



## CONCEPT NOTE:

### **Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU) and International Labour Organization (ILO) African Cooperative Leaders' Study Tour in Japan 5 – 14 September 2019**

#### **Background**

For the past years, the Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), through its Cooperatives Unit (COOP) and its Office for Japan (ILO Tokyo), have exchanged information to explore possible areas of collaboration particularly in supporting African cooperative development. The exchange was initiated in 2007 in the context of the ILO's Cooperative Facility for Africa (COOPAfrica) Programme.

Consequently in 2010, JCCU and ILO launched a joint study tour to encourage the exchange of knowledge and experiences and explore possible cooperation between African and Japanese cooperatives. From 2010 to 2018, nine editions of the study tour have been organized and 38 senior cooperative leaders from 16 African countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Niger, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Nigeria, eSwatini, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tunisia, Côte d'Ivoire, and Cameroon) have participated in this study tour. The selected African cooperative leaders learned about a range of the Japanese cooperatives' businesses and its strongly membership-based approach through lectures and study visits in Tokyo and its vicinities.

This concept note presents basic information on the 10th edition of the study tour that will take place from **5-14 September 2019** for interested candidates. To mark the 10th edition, the study tour programme will shed light on cooperative responses to some of the key issues considered in the Report of the Global Commission on the Future of Work launched in January 2019 on the occasion of the ILO's Centenary.

#### **Eligible participants**

This year, five African cooperative leaders will be invited to participate in the study tour. The participants will be selected based on the following criteria:

- To be in a leadership and managerial position at a cooperative enterprise, preferably in a secondary or tertiary level cooperative organization (i.e. applicants from non-cooperative companies, NGOs and government or municipal entities are not eligible);

- To have a proven track record in the cooperative movement;
- To have a fair educational background;
- To have ideas/plans to share and make use of lessons learned from this study tour to advance his/her cooperative and the cooperative movement as a whole;
- To have secured funds for their round trip to Tokyo, Japan; and
- To have good command of English both written and spoken

**Priority will be given to qualified women and young applicants. A limited fellowship might be provided by the ILO for a qualified applicant who cannot cover the international travel cost, but the priority will be given to those who have secured funds for their travel cost.**

### Overall objective

To encourage the exchange of knowledge and experiences and facilitate discussions on possible cooperation between African and Japanese cooperatives.

### Programme outline

The study tour programme will include the below components:

- 1) Introduction on the legal framework and institutional structure concerning cooperatives in Japan
- 2) Site visits and lectures on different types of cooperatives (e.g. producers', users' and workers' cooperatives) in different industries and sectors (e.g. agriculture, energy, finance and insurance, healthcare, childcare and eldercare, retailing, and other services) in Japan
- 3) Site visit to Kagawa Archives & Resource Centre on the history of the Japanese cooperative movement
- 4) Public seminar where the participants present on their cooperatives and future plans to advance the African cooperative movement and discuss possible collaboration with partners in Japan

A detailed programme will be available in due course on the ILO website at:

[https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/cooperatives/events/WCMS\\_677759/lang-en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/cooperatives/events/WCMS_677759/lang-en/index.htm)

The following links provide information on organizations related to the study tour.

- Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU): <https://jccu.coop/eng/>
- ILO Cooperatives Unit: <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/cooperatives/lang-en/index.htm>
- Kagawa Archives & Resource Centre: <http://zaidan.unchusha.com/en>
- National Association of Labour Banks: <http://all.rokin.or.jp/en/>
- National Federation of Workers and Consumers Insurance Cooperatives: <http://www.zenrosai.coop/english/english.html>
- Japanese Health and Welfare Co-operative Federation: <http://www.hew.coop/english/>

- Norinchukin Research Institute: <https://www.nochuri.co.jp/english/index.html>
- Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives (JA-Zenchu): <https://www.zenchu-ja.or.jp/eng>
- National Federation of University Co-operative Associations: <http://www.univcoop.or.jp/en/index.html>
- Japan Workers' Co-operative Union: <http://english.roukyou.gr.jp/>
- Japan Co-operative Alliance: <https://www.japan.coop/en/>

### Venue, dates and cost

- Venue: Tokyo and its vicinities in Japan
- Dates: Thursday 5th to Saturday 14th of September 2019
- Costs: The principle of cost-sharing is central to this study tour. JCCU will provide **five fellowships** covering the domestic cost: tuition, accommodation (including breakfast), and transportation for site visits in Japan. **Participants have to cover the travel cost between their home and Tokyo, Japan.** A limited fellowship might be provided by the ILO for a qualified applicant who cannot cover the international travel cost, but as mentioned above, the priority will be given to those who have secured funds for their travel cost.

### Logistic and administrative arrangement responsibility

- JCCU is in charge of the preparation and implementation of the study tour, covering the domestic cost for tuition, accommodation and transportation for site visits in Japan.
- ILO Tokyo assist the preparation and implementation of the study tour. ILO Tokyo will send guarantee letters needed to process visa applications at Japanese embassies to each of the selected participants.
- ILO COOP is responsible for the nomination of five participants and the support for the participants in preparing their presentations.
- Participants are responsible for the arrangement of their own flight tickets, the application of visas to enter Japan in case needed, and the purchase of any travel insurance s/he deems necessary. Participants should send copies of purchased flight tickets and visas as soon as possible to JCCU, ILO Tokyo and ILO COOP.

### How to apply

Interested candidates are invited to submit the following documents in English:

- 1) A Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the candidate;
- 2) A brief outline of his/her cooperative organization, explaining its mission, the main location and activities, the size (including annual turnover and the number of membership and staff), the governance structure (including a description of its Board) and key achievements and challenges faced by the organization;

- 3) A cover letter, including clear and concrete description on why and how the candidate can benefit from the study tour to advance his/her cooperative organization and the cooperative movement in Africa
- 4) A commitment letter from his/her organization, including the financial commitment to cover the travel cost between his/her home and Tokyo, Japan, and the practical plans envisaged by the organization to share and make use of the knowledge acquired during the study tour to advance the cooperative movement in Africa. **In the event that the organization does not honour its financial commitment, the ILO reserves the right to disqualify the candidate and replace him/her with another candidate.**

Applications should be submitted by email as soon as possible **before 25 June 2019** to:

- ILO Cooperatives Unit: [coop@ilo.org](mailto:coop@ilo.org) and [waki@ilo.org](mailto:waki@ilo.org)
- ILO Tokyo: [tokyo@ilo.org](mailto:tokyo@ilo.org); and
- JCCU: [kokusai@jccu.coop](mailto:kokusai@jccu.coop)