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2017 New Year Reception Held

The Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU), the Japan CO-OP Insurance Consumers' Co-operative Federation (JCIF) and the Japanese Health and Welfare Co-operative Federation (HeW COOP JAPAN) co-organized a new year reception on January 10 as a means to raise co-ops visibility through the exchanges with the various participants. About 1,200 people, including co-op stakeholders, the media, academics, co-operative organizations, leaders from various institutions including cabinet members, political parties and representatives from the Member of Parliament attended.

Following the opening address by Mr. ASADA Katsumi, President of JCCU, the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) Mr. SHIOZAKI Yasuhisa took turn and expressed that the Government acknowledges the role co-ops play in the local community and still expects co-ops to continue the goodwill by keeping the supporting efforts towards the reconstruction of the Kumamoto Earthquake and other social issues facing the country.

In addition Mr. OKUNO Choe, Chairperson, JA-ZENCHU (Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives) and Japan Joint Committee of Co-operatives representative called on the various co-op organizations to communicate the value of cooperatives to the next generation.

Finally a toast was proposed to declare the opening of the New Year.

New Year's Message: ASADA Katsumi, President - JCCU

I would like to wish all our Co-operative members, staff members, stakeholders and Co-operative colleagues around the world a sincere Happy New Year 2017.

Let me take the opportunity to convey my heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for the overwhelming support received from you all that pivoted the success of our business and activities in the fiscal 2016.

Review of 2016

Almost six years have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake but our hearts still go out to the families of the victims of this terrible tragedy. Also I would like to express my sympathy to the victims of the Kumamoto Earthquake in April, the Tottori Prefecture Chubu Earthquake in October and the severe typhoons experienced in Hokkaido and the Tohoku areas causing massive damage throughout the country. Co-operatives nationwide cooperated with the support activities of the Kumamoto Earthquake from the very day of the disaster by sending relief supplies, dispatching voluntary staff, organizing fund raising reaching 1.1 billion JPY for reconstruction exercise and collaborating with health care institutions to offer health care assistance in the disaster area.

The year under review also saw Co-op nationwide reaching out to communities for safe and secure living through our businesses and activities. Initiatives geared towards solving problems associated with aging, elderly isolation, domestic disparity and poverty which has become a common problem in Japan were advanced.

On food issues, a significant improvement of CO-OP products business and co-ops' effort towards a healthy eating lifestyle through information dissemination and catering services supporting

parents with children and senior citizens were achieved. We also extended social services beyond Japan through the sale of CO-OP products.

On environment, Co-op advanced initiative in promoting enlightening activities to shift alternative energy, while reducing environmental load from co-op operations.

On the international front, we were privileged to have our vice-president Ms. ARAI Chitose being elected as ICA-AP Vice President and our board member Ms. SHINBO Masako re-elected as the chairperson of the ICA-AP Women's Committee.

On the national level, JCCU advanced its initiative towards partnering with the Japanese Government in achieving the United Nations sustainable development goals, SDGs. In 2016, JCCU submitted an opinion to the Government regarding the "Guideline for SGDS Implementation" and demanded that the Government specifies co-operatives as stakeholders to work together with for the achievement of the SDGs since ICA has set sustainable society as one of its core themes in its 2020 vision "Blueprint for a Co-operative Decade". It is my believe that the efforts to SDGs and the registration of cooperative by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage in 2016, are new issues and expectations placed on cooperatives. This is a very pleasant story rather than a mere heritage and it is my hope that cooperatives worldwide will see this as a way of getting united through a common philosophy of "sharing" and "consideration to others".

We are proud of this and would like the cooperative association of Japan and the world to continue to jointly cooperate as was the case of IYC.

JCCU and member Co-ops donate to Typhoon victims

In September 2016, Hokkaido was hit hard by "Typhoons 7, 9, 10 and 11" causing flooding and victimizing many people, while Typhoon 10 also devastated certain parts of the Iwate Prefecture.

In Hokkaido the typhoon caused serious damage to agricultural crops, livestock and the fishing industry with amount of damage estimated to be 168 billion JPY.

JCCU called on its member co-ops nationwide to organize separate urgent fund-raising to support the typhoon victims in Hokkaido and Iwate prefecture respectively.

Members of Co-op Sapporo, in Hokkaido, donated 13 million JPY and the amount was donated to the Hokkaido Prefectural Government through the Red Cross to support the victims.

Also members of 73 consumer co-ops responded generously to this request by raising 38.45 million JPY which was also presented to the Hokkaido JA Group to assist in the welfare of the victims.

In total about 51.5 million JPY has been donated by Co-op members to the victims in Hokkaido.

Similarly in Iwate Prefecture, Co-op members nationwide gave warm support and encouragement and responded wholeheartedly to the emergency support fund raising. Seventy-six consumer co-ops donated a total of 41 million JPY to Iwate Prefectural Government.

