processing. The value of the total fish catch per year amounts to about Yen 1.5 billion. The society has 590 regular members and 10 associate members.

Boats are owned and operated by the members. In addition there are two groups of fish-net operators. In each case the owner of the fishing nets is one single member of the primary, and he has about 80 fishermen working for him. They are also regular members of the primary. The fish-net operators also own fish carrying vessels.

The other members of the primary—who do not work for the fish-net operators—own and operate a total of approximately 200 fishing boats. Out of these there are three 69 tonners which are engaged in mackerel slooping from January to May each year and squid fishing in the Sea of Japan from June to December. The rest of the vessels are smaller—upto 19 gross tons—and in March and April they are engaged in trawling for Bonito. From June to November they are engaged in drop-line catching of “Kinme”—or red fish. The rest of the season they are engaged in catching squid.

As regards marketing, each individual member's boat unloads its catch for sale in the fish market which is operated by the primary cooperative. After the catch is unloaded on to the wharf, cooperative employees grade and weigh the fish. To maintain freshness, fish are kept on ice. Members have to pay for the ice, but they are given a special price as they are members of the cooperative. The fish is then auctioned to middle-men, who sell to their own customers. About 40 middlemen buy fish in this market. The primary takes 4.5% of the value of the landed catch in return for services rendered.

Women's Associations

The Women's Association of Amatsu Primary Fishery Cooperative has 430 members. Office-bearers number 36 in all, and include: a President, 4 Vice-Presidents and 31 Directors. The

women said they have no special auditors, and they are quite happy to have the accounts audited by male members of the primary.

As is the case with the Amatsu primary fishery cooperative, the Women's Association also belongs to Kamogawa District, and within this district there are five cooperative units, one in each of the five towns, which comprise: Kominato, Amatsu, Kamogawa, Emi and Wada.

At Kamogawa there is a branch office of the Credit Federation of Fisheries' Cooperatives, and the Director of Credit of this Federation assists the Women's Associations in drawing up their plan of action at the beginning of the fiscal year together with women representatives from each town. The Prefectural Federation of Fisheries' Cooperatives does not have branches in all towns; hence, for smooth working in the whole district the Women's Associations are linked to the Credit Federation.

Main activities of the Women's Associations are:

1.1 *Periodic evaluation* and assessment of the harmful effects of salty diets on *health*. The Women's Association asked the cooperatives as well as the Health Authorities to check the salt content in MISO soup, which is commonly consumed in Japan. Some members keep notes on their daily intake of salt and these are used in studies on salt intake.

1.2. There are Home Advisers and Extension Workers who work for the Prefectural Government in the agricultural sector. They are paid half their salary by the Central Government and half by the Prefectural Government. These Home Advisers and Extension Workers examine the salt content of foods served in various places e.g., schools, canteens, etc., and report on the results. Such information is also made available to women in the fisheries' sector as women from fishing families having agricultural land are also members of the Women's Associations in the agricultural sector.

1.3. Lectures are given on the co-relation between salty foods and adult diseases.

1.4. Classes are conducted to improve food habits and to have more balanced diets.

2. *Anti-pollution campaigns*

2.1 Information is disseminated on the causes and effects of

pollution.

Women work to protect the sea against pollution. Campaigns are organised against the use of synthetic detergents and their replacement by natural soaps.

3. *Life Improvement and planning for a rich and abundant future* Savings promotion campaign

Dissemination of information about the use of consumer goods by the general public, to educate them in how to judge what is good and what is bad, examination of labelling and other relevant information to help in selecting the best goods.

Classes are held on this subject for members of the Women's Association.

4. *Volunteer Movement*

Members of the Women's Association work for the welfare of children and old people.

Savings: Husband and wife save from the family income and deposit the money in the bank of the primary. The target set for the end of November 1981 by all regular and associate members and members of the Women's Associations combined was 1.23 billion equivalent to Yen 2 million savings per family.

5. Activities are undertaken to assist bereaved children who have lost their fathers in shipwreck.

Members of the Women's Association do not pay any membership fees. The primaries donate Yen 100,000 to the primary Women's Associations for their activities.

The Women's Association has a special way of showing its appreciation to retiring office-bearers for the valuable services rendered by them. The Association undertakes joint buying of garments like shirts, suits, etc., and sells them on a commission basis. In this way it earns as much as Yen 400,000 to Yen 500,000 on each transaction. This money is given to the retiring office-bearers to enable them to undertake excursions.

