

JOICFP NEWS

Working with Women In Laos

Regional project focuses on FP/MCH service access to improve situation of women



(From left) Professor Vannareth Rajpho, minister of health of Laos; Anne Sutherland, representative, UNICEF Laos; and Khemphet Pholsena, permanent member, Executive Committee, Lao Women's Union.

Members of a JOICFP mission to Laos were made acutely aware of the need for improving access for women to family planning (FP) and maternal and child health (MCH) care services during discussions with villagers. An illiterate woman interviewed at Paksane Provincial Hospital explained that her visit to the hospital was her first. Suffering from hypertension and edema and pregnant for the 12th time, she said that she had delivered three of her children by herself and that only four of her children are living. Although she had not heard of FP, she told the team that she and her husband considered five children ideal.

The team heard many similar stories during their trip to Laos from June 29 - July 8 to discuss the workplan and baseline survey for the "Sustainable Community-based FP/MCH Project with Special Focus on Women (RAS/92/P11)." Now in its preparatory phase, the project is aimed at improving the situation of women through the provision of FP/MCH services and is being conducted on a regional basis with the support of UNFPA. In Laos, the project is being implemented by the National Institute of Mother and Child Health (IMCH).

During its stay, the team visited the three proposed project sites in Vientiane Municipality and Paksane and Thaphabat districts in Bolikhamxay Province and spoke with administrators and health staff. The lack of birth spacing services was presented to the mission as a major problem even for Lao women who live

in semi-urban areas. In addition, many rural health facilities are under-utilized because of poor construction, lack of medical supplies and scarce equipment. The team was also made aware that financial support remained a stumbling block to the establishment of a health volunteer system.

In Vientiane, the mission discussed strategies for the project with IMCH officials. Among the strategies agreed upon was that JOICFP would work with the multisectoral MCH committees now being organized, and that villages within a 5km-radius of the district hospitals would be the initial target of the project. To implement the mass approach to health-care, the project will gather villagers using outreach clinics which will provide primary health care (PHC) services as well as health education and individual counseling. The health center staff, volunteers of the Lao Women's Union (LWU) and village administrators will form a tripartite alliance to implement the activities.

The team members also met with



Ameerah Haq-Perera, representative, UNDP Laos.

Professor Vannareth Rajpho, minister of health, and representatives of other related organizations during their stay. "For any PHC project, I would like to emphasize coordination," said Rajpho. "We would like JOICFP to cooperate closely with other donor agencies."

Anne Sutherland, representative, UNICEF Laos, emphasized UNICEF's support for the integrated approach to healthcare. The organization is looking for windows of opportunity to better promote its current priority project of immunization, she said, adding that UNICEF has been actively seeking partners such as non-governmental organizations to achieve this.

Khemphet Pholsena, permanent member, Executive Committee, LWU, emphasized the importance of motivating female volunteers at the village level. "The project will not work if these women are not supported," she said. "We have to give them confidence in the project, such as by providing some equipment for them to carry out small-scale income-generating activities."

Expressing support for the project, Ameerah Haq-Perera, representative, UNDP Laos, stressed that a project involving grassroots women in decision-making will take a long time to prepare and that volunteers do need incentives such as assistance in child care.

An orientation workshop for central-level officials is scheduled for mid-December and a series of training sessions are being planned in Thailand. 1

People in Motion

Symposium for World Population Day highlights theme of migration

"In the past, people left Japan to seek a better life in another country but today Japan is receiving people from abroad," said Dr. Toshio Kuroda, director emeritus, Nihon University Population Research Institute. "Now that Japan has experienced both these movements of people, it is appropriate that we consider the role of the country in the context of migration and the borderless world."

Kuroda made his remarks in a keynote address he gave to an international symposium held in Tokyo on July 15 to mark World Population Day on July 11. The symposium reflected the Migration theme of UNFPA's 1993 State of World Population Report and included a panel discussion on the topic of "Why do people move?"

Kuroda commented that international migration has become a far more pressing issue since the end of the Cold War. "In the new political climate, we will see greater movement of people," he said. "People move to seek a better way of life, and this is something that will not be stopped quickly and cannot be stopped by force," he said.