A presentation ceremony was held on January 5 2017, and attended by Mr. KATO Yoshimasa, the Chairman of Iwate Consumer Co-operative Union, the Managing Director Mr. YOSHIDA Toshie and Mr. YAMAZAKI Wakami, Manager of Tohoku Chiren, JCCU.

Consumer Co-ops held 2017 National Policy Review Meeting

The Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union, (JCCU) and the Japan CO-OP Insurance Consumers' Co-operative Federation (JCIF) co-organized a national policy review meeting for consumer cooperatives nationwide on January 10-11, 2017 in Tokyo, attended by 415 persons.

The meeting, which is held every year in January, was attended by board members and executive officers from co-ops across the nation to discuss the tasks set forth in the second proposal of three-year plan (2017-2019) to have a common understanding about the task to pursue in the fiscal year towards achieving Co-op Vision 2020.

Mr. ASADA Katsumi, President of JCCU, gave an opening remark and appealed to co-ops for continued support towards the reconstruction of the Great East Japan Earthquake disaster areas and further urged co-op to further develop businesses and activities that aim to create a community that people could live in with a sense of security to make the co-op a modern version of mutual aid organization.

In a keynote speech by Mr. SHIMADA Hiroyuki, CEO of JCCU, announced the achievements and challenges of the three-year plan (2017-2019) and reported the achievements of the brand renewal of CO-OP products.

Taking turns, the Managing Director of Japan CO-OP Insurance Consumers' Co-operative Federation, Mr. OGIHARA Takashi, also presented a business summary of fiscal 2016 and the second draft plan for the fiscal 2017.

During the plenary session, participants actively debated on some of the key issues in the three-year plan to deepen understanding about the task to pursue in 2017.



Mr. ASADA Katsumi



Mr. SHIMADA Hiroyuki



Mr. OGIHARA Takashi

JCCU concludes cooperation agreement with NIED

On January 25 2017, JCCU concluded disaster cooperation agreement with the National Research Institute for Earth Science and Disaster Resilience (NIED).

The purpose of this agreement is to improve the regional disaster prevention capabilities, by sharing information necessary for disaster prevention and mitigation and making use of them.

Under this agreement the strengths and experiences of both organizations will be utilized to help create a society that is strong against disasters.

JCCU and Co-op nationwide utilize the infrastructure of business and activities to promote a network connecting the regions which become useful during a large scale disaster. Co-ops have concluded material

support agreement with local governments when a disaster occurs.

This experience and know-how would benefit the agreement with NIED.

In this agreement the information to be shared include:

- 1) the "Business continuity plan in normal times", "Review of standard work procedures", "Information sharing to improve regional disaster prevention capability.
- 2) Sharing and utilizing information that contributes to disaster response, recovery, reconstruction activities and support activities in the event of a disaster and other matters deemed necessary by both parties.

Exchange meeting held by Community Support groups

The Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU), the Japan CO-OP Insurance Consumers' Co-operative Federation (JCIF) and the Consumer Co-operative Institute of Japan (CCIJ) co-organized an exchange meeting for various organizations engaged in community support activities. The event was held last year on November 24 in Tokyo and December 8 in Osaka with the total participation of 90 people.

Since 2012, JCIF has been given subsidies to voluntary organizations and NPOs for community support activities as part of its social contribution.

In Tokyo, a lecture was given by Professor UENOYA Kayoko of Doshisha University under the topic "What is the activity required to realize a regional symbiosis society?". There was also activity report by funded organizations, such as the "Start-up of care prevention business in sparsely populated municipality," by NPO Social Business Promotion Center.

In Osaka, Ms. CHIKAMOTO Satoko a researcher of CCIJ gave a lecture under the theme "collaboration between the community and the consumer co-ops" followed by activity reports, workshop and group exchanges by the recipient organizations of the subsidy.

One of such reports was on Co-ops collaboration with organizations and the local administration to create a society where everyone can live in with a sense of security. Also activities of "Kids Creative City - Children's City Planning" by NPO Cobon was given.



"CO-OP Core Non Smile School Project" donation presentation held

JCCU and its member Co-ops in cooperation with the Japan Committee for UNICEF had launched a UNICEF donation campaign under the theme "CO-OP core non smile school project" to raise funds to help improve the education environment for the school children in the Republic of Angola since 2010.

One yen from the sale of each pack of CO-OP brand toilet paper "core non roll" is donated to UNICEF for the project.

The sixth phase of the project was executed from November 1, 2015 to October 31, 2016 through the home delivery catalog and the store outlets of community-based consumer co-ops nationwide.

During this one year period, approximately 10.8 million packs were sold yielding an amount of 10.8 million JPY.

On December 20, 2016, the sixth donation presentation ceremony was held at the UNICEF House in Tokyo, where the amount was presented to the Japan Committee for UNICEF to support the "children-friendly" school project for the Angola children.

