

the WTO/EPA negotiations, the global situation is not the same as during the era of the GATT-Uruguay Round, when the United States and the EU, the two poles of the world trading system, made decisions by themselves. It is only becoming increasingly important for

Japan regarding how it can take responsibility for Asia and demonstrate leadership.

I would like to conclude by asking oversea cooperators concerned and, JA officials for their continued strong support and cooperation.

**Request:**

To all ex-IDACA participants

Dear Mr. and Ms. IDACA Alumni:

IDACA wishes, above all, that its ties with you remain solid and long-lasting. So, why not keep us updated on your recent status and how we can reach you.

Please write us if your place of work, your position or your address have changed. There is no specific form that you have to follow in sending the information, but the following may serve as an example. We would appreciate it so much if you could mail (or e-mail) or fax it to IDACA, for the attention of Eiko Oshita.

Name (nationality): \_\_\_\_\_

Training course / Seminar \_\_\_\_\_

Changes

1) New address (home, telephone number and fax number): \_\_\_\_\_

2) New place of work (office, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address): \_\_\_\_\_

3) New position: \_\_\_\_\_

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## MESSAGE

### Message From a New President of IDACA



**Mr. Akira Banzai**  
President of IDACA

The Great East Japan Earthquake and the ensuing nuclear power plant accident have caused unprecedented damage. Immediately after the disaster struck, the JA Group has continued to exert utmost efforts, including getting a grasp of the well-being of people and the situation of the damage, and providing personnel and material assistance and donations, among

other things. We earnestly desire the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the affected areas as soon as possible. Meanwhile, on the occasion of the great disaster, the wonderfulness of cooperative associations' concept of mutual aid in the form of "connections between people and helping out each other" has come to be recognized once again.

IDACA has been trading its course for nearly half a century. It has so far accepted more than 5,600 participants. Many of the participants are playing active roles as government officials or leaders of agricultural cooperatives in the world. The development of agricultural cooperative movement in the Asian region and other regions and the human resources development training programs aimed at raising the income of farmers implemented by IDACA have won high acclaim both at

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home and abroad. I cannot help but pay respect to the exceptional foresight of Mr. Yasushi Hasumi, who “created learning opportunities within the agricultural cooperative movement in Japan for leaders engaged in the cooperative movement in developing countries” and who was instrumental in establishing this organization as a “venue to foster solidarity in the international community,” while serving at the time as president of the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives.

Currently, the global economic society is within the tidal current of market fundamentalism. The United Nations designated 2012 as the International Year of Cooperatives. This means that the United Nations

places great expectations in the role of cooperatives, which are organized by people and managed in a democratic manner, and that it is encouraging the world to promote the fostering and growth of cooperatives.

Through programs to train personnel who will assume leading roles in the cooperative movement, IDACA plans to contribute to achieving symbiosis with developing countries centering on Asia and with the rest of the world, and also make further efforts so that the participants will gain good understanding of Japan’s agriculture and agricultural cooperatives toward a desirable development for both sides.

## REPORTS ON TRAINING COURSES

### (1) JICA Course on “Strengthening Management and Business Activities of Agricultural Cooperatives”

Commissioned by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), IDACA conducted a training course for about two months from May 8 to July 16, 2011. The theme of the training course was “strengthening management and business activities of agricultural cooperatives.”

Participating in the training course were 11 people from eight countries including Afghanistan and other countries of Asia, Africa, and South America. They were government administrators in charge of rural development and/or agricultural cooperatives.

Study visits were conducted in Ishikawa Prefecture and Aichi Prefecture. In Ishikawa Prefecture, the participants visited JA Ishikawa Prefectural Union, JA Zennoh Ishikawa, JA Kanazawa, JA Komatsu, and Kanazawa Central Wholesale Market. In Aichi Prefecture, the participants visited

Aichi Prefectural Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Department, JA Aichi Prefectural Union, JA Zennoh Aichi, JA Nishiuwa, and JA Ochiimabari.

At the end of the training course, the participants completed action plans for strengthening the organization and business activities of agricultural cooperatives. They intend to conduct activities based on their plans after they return to their countries.



