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shop on Energy
Saving

On November 21, Co-op Kagoshima in co-operation with JICA (Japan International Co-operation Agency) organized a day workshop for seven participants who are in-charge of energy saving from six developing countries including Barbados, Botswana and Kosovo as part of JICA's International Training Energy-Saving policy planning course.

Participants received lectures on the energy saving practice, which Final Gate Company (experts in energy savings) promotes with Co-op Kagoshima.

Co-op Kagoshima does not only perform daily management practices such as taking care to turn off lights, but also take advantage of new store openings to introduce energy-efficient facilities to reduce the environmental impact of store operations.

The workshop also included site visit to Murasakibaru store to allow the participants to observe and understand the role of energy efficiency, energy conservation, and demand-side management tools to meet the growing demand for energy services.



Visit to Murasakibaru store

Consumer Co-op's Energy Policy Report

The Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union has conducted a poll to ask members opinions regarding Japan's future energy, which will be submitted to the Government for consideration.

The TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident caused by the Tohoku Earthquake brought a huge damage and urged Co-op to reconsider its electricity and energy policy as well as members' life and Co-op businesses.

Situation about Living and Energy

The nuclear accident caused a huge damage in the region, such as widespread radiation contamination on food, water and others.

As the myth of the nuclear power plant's infallible safety collapsed, fundamental safety enhancement, strict disclosure and thorough risk communication have come up as current issues.

Countermeasures against the impact of the nuclear accident, including its conclusion, cause investigation, victim's compensation and recurrence prevention, are ongoing but still halfway.

The Japanese government and the Diet are proceeding for revision of the national energy policy. Meanwhile, social movement toward denuclearization of the energy sources is expanding.

In the questionnaire survey with co-op members, 51% agreed with 'abolition in the long run', 15% settled on 'early abolition' and 19% 'in status quo'.

In respect of electricity saving, 76% agreed with 'as much electricity saving as possible', while 23% agreed on 'aggressive saving by changing lifestyle drastically'.

Change in Japanese Energy Policy

Presently, the energy policy lays down three basic points with respect to measures on energy supply and demand, thus:

1) Securing stable supply, 2) Environmental suitability and 3) Utilization of market mechanisms. The Co-op Energy review committee has suggested the addition of two basic points. That is: 1) Ensure safety and 2) Public participation.

Five key-issues in the future energy policy has been concluded as follows:

- 1) Policy change to be independent from nuclear power
- 2) Drastic cut of energy use by saving electricity
- 3) Rapid expansion of re-generable energies
- 4) Convert to natural gas thermal power generation
- 5) Institutional reformation in electricity and nuclear power policies

Again, the opinion pool reveals the following safety measures:

- 1) Taken necessary measures to resume operation at the existing nuclear power plants by re-confirming the safety conditions including stress test based on the assumption that there would be a future occurrence of a massive earthquake and tsunami, and nation-wide comprehension as well as regional agreement through information disclosure.
- 2) Old nuclear power plants between the age of 30 and 40 and others with higher risks must be decommissioned.
- 3) The nuclear fuel recycle policy must be reviewed. For used nuclear fuel, method of interim storage and direct disposal must be reviewed.

A movement to establish 'Victim's life support law'

This law requires prefectures to support victims of natural disasters, who would suffer loss or damages on their houses, by providing them assistance grant funding (50% subsidized by the national treasury) to help them re-build their life.

The movement, which was supported, largely by Co-op and some relevant organizations contributed to the establishment of this law.

The Hanshin Earthquake triggered this movement. Many people lost their properties when the Great Hanshin Earthquake happened in 1995.

At that time there was little official support for the victims. Zenrosai, Co-op Kobe and JCCU made a proposal to establish a legal system to support victims by summarizing the opinions of members from the three organizations and started a 'National congress to require national security system for natural disasters' in July 1996.

Lobbying the government was, however, not easy due to the underlining concept 'the national government never compensates private properties'.

However, JCCU enhanced partnership with 'Diet Members Alliance for Protecting Japan from Earthquake' and the National Governors' Association to persuade the government for its implementation.

The regional co-ops also lobbied the Diet member from their region while communicating with prefectural assemblies.

These persistent efforts contributed to the establishment of the 'Victim's life-support law' enacted in May 1998.

Co-ops effort in this regard reflects the spirit of mutual support in accordance with the Co-op principle.

Countdown to International Year of Co-operatives 2012

One of the major themes for the Japanese Co-operatives in respect of the launch of IYC is "what co-operative societies can do for the earthquake disaster reconstruction". Co-ops nationwide have advantage to showcase the significance of co-op through the exercise.

Various activities are being organized by co-ops nationwide to assist in the restructuring exercise. A report about the activities are summarized in a newsletter which is posted on JCCU website.

Japanese Co-operatives cheer Fukushima

For example Saitama Co-op in co-operation with the Foundation for International Exchange Association and others, organized "Co-op festival 2011" under the theme "putting smile back on the earthquake victims" which was attended by about 100 business partners and 250 organizations.



At the "friendship tea booth", co-op members and people from Futaba in Fukushima prefecture interacted while enjoying local cuisine and tea prepared from the region. Appeal for fund as well as the sale of products from Fukushima prefecture was made.

Again, various types of co-operatives in Fukushima prefecture "support team Fukushima" have collaborated to organize activities to revive the agriculture in the region under the theme "encourage local production and consumption". The co-operatives are committed to support fruit farms that have suffered reputational damage due to the accident of the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.

This summer, about 1,257 cases of peach were sold by the group and a portion of the proceeds given for the reconstruction exercise in Fukushima Prefecture.



Stage event to raise funds for reconstruction.

Since the International Year of Cooperatives is intended to raise public awareness of the invaluable contributions of cooperative worldwide, JCCU has found it necessary to introduce foreign Co-ops to the Japanese community.

In the December edition of Co-op report, JCCU gave a special focus on IYC 2012 programs in selected foreign countries such as the US NCBA, Singapore SNCF and Canada CCA.



Above picture is Wedge's (a food co-op and a member of NCBA) signed resolution in support of IYC. Below is the link:

<http://usa2012.coop/news/2011/11/217>



The two pictures (Left: SNCF & Right: JCCU) are leaflets being used to raise awareness and educate the public about the social value and impact of co-operatives.

The SNCF's introduces children's storybook series, which provides a delightful and fun reading experience for children to learn about Co-operation.

Link: <http://uncoopsnews.org/>

The JCCU leaflet gives a general introduction of IYC, ICA and Global 300, the difference between co-operative business and the corporate organizations, the fact and figures of the various co-operative groups nationwide and the role and initiatives of co-operatives in relation to the reconstruction of the East Japan Earthquake.

"CO-OP core non-smile school project" donation presentation ceremony held

The Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU) and its member Co-ops in co-operation 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 school kids in the Republic of Angola.

One yen from the sale of each pack of CO-OP brand toilet paper "core non roll" from any of the co-op stores and home delivery channels was donated to UNICEF for the project.

The first phase of the three-year project was from November 1, 2010 to October 31, 2011. During this period, a total of 9.7 million packs were sold yielding an amount of 9.7 million JPY

On December 14, 2011, a donation presentation ceremony was held where the amount was presented to the Japan Committee for UNICEF to support the "children-friendly" school project for the Angola children.



CO-OP brand toilet paper "core non roll"



Ms. Matsumoto (L) JCCU Board Member presents the fund to Mr. Hayami, Managing Director, Committee for UNICEF

Consumer Japan (SHODANREN) held a consumer symposium

On December 7, Consumer Japan, *SHODANREN*, which JCCU is a founding member, held a symposium in Tokyo under the theme: "Together we make consumers collective damage relief system", with the attendance of 113 participants.

This symposium, following the first one held on March 10, focused on a new litigation system for consumers. The audience, representing consumers' voice, discussed the whole concept of an ideal damage relief system and asked for support from various consumer organizations for its final endorsement.

Ms. Hisa Anan, chairperson of *SHODANREN*, delivered the opening addresses and declared the restart of the movement to realize consumers' collective damage relief system, which had been suspended as a result of the Tohoku Earthquake.

The last half of the symposium was a panel discussion about the new litigation system and method of announcement to consumers.

Finally, Ms. Yoko Yano, Secretary General of the Tokyo consumer organization Call Center made a remark at the closing of the symposium. She appealed to the local and national assembly members to work hard towards realizing the litigation system by planning workshops and learning sessions for consumers to study the system together with media and business organizations.



Presentation ceremony of '2011 Civil Activities Support Program Fund'

On October 3, a presentation ceremony in respect of the '2011 Civil Activities Support Program Fund' was held with 40 participants from 15 organizations that qualified for the fund.

This year marks the 12th anniversary of the program. Out of the 15 qualifying organizations 4 pledged to use the fund to organize activities that would support the victims of the Tohoku Earthquake. Approximately 4 million JPY was given to the 15 organizations.

Mr. Yoshinaka, chairperson of Pal System Kanagawa Yume Co-op, mentioned about the importance of co-operation and collaboration with the community in solving problems in the region.

Activity reports from the 15 organizations were given.

They were glad to find other organizations that are doing similar activities in the same prefecture. They all saw the need for horizontal connection between the organizations to build a better community.



JCCU marks 1st anniversary of supporting Food bank

Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU) started Foodbank in December 2010 and this December marks the 1st anniversary. Under the concept of Food bank JCCU offers free food and commodities that Co-op is unable to sell for some logistical reasons to people who need them.

JCCU decided to start this support program last year after considering about Foodbank from some viewpoint such as disparity, poverty, issues on food, support for environmental issues and Co-op's social responsibility.

JCCU partners with an NGO "Second Harvest Japan" who collects foods and commodities that

have problems with their package, and cannot be sold, and sends them to people or welfare organizations or institutions needing those products.

Co-op also donated products that fell from storage shelves and got damaged on the package when the Tohoku earthquake happened on March 11.

As at the end of November, JCCU has donated 92 item goods (65,527 in total) such as frozen vegetables, pot noodles, fried noodles and other daily necessities.

Consumer co-ops such as Miyagi, Ibaraki, Hiroshima and Yamanashi also support the Foodbank program.

Nara Co-op mutual support club received the 'Nara Caring Prize'

On November 5, Co-op *Tasukeai-no Kai* (mutual support club) received the 'Nara Caring Prize' for exhibiting professionalism in caring support. The executive committee of "Nara Kaigo-no Hi" hosted the event.

Co-op mutual-support club was established in 1989, based on the Co-op's principle, to support domestic services with the spirit of co-operation and to build the regional community more safely by supporting people's self-help.

The club has been offering their paid-for support with voluntary spirit.

In recent years, support is also extended not only to senior citizens but also to people who have just recovered from illness, pregnant women and families with babies and small children.

Ms. Tai, chairperson of the club, received the certificate and a commemorative gift from Mr. Kazuya Inayama, vice-governor of Nara prefecture. She also explained the group's activities to the audience.

The prize motivated the club members since it signifies their 20-year effort in caring services.

It was also a day to reassure their further effort to promote bonding with other people in Nara prefecture.



Prize receiving scene



The club members.

News in Brief

Co-op Toyama's garbage recycling group commended by the governor of Toyama prefecture

At the Toyama "zero waste promoting competition" held by Toyama Industrial Exhibition Hall, Co-op Toyama's garbage recycling group was commended by the governor of Toyama prefecture as one of the honorable organizations in the environmental issues.

The group's 18-year-long activity, including decreasing and composting garbage, production of organic vegetables using the compost, and organizing garbage recycle workshop for elementary school kids and members of Co-op Toyama, was highly evaluated for its contribution towards decreasing wastes and increasing awareness of recycling. Panel exhibition displaying the group's activities were shown.



JCCU conducts emergency drills at its headquarters

This year, apart from the regular fire drill, two additional drills 'earthquake drill' and 'walking home in event of a disaster' were held at Co-op Plaza, headquarters of JCCU.

1. Fire drill

For the purpose of confirming role sharing and to learn about the basic action plan based on the self-firefighting method, staffs working at Co-op Plaza participated in the emergency and fire fighting drill.

Staff practiced how to use the stairways to escape in event of a fire outbreak.

In the fire fighting drill, they learned how to use fire extinguishers and indoor fire hydrant.

A staff commented that many people think they can use fire extinguisher easily, however, in real situation most people can not handle it correctly.

2. Earthquake drill

On November 21, Co-op carried an earthquake drill to confirm the first action to take when a large earthquake happens, based on the lessons learned from the Tohoku Earthquake.

This time the main target was: 1) to immediately set up a task force, 2) correct use of radio

communications, 3) rapid safety confirmation of staff.

3. Drill to return home

The drill period was from October 17 to November 19. About 60 staff voluntarily walked home from office by their own planned schedule.



Season's Greetings to all our readers

As this is the newsletter before the New Year, it seems a good opportunity to thank you all for your interest and reading of JCCU News over the past year.

In this season of gratitude, we are thankful for your friendship and support.

All of us in JCCU join in saying "Thank you" and Wish you all a Happy Holiday and Fruitful New Year.

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