Kanto-Tokai Regional Meeting

I attended the Kanto-Tokai Regional Women's Meeting in Chiba Prefecture. One of the first tasks taken up at this meeting

was a review of the work done during the past year and reports were presented by the various representatives present from the following Prefectures: Mie, Aichi, Shizouka, Kanagawa and Chiba.

Special invitees included: two staff—(one male Extension Worker and one female Assistant Chief)—from the Guidance Extension Section of the Fisheries Department, Chiba Prefectural Government; the Presidents of the Prefectural Federation of Fishery Cooperative Associations and the Prefectural Credit Federation of Fishery Cooperative Associations; some staff from the Secretariats of the Prefectures represented.

(i) According to the reporting at the Meeting it would appear that funds collected through the Campaign to assist bereaved families who had lost their bread-winners as a result of shipwreck, had exceeded all expectations;

(ii) To prevent pollution which endangers the environment and the cleanliness of the sea, the women's liaison council in Mie Prefecture had called upon their members to form "Han" groups consisting of 10 members per group, and entrusted these groups with the task of collecting garbage from various houses, after which they in turn request the Municipal staff to collect the garbage, for disposal. In this way the women are rendering assistance to the Municipal staff by saving them the time and labour of having to go to individual homes to collect garbage. Also, prompt collection and disposal of waste material helps to lessen the chances of pollution. It was further reported from Aichi Prefecture that garbage is collected twice a week by the Municipal trucks. Because of strong pressure from the women's associations in the Prefecture this work was being so efficiently carried out.

(iii) There were different opinions as regards the question of natural soaps versus synthetic detergents came up for discussion and different opinions were expressed. The representative from the Prefectural Credit Fishery Federation of Aichi Prefecture felt that the campaign against the use of synthetic detergents had become stagnant now because many people were not aware of its harmful effects; hence, he felt the campaign should be further encouraged and stimulated. The representative from Shizouka Prefecture said that the natural washing soap sold by the cooperatives had a peculiar smell and hence was

not popular.

One member wanted to know what the Life Improvement Fund was. The representative from Mie Prefecture said it was fully appropriated from the Prefectural Government budget, but from 1980 the National Government was also subsidizing this fund. Agricultural Home Advisers and Extension Workers are stationed at several places all over Mie and through them best use is made of monies in this fund.

It was reported from Aichi Prefecture that the women's associations in the fishery sector have exchange of recipes on the preparation of fish and agricultural products with the women in the agricultural sector.

In reply to a question as to how often the women meet the Chairman, Manager and other staff of the primaries, the representatives from Mie said this usually happens once a year. The representative from Aichi said that in addition to meeting the concerned staff of the primaries, the women also met with concerned people in the Prefectural Government and Municipality to discuss programmes relating to women. She added that when Chairmen of the primaries were present at meetings, managers were reluctant to speak frankly about any shortcomings, etc. pertaining to store operations. Yet, she said, such open discussions are necessary if things are to improve.

Another representative from Aichi said that the campaign of cleaning the beaches had improved and women in the agricultural sector were also cooperating.

It was reported by the representative of Kanagawa Prefecture that major catch in Kanagawa was mackerel. The Women's Associations campaign strongly for the increased consumption of mackerel and many varied recipes are used in cooking demonstrations on the subject.

Mrs. Yamaguchi, President of the Chikura-cho Nanbu Primary Fishery Cooperative (whose husband is President of the Chiba Prefectural Federation of Fishery Cooperatives) said that in her primary the Women's Association lay major stress on the use of natural soaps, so she takes the lead in buying such soap for distribution to other members.

Another very important activity for every fishing household is home book-keeping as it helps families to understand the relationship between family income and expenditure and enables

them to effect short and long-term savings for their future, under the "Life Cycle Plan".

It was reported from Aichi that the Prefectural Government regularly sends representatives (men and women) from the fisheries sector to Korea, for an exchange of views and experiences with their counterparts there. This has served to enhance knowledge and provide new and improved ideas to people in the fishery sector.

Conclusion

In Japan the family is taken as a unit, and when annual plans are prepared they will take into account expected income and expenditure in connection with the main occupation and subsidiary occupations, as well as the household. The fishery cooperatives and the Women's Associations will formulate their plan of activities in relation to set targets, and each will complement and supplement the other's efforts to bring about improved standards of living in the fishing villages.