Visiting JA Komatsu Direct Sales Shop

### I learned about “Environmentally Friendly Agricultural Production and Marketing Network” in Ishikawa Prefecture



Ms. Dasanayaka  
Ranaweeralage Wenaka  
Krishanthi (Sri Lanka)  
Agriculture Officer,  
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Mahaweli Authority of  
Sri Lanka,  
Ministry of Agriculture

I believe that the agricultural product marketing system in Japan will serve as a very good reference in Sri Lanka. For example, during study visits, I had the opportunity to visit Ishikawa Prefecture, and I felt that I saw a model that shows how to put into practice policies based on the multi-functionality of agriculture and the concept of sustainable agricultural development, which JAs advocate. Such matters as the production of high quality

agricultural products, standardization of fruit sorting and grading, packaging and labeling, storage, sanitary control, quality assessment and certification system, which I witnessed during study visits, were excellent. I learned not only these matters but also the importance of marketing strategies and the creation of marketing networks.

In Sri Lanka, we are confronted with the difficult problem of developing marketing network systems that are suitable for our country. Upon gaining the opportunity to participate in this training course, I felt that we also need to promote development of an environmentally friendly agricultural product marketing system and business activities through sound organization building.

### (2) ICA Training Course on Quality and Safety Management of Farm Products

In order to contribute to enhancing the productivity of agricultural products and increasing farmers’ income, IDACA, in collaboration with ICA, carried out the training course on the “1st ICA Quality and Safety Management of Farm Products” between July 11 and August 4, 2011 for supporting the fostering of distribution experts who are in charge of agricultural product quality and safety management.

Participating in this training course were 16 people such as administrative officials, staff members of agricultural cooperatives and farmers from 11 countries, which are South Asian countries and countries along



Visiting the home of a vegetable farmer (within the operation area of JA Kanagawa Seisho)

the Mekong River.

In the training course consisting mainly

of classroom sessions at IDACA, the participants learned about such matters as the agricultural product marketing system and safety management system, on which the JA Group has been working. In the study visits that followed, the participants went to Nara Prefecture, where they visited JA

Nara, its relevant facilities, and the Nara Prefectural Agricultural Research Center. At the end of the training course, the participants drew up action plans that they intend to put into practice in their own countries as the outcomes of their training.

## Consumers in Bhutan are food safety-oriented



**Mr. Chogyal**  
Mill Manager / Coop Focal Person,  
Department of Agricultural Marketing & Cooperatives,  
Ministry of Agriculture and Forests,  
Royal Government of Bhutan

My impression of the Japanese people whom I met was that they were all polite, kind, and hard-working day and night. However, since they were not very good at communicating in English, they helped me by using body language. What was amazing is that the city is very clean and that Japan is a safe country.

What I learned through the training course are as follows:

- In establishing a cooperative association, it is essential to adhere to the principle of cooperative association in order to support solidarity between farmers and rural communities.

- In order to gain the trust of farmers, it is necessary to first indicate to them that you are confident in providing guidance and then guide them efficiently.

- Actively gaining various information and knowledge and providing proper guidance will lead to increasing the income of farmers.

- Go out to the fields where farmers work, and understand and respond to their problems, needs, etc.

This training course served as a valuable opportunity for me to gain various kinds of knowledge. Agricultural product quality and safety management is a theme that will be very useful to me in my work in the future. The reason is that consumers in Bhutan are oriented toward food safety, including organic farming.

During study visits in Nara Prefecture, I gained up-to-date knowledge through observation of the business activities of the JA. What made the most impact on me were the farmers' markets, which can possibly be established in my own country.



Visit to Yamato green tea orchard in Nara Prefecture (JA Nara-ken)

## (3) JICA “Planning of Agricultural Policy” Course

Continuing from the previous fiscal year, IDACA, at the commission of the JICA, took charge of “Agricultural Policy Planning” Course, a group-training course, from August 30 to September 21.

Participating in the training course were 16 people from 11 countries of Asia, Africa, and South America. Technical training started after presentation of draft action plans of the participating countries. After that, lectures were held on national-level policies at the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and IDACA, organization of agricultural cooperatives, rural finance and agricultural product distribution, followed by observation of land improvement district that is involved in water utilization, which serves as the production base, and on-site training in Kochi Prefecture conducted as a case

study of prefectural-level policies and agricultural promotion. At the end of the training course, the participants drafted action plans for the planning and proposing of agricultural policies in their respective countries by utilizing the PCM (project cycle management) method for analyzing problems and studying improvement measures.



