



**The Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU) and
International Labour Organization (ILO) Collaboration
African Cooperative Leaders' Study Visit Programme in Japan
25 September - 2 October 2011
Background Note**

I. Back ground

For the past years, the Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU) and the International Labour Office (ILO), especially the Regional Office for Africa (ROAF), the Cooperative Facility for Africa (ILO/COOP Africa), and ILO Office for Japan (ILO Tokyo), have been exchanging information on their activities and exploring possibility to collaborate in helping building up African cooperatives' capacity in order to bring about a "renaissance" of the cooperative movement in Africa. The JCCU in collaboration with ILO have been working closely on the formulation of a programme to assist the African cooperative movement to strengthen its capacity by introducing the good lessons learnt by the Japanese cooperatives. The JCCU and ILO implemented the first joint training programme in August 2010 to expose selected African cooperative leaders to learn about the Japanese cooperative movement and its strongly membership-based approach through lectures and study visits in Japan. This year JCCU and ILO will implement the second round of the programme and this concept note presents basic information on the proposed programme for interested candidates.

II. Expected participants

Five African cooperative leaders will be invited to Japan to participate in the training programme. The participants will be selected based on the following criteria:

- Strongly involved/ interested in agricultural production, retailing & marketing and mutual cooperative activities;
- Leadership position in a cooperative enterprise, preferably in cooperative unions or federations/confederation (i.e. NGO, government officials are not considered as the primary target group);
- Good/Fair education degree and/or proven experience in the cooperative movement;
- Results-oriented and proven record of achievements;
- Commitment from the institution sending the candidate;
- Commitment by the candidate to apply/share/replicate the knowledge and ideas gained from the training course in her/his own cooperative organization;
- Commitment by the candidate to share the knowledge and experience gained from their own cooperative back home with the Japanese cooperative stakeholders;

- Ideally gender balanced; and
- Fluent in both spoken and written English.

Qualified women and young people complying with the above mentioned criteria are highly encouraged to apply.

III. Overall objectives

Attitude change and paradigm shift of the participants by exposing them to activities as well as good lessons learnt/challenges of Japanese cooperatives.

IV. Programme outline

A draft programme agenda is attached to the concept note. The main issues are:

1. Introduction of various kinds of cooperatives in Japan;
2. Lectures on Consumers' cooperatives activities, the Cooperative Principles (shared capital, use, and management by the members);
3. Study visits to consumers' cooperatives offices/centers, vendors, contracted farms and factories;
4. Introduction of Japanese agricultural cooperatives, their activities, study visits to JA/IDACA *offices/centers, and member farms;
5. Introduction of financial and insurance cooperatives such as Rokin Banks* and Zenrosai*; and,
6. Lectures on Japanese laws and legislation relevant to various cooperatives.

*JA-URL <http://www.zenchu-ja.or.jp/eng/index.html>

*IDACA –URL http://www.idaca.or.jp/e_p/kensyu/index.html

*Rokin Banks (Labour Banks) <http://all.rokin.or.jp/english/index.html>

*Zenrosai <http://www.zenrosai.coop/zenrosai.php>

V. Venue, dates and cost

1. **Venue.** The programme will take place in Tokyo, Japan.
2. **Dates.** The programme will take place from 25th September to 2nd October 2011
3. **Costs.** The principle of cost-sharing is central to the programme.

JCCU will provide 4-5 *fellowships* covering domestic costs: accommodation, training fees and transportation in Japan.

The *participants from African cooperatives are expected to pay their own international travel costs*: flight ticket, land transport to/from airport of origin and destination (Narita Airport), Daily Subsistence Allowances – DSA (except accommodation) and all other related costs (eg. Visa, insurance fees). The ILO Regional Office for Africa (ROAF) may provide airticket only

on an exceptional basis, upon request in the cover letter (see below).

The ILO COOP Africa, ROAF and Tokyo are providing administrative and technical support.

VI. Logistic arrangement responsibility

The JCCU is in charge of the study visit programme preparation & implementation, covering the domestic costs (except DSAs) of the training programme.

The ILO COOP Africa and ROAF are responsible for the nomination of the programme participants.

The ILO Tokyo acts as the liaison between JCCU and ILO ROAF and COOPAfrica.

Ticket booking and purchase will be done by participants and communicated to JCCU through ILO COOP Africa, ROAF and Tokyo.

VII. How to apply

Interested participants must submit the following documentation in English:

- 1) A CV of the applicant;
- 2) A brief outline of the organization, including information on the purpose of the organization, its governance structure (including a description of its board), its achievements and challenges, the size of the organization, the number of staff, the main location and the main sector of activity (coffee, sugar, rice, etc.); its annual turnover
- 3) A cover letter, including the rationale of participating in such training activity and the choice of the candidate, the challenges faced by the organization for which the training is needed and the vision for their organization in the coming years; and, A description of post-course follow-up activities to share with colleagues (especially board and management) the knowledge, ideas and experience gained from the course.
- 4) A commitment letter from the organization, including the commitment to support travel costs, air tickets, airport transfers and DSA) as well as the practical way forward envisaged by the organization and the participants as a consequence of the learning acquired during the training programme.

The applications should be submitted by email before 30 June 2011 to:

COOP Africa Programme
ILO Dar es Salaam
coopafrica@ilo.org

CC: Yumi Nabeshima (Ms)
ILO Tokyo
nabeshima@ilo.org

VIII. Selection procedures and information to participants

Only the 4-5 selected participants will be notified in writing by JCCU. ILO Tokyo will also provide a guarantee letter to the selected participants in order to process their visa at the

nearest embassy.

IX. Insurance liability

The participants shall be responsible for taking out any insurance she/he deems necessary in accepting this training invitation from JCCU.