As mentioned earlier, it is the fishery cooperatives at primary level who generally take the initiative in establishing women's associations, and we may well ask ourselves why this is so. The fishery cooperatives remember very well that it was the women in an impoverished village in Hokkaido who first took the initiative to start a savings campaign, in order to lift themselves out of the miserable conditions in which they and their families were existing. As a matter of fact in all the places I visited, and in all my discussions with the cooperative leaders and staff in the fishery cooperatives, I was repeatedly told that had it not been for the strong support from the women's associations, the fishing industry could not have developed as rapidly as it has done.

Life does not always follow the same pattern in every fishing village, but in all of them men and women have a very definite role to play, and life is hard for both. As we have seen, in some cases women may accompany their husbands on fishing trips and act as crew, or they may assist with diving operations. In regard to aquaculture whole families often work together. However, women can also find employment in the fish processing factories, cold storage plants, textile and other industries and similar undertakings, or they can be full-time housewives, de-

pending upon the family's economic status, the need to supplement the family income, and opportunities for earning supplementary incomes.

The main aim of the Fishery Cooperative Movement is to build better and happier fishing communities, and if this aim is to be achieved it is but natural that both men and women must be involved in the many things that go into the making of "Better Living".

One of the prime tasks of the fishery cooperatives is to help their members to earn a decent livelihood from fishing and connected operations. Hence they provide them with credit and other necessary inputs and also assist with marketing the members' produce. If, however, families are to earn a good living from fishing, the fish catch and/or fish production must be good, and the prices of fish and fish products must be high enough to guarantee good returns. Otherwise, even if the catch is good fishing families will not earn much. Because of changing food patterns in Japan at the moment there is a tendency for people to consume less fish, and this is where the Women's Associations step in and organise campaigns combining the formulation of new recipes with cooking demonstrations, to popularize the consumption of fish.

Earning a living from fishing is strenuous work; fishing operations are undertaken in the wee hours of the morning, as also all night, depending upon the type of fish to be caught, and fishing boats go out in all kinds of weather, be it hot, cold or wet. Hence, to be able to do this kind of work one must be in good physical health. To enable members and their families to maintain good health the fishery cooperatives arrange regular medical checks, for which members do not have to pay. As we all know, to provide facilities is one thing, but to get people to avail of them is another! To make fishing families understand the value of this type of health control, so that they will of their own accord wish to take advantage of the facilities offered, the Women's Associations have regular health programmes to impart information and knowledge about health. Apart from supportive work of this type, the members of the women's associations are also busy as individual housewives who are trying to bring about improved conditions in the home by providing their families with balanced diets, practising thrift and

savings, helping their husbands with fishing operations or work connected with these, tilling the family farms (in cases where they own land), or working as paid employees outside the home and thereby supplementing the family income. In this way women are making their own valuable contributions towards better living in the fishing villages.

Despite all the developments which have taken place in the fishing industry, some things cannot be changed, and fishing continues to be a highly hazardous occupation claiming many lives by shipwrecks which are caused by such natural disasters as storms and tidal waves. Already there is a shortage of young fishermen as many of them prefer to seek white-collar jobs in the urban areas where life is less strenuous in terms of physical labour in such occupations. If we add to this the fact that the families who are left destitute because they have lost their only earning member by shipwreck have to seek their livelihood somewhere else, we can visualise how depleted the fishing population can become. This is why the question of successors troubles both men and women in the fishing community, and the Women's Associations render substantial assistance to bereaved families to enable them to complete their children's education and encourage them to stay on in the fishing villages and continue their father's occupation. Young women too feel they would like to get away to the urban areas and marry men having occupations other than fishing which is such a hard and dangerous occupation. Women's groups are also troubled about this and are constantly searching for ways to make life in the fishing villages more attractive for young people.

Of course, the Women's Associations have their own special problems. As mentioned earlier, only about half the associations are affiliated to the National Liaison Council of Women's Associations of Fishery Cooperatives. This should be remedied as soon as possible if the Women's Associations are to strengthen their present position. Furthermore, Women's Associations should be established in those primaries where they do not as yet exist. There appears to be a need for more uniformity between the work being done by the women's groups in different places, and it is indeed good that the women themselves are in the process of discussing the need for greater institutionalization and coordination in their work.

As elsewhere, life in the fishing villages of Japan is also changing, and young women are not too interested in joining the Women's Associations, where the average age of members is around 40. One of the reasons could be that more women are now in employment and if they have to combine their housework and care of young children with their work they cannot find enough time for other occupations.