Visit to a member farmer of JA Kochi-Haruno engaged in horticultural production.

## Continuously surprised by the gap between Iraq and Japan



**Mr. Lukman Ismael Abdullah Mufti**  
Head of Planning and Follow-up Department  
General Directorate of Agriculture,  
Duhok Governorate

When I arrived at my hotel in Tokyo via Jordan and Dubai after departing Iraq early in the morning, it was past 9:30 at night of the next day. Since it was a Saturday night, I would be completely free the next day. No one I knew was around, other participants were not there, I had no

money, and on top of that, I could not use the computer I had brought with me because the power plug would not fit into the outlet. Therefore, I regretted having signed up for this training course. On Monday, however, there were more participants, and JICA coordinator came around to help me out, so I was able to recover from my depressed feelings.

The training course at IDACA did not consist of only theoretical lectures for drawing up agricultural policies, but it also included study visits and was easy to understand. Although it was difficult at first to understand how the lectures and

the study visits would be interrelated, I gradually began to understand. However, there was a big gap between the situations of nearly all the countries from where the participants came and the advanced system in Japan. Of course, it was very useful, but I felt that copying everything would be impossible.

All the staff members at IDACA were kind, and the accommodations that are

blessed with a rich natural environment were very comfortable. Although the temperature in the Kurdish region in Iraq rises to about 45°C during the daytime, it falls to about 20°C at night, so you feel comfortable. However, in Japan during the summer, there are hardly any differences between daytime and nighttime temperatures, and the humidity is very high. This is the one thing that I never came to like.

## REPORT ON RESEARCH ACTIVITY

### Visiting Ethiopia

Mr. Hiroshi Terunuma, Manager of IDACA Training/Development Department

In connection with subsidized projects of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, I visited Ethiopia to provide guidance on development of farmers' organizations. As agriculture is an important industry, the Government of Ethiopia has been engaged in a five-year plan to double agricultural production.



A general store owned by an agricultural cooperative (Toke Village)

I was assigned to Yaya Gulale woreda, North Shewa zone, Oromia Region. It is an area that rises 2,800 meters above sea level. The climate is cool, and clean spring

water gushes in the highland area. I saw women carrying water and children running after cows and sheep in various places. Agricultural production is nearly self-sufficient. In addition to growing teff (a plant of the Poaceae family), which is the local staple food, as well as wheat, sorghum (Johnsongrass) and beans, the people raise cows, sheep, goats, pigs, and chicken. All family members, including small children, are engaged in farm work. To sell their crops, the people walk for more than 20 km to town markets, with the crops loaded on the back of donkeys or



Children helping with farm work (Toke Village)

other livestock. It is hard work because there are many sloping roads, since this is a mountainous area.

The main activity of agricultural cooperatives is to supply fertilizers via the district federation. The offices and warehouses of agricultural cooperatives are of simple structure, consisting of tin roofs and dirt floors. Since no employees were there

yet, officials from the woreda's Agricultural Cooperative Promotion Office were assigned to work there as accountants or managers.

There exist many problems, but I hope that the agricultural cooperative movement will be energized to help modernize the agriculture cooperatives.

## OTHERS

Greetings from the New Executive Director:

### “Thinking about the Significance of Asian Strategy through Human Resource Development”



Mr. Keiji Hiraoka  
Executive Director, IDACA

At a meeting of the IDACA Board of Councilors and Board of Directors held on August 24, I was elected executive director to succeed Mr. Ashikari, my predecessor.

After being transferred to JA Zen-Noh from JA Zenchu in April 2008, I served as district managing director at JA Zen-Noh until the end of July this year, receiving much favor from JA officials of Hokkaido and Tohoku districts. As the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred during this period, I worked hard to serve as a coordinator between the JAs in the field and the national headquarters for rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, but there was never a day that I did not feel my

own inadequacy.

Meanwhile, the last several months were a period during which the importance of mutual ties among fellow JA members were deeply embedded in my heart. During the opening ceremonies of IDACA's training courses, I have first expressed gratitude for the various kinds of assistance offered by the people of the agricultural cooperative sectors of various countries of the world including Asia.

As seen in the recent developments in



With a participant from Bhutan