The discussion by the four panelists was coordinated by Dr. Yoichi Okazaki, professor, Nihon University, and was the highlight of the symposium. The event was attended by 300 people including experts, officials, government officials, parliamentarians and academics and featured a new JOICFP documentary film on women in development in Guatemala entitled *Maria*. An annual event, the symposium was organized by the Council



A view of the audience.



Members of the audience listen intently to the panel discussion.

on Population Education in cooperation with JOICFP and was supported by UNFPA.

In a message to the symposium, Dr. Nafis Sadik, executive director, UNFPA, noted progress toward the UN International Conference on Population and Development to be held in Cairo in 1994. Commenting that the 1994 conference will decide the direction of population efforts in the future, Sadik expressed her hope that the symposium would serve as an important activity to stimulate awareness about the conference. She said that the world expects a considerable contribution in the field of population from Japan and emphasized that population problems cannot be solved by the developing countries alone.

A business viewpoint of migration was provided by Ken Moroi, chairman, Chichibu Cement Co., Ltd., and vice-president, Nikkeiren (Japan Federation of Employers' Association), a major economic organization. "The role of Japan is very clear; it must assist developing countries to develop," he said. "Development is a key factor of international migration and the most important assistance that developing countries need is in the field of human resources," Moroi said. "The quality of life must be improved and people must feel that if they work they will gain benefits."

Moroi said that the business sector of Japan is carefully examining ways to start business ventures in other countries. Since businesses look closely at the stability and human resources of a country before they invest, it is extremely important that Japan help other countries to develop their infrastructure and levels of business and technical know-how, he said. "Without making investments in the development of other countries, we cannot stop the flow of

economic refugees," he said.

The need for the North to extend assistance to the South was also emphasized by Dr. Gerald Curtis, professor, Columbia University, who commented that the age when developed countries only considered their own interests is finished. "It is now in the mutual national interest of countries in the North and South to promote development in developing countries," he said. "Countries such as Japan must open their markets to the products of developing countries."

Foreign Workers in Japan

Shizuko Oshima, coordinator of Hand-in-Hand-Chiba, a non-governmental organization (NGO) working to support foreign workers in Japan, drew attention to the lack of protection for illegal migrant workers in Japan. "Officially, there are 290,000 illegal foreign workers in Japan, but I estimate that the real number could be as high as 400,000-500,000," she said. "Although these people are illegal, they are contributing to the economy of Japan and should be protected from the point of view of human rights," she added.

Putting Japan's migration issues in a historical perspective, Dr. Makoto Ato, director, Population Problems Research Institute, Ministry of Health and Welfare, commented that between the start of the Meiji era in 1868 and the 1960s, 1.7 million people left Japan. "With the rapid development in the 1960s, people stopped leaving Japan and today we are a nation on the receiving end of migrants," he said. It is time that the Japanese legal system is adjusted to meet the needs of the new situation, he stressed. J

Fine-tuning Project Implementation

Experts assess progress in 4th phase project areas in China

An expert assessment was made of progress in new 4th phase Integrated Project (IP) areas by a joint Japanese-Chinese team that visited two project areas in two provinces from May 22 - June 1. The first monitoring mission to observe 4th phase IP sites since the project was launched in 10 new provinces in

January this year, the team consisted of family planning (FP), maternal and child health (MCH) and parasite control (PC) experts from the China National Steering Committee of the IP and JOICFP.

The team members visited Dongzhi County, Chizhou Prefecture, Anhui Province, and Yiyang County, Shangrao Prefecture, Jiangxi Province, where they were briefed on all aspects of the IP by local steering committees and held discussions with local people involved in the project. The visitors also viewed activities at stations for epidemic prevention, MCH and FP at the county level and visited town hospitals, farm houses and primary schools.

The IP covers a target population of 34,593 in Dongzhi County and of 52,399 in Yiyang County. Socioeconomic status for both areas is relatively low, a factor reflected in the low literacy, high parasite infestation rates and high infant mortality rates (IMRs). The IMR in 1992 was 40.5‰ and 44.4‰, while total parasite infection rate was 63% and 69.6% for Dongzhi and Yiyang, respectively.

In Dongzhi County, the team found that 140 project personnel had been recruited and that various IEC and training activities had been conducted under the project. In Yiyang County, meanwhile, the team found that IP-implementing organizations had been set up, IEC activities had been conducted and 232 personnel had been trained.