Mr. HAYAMI Ken, Executive Director of Japan Committee for UNICEF received the donation from Ms. ARAI Chitose Vice President of JCCU.

Mr. SHIMADA Hiroyuki, CEO of JCCU, gave the opening address and mentioned that "The UNICEF activities of consumer co-ops are promoted by members through various initiatives such as street fund-raising, lottery fund-raising etc. and donation through products such as the school project being described here. For 6 years the school project for the children of Angola has been advanced and JCCU would continue further."

Mr. Hayami, in his words of thanks mentioned that "Every child has the right to live including children born in difficult situations like Angola. UNICEF provides support for every child to live with confidence without discrimination and therefore asks JCCU's continuing support in the future."

JCCU and the Japan Committee for UNICEF have agreed to continue this project till October 2019 aiming at:

- (1) Installation of appropriate water supply facilities and sanitation facilities for the schools and health education

- (2) implementing training on sanitation education and teacher training on education with a focus on children,
- (3) strengthening school management and promoting community participation,
- (4) support health and hygiene education to make the entire schools in Angola child-friendly.



CO-OP Brand toilet paper (core non roll)



Mr. HAYAMI Ken (R), receiving the donation from Ms. ARAI Chitose (L)



Participants that took part in the 6th ceremonial donation ceremony

“CO-OP X Red Cup Campaign”

The 2016 “CO-OP X Red Cup Campaign” which is an effort to support the “School Feeding Program” in the Republic of Ghana by JCCU and its member co-ops in cooperation with the Japan Association for the World Food Program (JAWFP) was launched from October 1 to November 20, 2016.

In this campaign one yen from the sale of target CO-OP product items is donated to WFP for the WFP School Feeding Program in Ghana.

During this period, a total amount of 4.67 million JPY was realized.

On January 18, a donation presentation ceremony was held at JCCU headquarters in Shibuya, Tokyo, where the amount was presented to the Japan Association for the World Food Program (JAWFP) to support the school feeding program in Ghana.

Mr. SUZUKI Kunio, Secretary-General for JAWFP (R), received the donation from Mr. SHIMADA Hiroyuki, CEO of JCCU (L).



JCCU Releases Business Summary

JCCU summarizes December 2016 business turnover of 66 community-based retail co-ops nationwide operating stores and home delivery service.

For 21 consecutive months the home delivery turnover had exceeded the previous year. In December the increase was 2.3% with the value of 165.93 billion JPY accounting for about 65% of the total turnover of the 66 community-based co-ops, while the store turnover slightly fell short of previous year by 0.6% with the value of 84.38 billion JPY accounting for 33.0%.

News in Brief

Policy Recommendation

On January 5 2017, JCCU submitted to the Agency for Natural Resources and Energy, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, an opinion on the gas system reform.

Currently for the realization of a gas system where consumers could have variety of choices, the reform of the “Act on the Securing of Safety and the Optimization of Transaction of Liquefied Petroleum Gas” is being considered by the ministry.

In respect of this, public comment on the Act has been made. JCCU, from the standpoint of consumers, submitted an opinion to the ministry on the gas system reform to ensure consumers easy and secure use of city gas.

In the opinion, JCCU expressed its support to

the partial revision of the Act particularly the Guidelines for trade optimization in retail business of liquefied petroleum gas and requested that a regular investigation be carried out by the government regarding the compliance status of the guidelines to ensure price transparency, trade optimization and whether the law is being observed or not.

JCCU urges the government to take stronger measures in securing the safety of liquefied petroleum gas and the act on regulation of trading, if insufficient results are obtained in compliance with the guidelines.

Environmental Conservation activity promotion exchange meeting held

On December 12 2016, Nara Co-op in collaboration with 16 organizations in the prefecture engaged in the promotion of environmental conservation activities held a group exchange meeting to deepen understanding of each group activity.

Thirty-two people including Co-op staff participated in the meeting.

Through the use of bulletin boards, documents and exhibition boards, the daily activities of each group was introduced followed by exchanges among them.

There was a report on the Nara Prefecture Environmental Comprehensive Plan formulated in March last year which serves as a guide to improve environmental sustainability in the prefecture.

Thereafter, Ms. KANEMITSU Yuka, director of Co-op Nara introduced the Co-ops "Renewable-Energy Cooperative Fund" that gives subsidy to businesses to disseminate renewable energy and energy conservation in the region aiming to

realize a self-sustained distributed energy society.

Participating organizations interacted while reporting their respective efforts.

Lastly, the vice-chairperson of Co-op Nara Ms. NAKANO Motoko gave a closing remark, mentioning that the co-op intends to create a mechanism where ordinary people could work on environmental conservation activities without any difficulty.



Co-op Plaza
3-29-8, Shibuya, Shibuya-ku
Tokyo, Japan 150-8913
<http://jccu.coop/eng/>
email:kokusai@jccu.coop

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