It is very heartening to see the growing collaboration between the women in the fishery, agricultural and consumer sectors. Naturally, in terms of physical distance, the fishery and agricultural sectors are closer, but since basically the needs of people are the same everywhere, we find that the women in all three sectors have many common activities—all of which are aimed at improving life for the communities in which they live. For instance, the fight against the use of harmful, synthetic detergents is common to all, as also such activities as home book-keeping, savings, health control and others, including special programmes for children, joint programmes with youth groups, and specialized programmes for the aged. Pooling of knowledge and experiences can be of great value to women in all three sectors as it could eliminate much "trial and error" and certainly unified efforts in any field can only bring benefits.

When tracing the early history of the fishery cooperatives and their development up to the present time, it is clearly evident that the Government Fishery Administration has been—and still continues to be—solidly behind the fishery cooperatives. The Government assists the cooperatives financially, and in other ways, and the fishery cooperatives work closely with the government fishery departments at prefectural and local level.

The preferential treatment accorded to the fishery cooperatives by the Government in the matter of administering fishing rights is the biggest single factor responsible for the overall growth and strength of the fishery movement. Government assistance with establishing cooperative fish markets at landing centres, construction of ports, modernization of the fishing industry, provision of foreign exchange to import fuel and diesel for fishing boats and other forms of help have all assisted greatly in the rapid development of the fishing industry and especially the fishery cooperatives. Long and short-term interest-free loans to enable fishing families to improve their homes is ano-

ther incentive provided by the Government to encourage fishing families to attain a better standard of living. In addition, community development work to improve roads and provide additional facilities in the fishing villages is also in progress.

As in the agricultural sector, more and more families in the fishing villages are beginning to derive the major part of their livelihood from occupations other than fishing, and this is a very disturbing and unhealthy trend, as the fishing industry has its own special importance, and its own important individual contribution to make to the overall economy of the country. It is hoped that through the joint efforts of the Government and the fishery cooperatives—including the Women's Associations—life in the fishing villages will improve to the extent where young people will prefer to settle down and live and work and continue to be a part of the fishing community as their fathers and forefathers were.

“Life Cycle Programme” of Fisheries Coop’s Women’s Groups in Japan

What the life cycle programme means?

The life cycle programme is a planning for life in other words. You need to prepare for such future economic necessities of your family members as, for example, education of your children, marriage of your children, you and your husband’s livelihood after you and/or your husband’s retirement from work etc. In order to prepare for such expenditures in the future as above, you must save your money on a well planned manner with due considerations given to increases in commodity prices and inflation. This is what the life cycle programme means and women’s groups of fisheries cooperatives are trying to promote this for all the members of women’s groups of fisheries cooperatives in Japan.

How the life cycle programme operates within the family?

In our life, it is almost impossible for us to predict what will happen in the future. Why insurance schemes have developed so rapidly in most of the world is self-evident, it is to prepare for unpredictable accidents. By indicating in concrete figures “when”, “how much” and for what purpose the money you will need, you will be able to calculate total expenditures of your family’s livelihood of a given year, for example, five years ahead from now. Suppose that if you will have to buy new fishing gear (nets etc.) or trade in your fishing vessel for a new one that year, you would have to rely on government-supported loans or loans from commercial banks at times. In order to be best prepared for such, it is best to save as much as possible before that year comes. If all the fishing families submit their life cycle programme schedules to their fisheries cooperatives (primaries) via women’s groups together with their plans of, for example, changing the engines of fishing vessels, buying new nets and fishing vessels etc., it will greatly help the fisheries cooperative concerned to plan its work such as credit business and supply (of fishing materials and necessities) business etc. If we look at this from the economic view of the fishing com-

munity, strengthened economic power of fisheries cooperatives is sure to take a leadership for sound social development of that community.

How the programme is planned and implemented ?

First, a model of life cycle programme is planned at prefectural level by the staff of prefectural liaison council of women's groups of fisheries cooperatives in consultation with the directors of prefectural liaison council of women's groups of fisheries cooperatives and life improvement extension officers who are prefectural government employees. It is used as a text on various occasions such as study meetings of women's groups of fisheries cooperatives etc. In many cases, the text is distributed via primaries to the members of women's groups of fisheries cooperatives (primaries) for active participation in the programmes.

Life improvement programmes have been actively done in Iwate, Yamaguchi and Nagasaki prefectures etc.

(Note prepared by Mr Masaaki Sato of the National Federation of Fisheries Cooperative Associations, Zengyoren.—Tokyo, Japan)

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, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand.