

COURSE MEMORANDUM

1st Training Course on “Improving Capacity of Rural Women” Thailand-Japan: 12th November to 10th December 2014

01. BACKGROUND

Gender equality is a fundamental factor for the socio-economic well-being of all. It has particular importance in terms of global economic recovery and global development. Yet, despite the gains made so far and the efforts and political commitment of the international community, visible and invisible obstacles continue to persist that prevent rural women from fully exploiting their capabilities. These barriers equally deny them their right to be recognized as the driver and the main actor in rural development.

Rural women face a number of constraints. Rural women have limited or no access to natural, infrastructural, technical and financial resources due to both cultural and legal constraints; rural women are not heard since they have no voice; and rural women mainly work in the informal sector and in subsistence agriculture. As a consequence, their access to education and basic social services is compromised.

The role of rural women is vital. Rural women not only contribute to feeding the world in a safe and sustainable way, but also promoting a true development and contribute to building peaceful and socially cohesive communities.

02. INTRODUCTION

The International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) is a non-profit international association established in 1895 to advance the cooperative social enterprise model. Its members are national level federations of cooperatives and individual cooperative organizations, primarily operating at a national level. ICA's members, representing cooperatives in **100** countries, have established seven principles that define the essence of cooperative organizations. One of ICA's primary responsibilities is to advance, interpret, and maintain the relevance of these principles. To accomplish its purposes, ICA is organized with a Global Office, four Regional (Europe, Africa, Americas and **Asia-Pacific**), and eight Sectoral Organizations (Banking, Agriculture, Fisheries, Insurance, Health, Housing, Consumer Cooperatives and Worker Coops).

The ICA-Asia and Pacific Office is operating from New Delhi since 1960, serves 83 national level organizations from 25 countries, representing over 500 million cooperative members.

03. TRAINING COURSE

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of the Government of Japan has chosen the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) to implement an umbrella Project on **“Strengthening of Capacity Building in Developing Countries in Asia”** for three years starting from 2014.

Under this Project, the **1st** Training Course on “**Improving Capacity of Rural Women**” will be held in **Thailand** and **Japan**. Part-I of the Training Course would be held in Thailand in collaboration with the Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT) from **12th** to **18th November** 2014 and Part-II in Japan in collaboration with the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA) from **19th** November to **10th** December. The Training Course is being funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF), Government of Japan, and implemented by ICA.

04. OBJECTIVE

The objective of the Training Course is to assist capacity building of leaders of rural women for promotion of more organized business activities in the countries of the South East Asia and South Asia regions.

05. PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES & NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

Ten (**10**) woman participants will be selected by ICA-AP for the Training Course from the following ten countries – Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

06. SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

The nominated candidates should have the following qualifications:

1. *Women leaders working in agricultural cooperatives, farmers' groups or women's groups in rural areas. In the case of the country where agricultural cooperatives is not established or not in order, women government officials in charge of rural development can be included.*
2. *The participants are expected to speak, write and understand English language well.*
3. *The participants should be physically and mentally fit to travel and study abroad and above twenty-five (25) years of age with a minimum 3-5 years experience.*

07.1 COURSE LOCATIONS

Home Country Assignments (HCAs)

The selected participants are expected to undertake their Home Country Assignments (HCAs) for a period of **5** days (7-11 November) prior to the actual commencement of the Training Course. They are expected to prepare (i) a **Country Report**; and (ii) a draft **Action Plan** for the development of their own organizations including social and economic activities so as to meet the objective of the Training Course. The Format for the preparation of the draft Action Plan would be sent to the selected participants.

The Training Course will be divided into two parts, as has been explained below:

Part-I: Study Visits in Thailand

A one-week study visits program with a focus on observation of the activities of cooperatives and social institutions will be held in Thailand from **12th** to **18th** November 2014 in collaboration with the Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT) – a Member Organization of ICA.

Part-II: Training Course in Japan

Part-II of the Training Course, including field study visits, will be held in Japan for 22 days (19th November to 10th December 2014). The Training Course will be conducted by and located at the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA). Some of the key subjects to be covered at IDACA are:

- *Development of Agricultural Cooperatives in Japan;*
- *Women's Associations of Japanese Agricultural Cooperatives;*
- *Rural Women's Entrepreneurship (marketing and local agro-processing);*
- *Women's Participation in the Rural Development;*
- *Finalization and Presentation of Action Plans; and*
- *Reporting and Evaluation.*

The details of the actual day-to-day program are being worked out in collaboration with the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Cooperation in Asia (IDACA) and the same will be supplied to the selected participants.

The draft Action Plan prepared by the participants in their home countries would be finalized based on the experience and knowledge gained during the Training Course in Thailand and Japan and the inputs provided by IDACA officers. It may please be noted that experiences gained should promote social and economic activities in their home countries.

07.2 SUMMARY OF THE TIME TABLE

The participants who are finally selected by the ICA-AP are expected to follow the Training Course for its full duration and according to the timetable developed by the ICA-AP/IDACA. It may please be noted that once the ICA-AP formally selects a participant, she will be placed at her organization under the charge of the Chief Executive Officer of the organization and given specific tasks to be accomplished during the Home Country Assignments.

<i>Home Country Assignments (HCAs)</i>	:	<i>7th to 11th November 2014</i>
<i>Arrival of Participants in Bangkok</i>	:	<i>12th November</i>
<i>Part-I: Field Study Visits in Thailand</i>	:	<i>13th to 18th November</i>
<i>Arrival of Participants in Narita-Japan</i>	:	<i>19th November</i>
<i>Part-II: Training Course in Japan-IDACA</i>	:	<i>20th November to 9th December</i>
<i>Departure of Participants from Japan</i>	:	<i>10th December</i>

08. SUBMISSION OF NOMINATION PAPERS

The nominations should be made in the ICA prescribed Nomination Form only [*sample attached*]. The nominations should be made in **duplicate** and the nomination papers should be complete in all respects before they are submitted to the ICA-AP for final selection. The nominations **MUST** reach the ICA-AP on or before the closing date – **30th September 2014**.

In order for us to finalise all practical arrangements for the Training Course well in advance, it is requested to send nominations soon, so as to reach the ICA-AP positively on or before **30th September 2014**. In the meantime, please let us know by fax/e-mail, whether you will be nominating participants. It is very important for us to receive the nominations on the date mentioned above to enable us to make necessary preparations.

It will NOT be possible for us to accept nominations unless they are accompanied by full background information of the nominated participants in the enclosed Nomination Form together with and a Medical Fitness Certificate.

09. GRANT OF SCHOLARSHIPS TO SELECTED PARTICIPANTS

The ICA generally grants fully paid scholarships to the selected candidates, which include tuition fees, travels [international and domestic within Thailand/Japan], board and lodging, textbooks etc. Economy/Excursion class excursion tickets are generally issued, where feasible.

The ICA will not pay fiscal tax/exit tax/airport tax from the point of departure from home countries. The ICA will also not pay any passport handling fee/visa-processing fee for Thailand and Japan. Such charges must be paid by the selected participants themselves or by their respective sponsoring organizations. Candidates will have to pay extra if they intend to deviate from the authorized routes.

10. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The selected participants will first travel to **Thailand**. After participation in the field study visits program for about one-week duration there, they will proceed to Japan and stay there until the end of the Training Course. The participants should, therefore, arrive in **Bangkok** and **Tokyo** on time and attend the Training Course for its full duration.

The selected participants will be provided with detailed information relating to the practical matters and necessary advice on their travels and visa-related matters.

The ICA-AP cannot provide any medical facilities to the participants in Thailand. It is, therefore, advised that the participants get themselves covered by a Medical Insurance/Travel Accident Insurance Policy on their own before leaving the home countries.

The obligations of the ICA-AP are limited only to the ones which are explained here in this Course Memorandum. All other costs are to be covered by the participants themselves or by their sponsoring organisations.

The selected participants are expected to participate in the Training Course for its full duration, and in the event of anyone leaving the program half-way, they will have to reimburse all the costs to the ICA-AP.

11. FOLLOW-UP GUIDANCE SURVEY

The ICA-AP in collaboration with IDACA will conduct follow-up program to survey the progress of Action Plan through Questionnaire. Please note that it is obligatory for all participants of the Training Course and their own organizations to answer the Questionnaire. The nominating organization in each country is expected to collect the Questionnaire and submit it to ICA-AP within the stipulated date.

Encl: Nomination Form