Following its assessment, the experts came up with a series of recommendations for improving implementation. In particular, the mission stressed that

realistic short-term goals be set for the project and that PC be used as an educational tool to trigger interest in health issues and not simply as a means to reduce parasite infection. The team emphasized that people would be more willing to join such activities as latrine construction if they understood health issues. They also

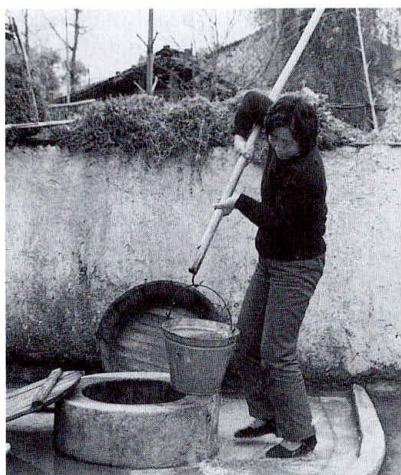
recommended that data collection should be improved and that fees should be charged to help improve service quality.

The results of the monitoring mission were also reflected in the proceedings of the National Workshop on the IP for the 4th phase, held June 3 - 8 in Taicang City, Jiangsu Province. Attended by 60 participants including central-level experts and government

officials, representatives of the 1st, 3rd and 4th phase areas and JOICFP officials, the workshop consisted of three days of presentations, a one-day field trip in Taicang and two days of discussions.

In the workshop recommendations, participants stressed the need to strengthen the provincial IP steering committees by involving government departments, related organizations, expert groups and voluntary groups more closely in the project. The need to train staff to serve as permanent members of the IP was brought up by participants, who also called for more appropriate IEC activities and more effective use of PC as a means to promote health education. To expand the resources of the project, the recommendations called for fund-raising through various channels such as government bodies, enterprises and community people and the establishment of local economic enterprises.

The workshop also highlighted the need to improve statistical evaluation and reporting systems. In particular, the participants called for more systematic collection and analysis of data and use of both qualitative and quantitative information to provide a clearer picture of project impact.



A woman draws water from an improved well in Yiyang County.

Towards Better Health Promotion

Eleven Chinese officials gained valuable insights into Japan's community-based FP, MCH and primary health care activities while in the country from June 28 - July 11. Comprising management staff from new 4th phase IP areas and a representative from the Department of Foreign Affairs, State Family Planning Commission (SFPC), the team took part in the Tenth Parasite Control Seminar for Promoting the IP in China and visited Fukushima Prefecture for field observation of activities related to healthcare and environmental sanitation.

The training was aimed at deepening the participants' understanding of the concept of the IP and improving their level of technical know-how with a view to enhancing promotion of the IP in their respective areas. Participants were also introduced to the community-based healthcare activities conducted in Japan in the postwar years and learned about the effective role that non-governmental organizations have continued to play in improving the way of life in Japan, particularly through activities conducted in collaboration with the government.

The seminar was sponsored by the Sasakawa Memorial Health Foundation and conducted by the Japan Association of Parasite Control (JAPC) in cooperation with JOICFP.

Exchanging Information

The trip to Fukushima Prefecture served as a highlight for the Chinese visitors who were able to exchange information with people working in the field and view activities firsthand. The team visited environmental sanitation facilities, observed healthcare activities and were introduced to the supporting role played by volunteer groups such as women's and food sanitation associations in Fukushima.

Through the field trip, the team was able to see the benefits of government and private sector collaboration and understand the effectiveness of involving the community in health and development activities.



Participants observe registration for health checkups in Fukushima.

Health Issues for the Aged

Issues of health promotion and medical services for the elderly were addressed at this year's Seminar on Population Aging, held in Japan from July 5 - 16. The event was the second program of JOICFP's second Regional Population Aging Project, "Promotion of Awareness and Policy Formulation on Aging in the Asian Region (RAS/92/P13)".

The seminar was primarily aimed at promoting the formulation of health and medical policies and the development of systems and strategies to meet the needs of societies with aged populations using the experience of Japan as a case study. It was attended by eight representatives from China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

The field trips to two towns in Miyagi Prefecture provided participants with a valuable comparison of different ap-



Participants meet an elderly woman cared for by her daughter-in-law.

proaches to health promotion among the elderly. In Wakuya Town, the team visited the Medical and Social Services Center. The town, which has sought to integrate health and welfare activities including those for the elderly, created the center to function as a base for comprehensive health services and health promotion. As such, it incorporates a range of facilities such as rehabilitation and gymnasium facilities.

The participants were introduced to

community care service approach for the aged in Sanbongi Town, which unlike Wakuya Town, has no institution providing integrated services. The town offered the visitors insights into the effective operation of a home visit nursing care program for the aged. Participants were particularly impressed that the system had succeeded in establishing a good collaborative working network among the nurses, home helpers and nutritionists and service recipients.

The field trip did much to stimulate discussion among the visitors who were able to pin-point shared issues concerning health of the elderly in Asia. In particular, they noted the strong tradition of family support for the elderly in Asia and the impact that the emergence of the nuclear family is having on this system. Other areas of shared concern noted were the diversity of needs of the elderly and the pressing issue of a lack of human resources — both specialists and general care-givers. The participants also showed concern over how to allocate limited resources adequately to cater to the different needs of the elderly. It was agreed that the view of the aged as weak needs to be changed and that the elderly need to be actively involved and contribute to community life. J

Three Perspectives on Aging

Three participants of the Seminar on Population Aging provided insights into aging issues in their countries and impressions of the seminar to JOICFP NEWS on July 15. Below are highlights of their comments.

Joanna Tan, executive officer, Population Planning Unit, and executive officer, Department of Continuing Care, Ministry of Health, Singapore

Currently, people aged 60 years and older make up about 9.4% of the population of Singapore. We are experiencing rapid aging and by the year 2030, the proportion of aged is expected to reach 26%.

In an attempt to meet the needs of the elderly in Singapore through the provision of comprehensive healthcare services, we recognize that there is a need for support services, especially in situations where families have to cope with those elderly with long-term chronic illnesses.

During the field trip to Sambongi Town we visited a home in which four generations were living together. The daughter-in-law was taking care of her bedridden mother-in-law and seemed to accept her role. But my concern is whether such daughter-in-laws can continue to fulfil this role. Home help visits are not sufficient because they only come once a week, while the daughter-in-

law's job is non-stop, seven days a week.

In an urban setting such as Singapore, the woman has many roles — mother, wife, daughter-in-law and working woman. As working women we have to ask ourselves whether we would take care of the elderly.

This issue has been recognized in Singapore and there are general policies that help relieve the burden placed on women. For example, we try to maintain the function of the extended family by supporting inter-generational households through housing policies.

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Dr. Suchart Phudhichareonrat, head, Neuropathology Department, Prasat Neurological Hospital and Institute, Thailand

Thailand has been experiencing population aging since the 1960s when the proportion of people over 60 was 4.6%. By 1990, the aged people occupied 7.3% of the total population and this proportion is expected to reach 10.9% in 2014.

The main concern with the elderly in Thailand is disease prevention and maintenance of physical and mental health. If the health of the elderly is maintained, we can cut costs of care.

To achieve this aim, we divide the elderly into four age groups and have a different emphasis for each group. For 50 to 60-year-

olds, we emphasize prevention of disease so that they can enter old age and enjoy a healthy life in their old age. For 60 to 70-year-olds, we stress an active role for the elderly in society, which contributes to the maintenance of health. For 70 to 80-year-olds, we emphasize nutrition and education on daily meals. We also stress moderate exercise for physical and mental health. For those 80 years and older, we place stress on the people surrounding and taking care of the elderly.

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Wan Hashim Wan Jaffar, assistant statistical officer, National Population and Family Development Board, Malaysia

In Malaysia we consider that we still have a young population because those aged 65 and over only make up 3.7% of the population. This proportion is expected to rise to around 7% by the year 2020. Because of this, we do not have any specific policy for the elderly. Their needs are catered for under the National Social Welfare Policy as part of the disadvantaged.

It is a norm in Malaysian culture that the family looks after elderly parents and usually it is the daughter who takes care of the parents. With rapid industrialization, however, the extended family is being replaced with the nuclear family. Recognizing this, the government revised the National Welfare Policy in 1991 and provides a tax rebate for tax payers who look after elderly family members. J

Sharing Expertise in Aging

Australia reaches out to Asian countries in the field of aging

Professor Gary Andrews, director, Center for Aging Studies, Flinders University of South Australia, and Dr. John McCallum, senior research fellow, National Center for Epidemiology and Population Health, The Australian National University, visited JOICFP on June 10 as consultants commissioned by the Australian government to study aged care issues in the Asian region and the potential for international collaboration. In Tokyo, they exchanged information with prominent Japanese experts in the field of aging in a roundtable discussion organized by JOICFP. Below are some highlights of their comments during the session.

Gary Andrews

We are now entering a new era where there is a need for countries to work together and cooperate within the region to tackle population aging just as we did with family planning. The difficulty, however, is how to translate policies into action, or "operationalizing" the policies. JOICFP has been in a wonderful position to coordinate institutions regionally to promote exchange and prevent the duplication of effort by various agencies.

We are visiting Japan as a part of a team to look at aging and aged care services in the Asian region to see if the experiences of our country can be applied to other countries in the region and if we can benefit each other from sharing experiences. Our team will observe aging programs in 10 Asian countries.

Australia now has a policy to make more effort to be part of Asia, not just

geographically but also culturally, socially and economically. We have a great deal to learn from exchanges within the region — we have already gathered many skills and resources and we do not need to look to the United States and Europe for guidance and technical expertise as much as we did before. We feel that Australia's aged care expertise and services can be "sold" abroad both directly and through aid programs.

We would like to work with Japan as a potential partner in bilateral projects within the region.

The Australian system for the care of the aged achieved success in moving from an institutional to a more community focus. From the evaluations of our projects, we have also learned to go from a service orientation to a more individual orientation and to give more respect to the dignity and rights of the elderly. The dichotomy of the family versus the state being responsible for elderly care has become a partnership among family, state and community.

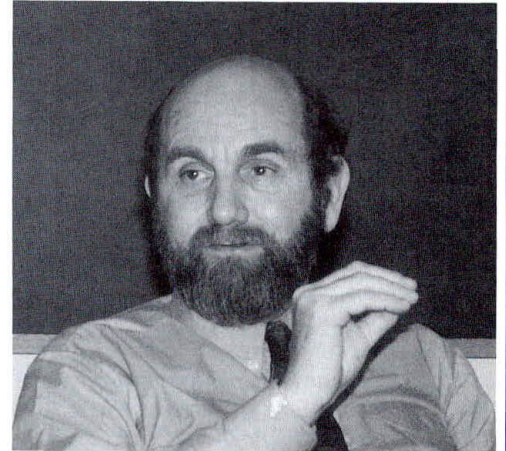
We are now extending support and assistance to families providing care as well, not just those needing care. Australia has a massive education infrastructure and this could be better used by the country to benefit others, for example, as training centers for trainers.

John McCallum

Australians are beginning to discuss the potential for the export of expertise in aging and free exchanges of experiences in the region so that Asia can become regionally self-sufficient in aging expertise.

In the 1980s, maternal and child health (MCH) was the priority in many Asian countries and we could not get aging on the agenda. In the 1990s, MCH and other economic programs are still high on the agenda, but in countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand, they are beginning to talk about national plans and small allocation funds for aging projects.

It is difficult to find funding for humanitarian projects on aging. Many donor agencies believe that once you have an aging society, you have a wealthy country and it does not need aid. What they do not



Gary Andrews

recognize are some of the more specific problems caused by aging and rapid social development.

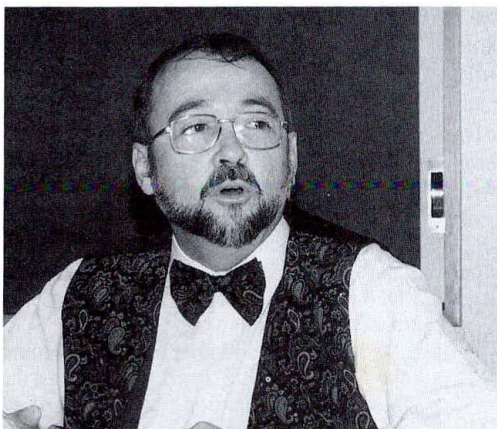
Migration of Young People

For instance in Thailand, the old-age structure of rural populations, due to the migration of young people to urban areas, has brought public media attacks on family planning. People young and old who migrate to squatter settlements have no access to services. Moreover, in the new big cities in Asia, there are many old people who are not poor and are assumed to be taken care of by their families. In reality, the family members are out to work or school during the day, and they are old people stuck at home alone or with a maid and are very lonely. These problems are only being recognized by non-governmental organizations at this time.

The biggest problem in the area of aging is not in medical services as it is often believed. The establishment of welfare services is the problem. The question is how to make the transition from welfare homes to aged care service homes and to keep in mind that old people have special needs such as dementia.

Australia has expertise in coordinating and putting together a national aged care system. By coordinating, I mean among different service types such as acute and long-term care and among different levels of service national to local government. It is time for Australia to learn from Japan about exporting her experiences. JOICFP's aging seminars and experience-sharing among Asian countries have been very effective in spreading new ideas. There is an enormous job to be done in aging and this can only be accomplished through cooperative efforts.

2



John McCallum

Promoting Integrated Healthcare

The use of mass examination and treatment of parasites as a practical means to stimulate awareness of health issues was emphasized in a unique set of resolutions made at the 15th APCO Parasitologists' Meeting, held in Tokyo from July 19 - 21. Highlighting the effectiveness of using mass parasite control (PC) as an entry point and partner for other healthcare activities such as family planning (FP) and maternal and child health (MCH), the resolutions reaffirmed the commitment of the Asian Parasite Control Organization (APCO) group of experts to supporting health and welfare activities in developing countries, particularly through the promotion of the Integrated Project (IP). The resolutions, which reviewed the contributions made by APCO to the promotion of integrated healthcare, also emphasized the effectiveness of sharing Japan's postwar experiences in community-based health promotion.

Insights into Field Activities

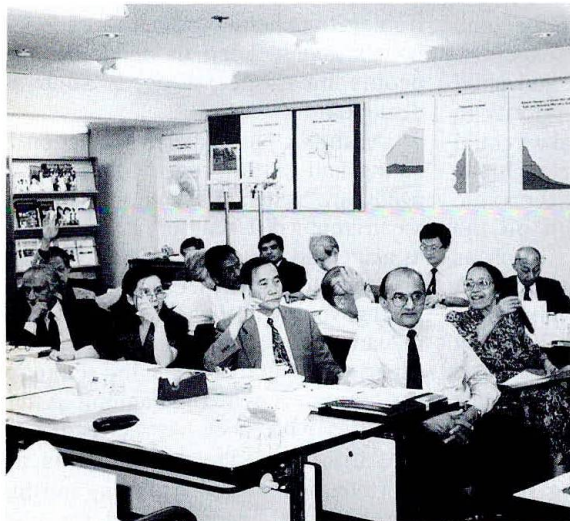
Attended by 31 participants including leading parasitologists and healthcare officials from 11 countries, the meeting consisted of presentations of research reports and discussions. JOICFP Chairman and APCO Secretary Chojiro Kunii provided an overview of the progress in IP-implementing countries in his secretary's report and updated participants on events concerning APCO and JOICFP. Insights into the promotion of the IP in the field were also provided by Dr. D. N. Chatterjee, project director,

Integrated Parasite Control & Family Welfare Project, Dooars Branch, Indian Tea Association, who attended as an observer.

The 15th event of its kind, this year's meeting was sponsored by the Japan Keirin Association and the Hoken Kaikan Group and was organized by the Japan Association of Parasite Control (JAPC) in cooperation with JOICFP.

The resolutions were created in view of next year's UN International Conference on Population and Development and reaffirm the conviction of the APCO group of experts to continue its strong support to develop integrated healthcare in other regions of the world. Outlining the benefits of using mass PC integrated with other health and welfare activities, the resolutions note the low-cost and simple-technology advantages of PC and the immediate impact that the activities have on community people who see worms expelled after treatment. The resolutions point out that by quickly improving the health of the people, PC helps build trust between the health worker and the community people, who in return are more likely to participate in activities to improve their health and take initiative in securing safe drinking water and improving environmental sanitation.

Present at the opening session was Jaehee Wilder, director, UNICEF Tokyo. Addressing the participants, Wilder commented that her organization is interested in APCO's experience "in promoting mass parasite examination and treatment, using relatively simple, low-cost technologies, and with the participation of mothers, school teachers and children, as an entry point into broader community health and development activities." "Another important principle that you have successfully maintained is to make all those activities self-sustaining both from systems and financial points of view," she said. "I very much look forward to strengthening our cooperation with JOICFP and APCO, in our common effort to improve the health and well-being of children and women, and in empowering communities to help themselves."



Participants share information and experiences.

Growing Support for NGOs

The Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications announced on June 18 that JOICFP will receive assistance from funds donated by the Japanese public to support projects implemented in six countries for the period of July 1, 1993 - June 30, 1994. Allocated from funds collected through the Voluntary Deposit for International Aid (VDIA) scheme during fiscal 1993 (April 1, 1992 - March 31, 1993), the assistance earmarked for JOICFP projects amounted to a total of ¥50.122 million (US\$411,000 at an exchange rate of ¥122 to US\$1). The assistance allocated this year will support the ongoing projects in Brazil, Guatemala, Mexico, Nepal, Tanzania and Zambia, which received initial VDIA support last year.

VDIA Scheme

Coordinated by JOICFP, the funds will be used to purchase equipment and materials and dispatch experts to support the activities implemented by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the respective countries under the Integrated Project (IP). The majority of the IP activities supported in the countries are community-based and are geared to raising the levels of health and welfare of women and children.

The VDIA scheme, administered by the ministry, was launched in January 1991 to assist Japanese NGOs implementing projects in developing countries. Under the scheme, members of the Japanese public commit 20% of the interest earned on deposits in VDIA accounts held at post offices to support the Japanese NGOs which work with local NGOs in developing countries.

Growing Account Holders

Despite a dramatic increase in the number of account holders to 10.45 million (as of March 31, 1993) from 6.74 million (as of March 31, 1992), the amount of funds collected in FY1993 declined due to a drop in the interest rate on the accounts. The fall in the interest rate from an annual average of 3.1% in FY1992 to 2% in FY1993 was reflected in the total amount of funds collected under the scheme which dropped from ¥2.32 billion in FY1992 to ¥2.185 billion in FY1993. The interest rate for VDIA accounts is currently 1.56% (as of July 1, 1993).

Overall, VDIA assistance was approved for 240 projects this year, down from the 250 of last year. A total of 524 proposals for VDIA funding were submitted by 341 Japanese NGOs this year.

Meanwhile, the number of VDIA account holders continues to swell in Japan as the scheme attracts attention from people of all ages as a practical means to assist people in developing countries.

Japan's Elderly Rise as TFR Dips

Elderly households soar as total fertility rate sinks to historic low of 1.50

Japan's birthrate continued to fall in 1992 with the total fertility rate (TFR) hitting an all-time low of 1.50, according to a report from the Ministry of Health and Welfare (MOHW). The figure, down 0.03 from 1991, is far below the replacement level fertility of 2.1.

The ministry also reported that the total number of births fell in 1992 to 1,208,977 in 1992, down 14,268 from 1991. The natural increase rate — the difference between those who were born and those who died — was 353,541 in 1992, down 39,907 from 1991, according to the government.

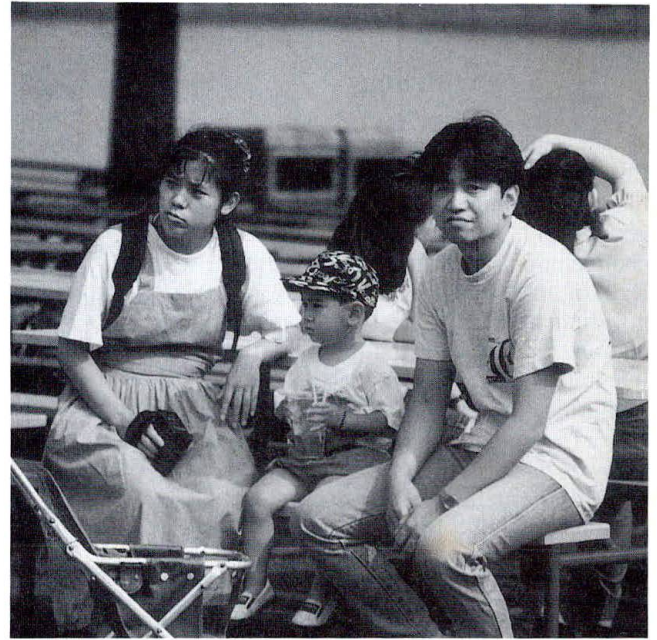
The falling birthrate, expected to reach its lowest point in 1994, is gaining considerable attention by the government which is concerned about the rapid aging of the Japanese society and the burden that increased pensions and social costs

will place on younger tax payers.

In its analysis of the declining births, the ministry noted the decline in the number of women of child-bearing age and pointed to the increase in the number of women choosing to marry later after pursuing higher education and careers.

The average marriage age for a woman marked a postwar high of 26.0, while that for a man was 28.4 in 1992. Moreover, recent related surveys indicate that marriage is losing its allure for a growing number of people in Japan. The MOHW reported that the number of divorces in Japan marked an all-time high of 179,198 in 1992.

Meanwhile, the average life expectancies of Japanese men and women remained the longest in the world, according to the MOHW. The average life span of Japanese men declined slightly to 76.09 in 1992 from 76.11 in 1991, while Japanese women averaged 82.22 years, up



A young family in Tokyo.

from 82.11 in 1991.

Indicating the graying of Japanese society, the number of elderly households hit a record in 1992, the MOHW reported. According to the report, the number of households headed by single men over 65, women over 60 or couples where both are older than those retirement ages, marked 4.88 million in 1992. The figure, up 3.6% from 1991, was triple the number of 17 years ago. 7

An Active Role for the Media

Toshihiro Horiuchi, editorial member, NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation), took part in an international media seminar organized by UNFPA in Lisbon, Portugal, from June 30 - July 2. Held ahead of the release of UNFPA's 1993 State of World Population Report, the seminar gave special attention to the report's theme of migration and covered a number of topics including population trends; the relationship between population and development; and the vital role that the status of women in society plays in determining population growth and economic development. On return to Japan, Horiuchi highlighted several issues in a report on the seminar. Below are some highlights of his comments.

The seminar provided valuable input for the media, particularly ahead of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) to be held in Cairo, Egypt, in September next year. Migration, the theme of this year's seminar, affects countries on a domestic level, but we should recognize that migration is an international issue. The domestic affairs of a country

reflect the world situation; people move as refugees and migrant workers as a result of international issues.

In an overview of the world situation, UNFPA emphasized that population is growing rapidly. In its highest projection, UNFPA estimates that the world's population could reach 30 billion by the end of 22nd century.

In its assessment of migration issues, UNFPA's report notes many reasons such as political, environmental, economic and social issues for people to move, but stresses that the world is finite and that there will come a day when there is nowhere to move. As representatives of the mass media, our job is to identify the reasons why people resort to migration.

We reviewed migration situations around the world. In Europe, for example, many countries invited foreign workers to support economic growth, but as their economies slowed, many are sending these people back and are restricting access. This kind of treatment will be cause for North-South conflict in the future. The pressing issue for developed countries is to assist developing countries to attain



A view of the seminar.

sustainable development. One very important factor is human resource development. By assisting the South in promoting education, the North will contribute to the sustainable development of developing countries.

The world is considered borderless in terms of communications and travel. But this concept does not apply to mass migration and refugees. We need to work towards a peaceful North-South coexistence since we are all members of the same global family.

Voice of Voices

By Chojiro Kunii

A New Bridge

My colleagues and I recently visited China as guests of the State Family Planning Commission of the Chinese government. We were invited to attend a commemorative ceremony at the Great Hall of the People organized by the government as an expression of appreciation for the contribution that the Integrated Project has made to China. The project has now been expanded to cover 16 provinces in China. It applies many of Japan's postwar experiences in development and health and its acceptance at the grassroots indicates that the people consider its approach as effective.

Twelve members of our mission representing Japan and JOICFP listened to the words of appreciation expressed by the Chinese participants. Approximately 150 Chinese representatives joined the event attended by Dr. Wu Jieping, vice chairman, Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, and Minister Peng Peiyun of the State Family Planning Commission among others. In response, we expressed our strong wish that the IP in China will continue to develop and expand.

IP Training Center

During the field visit to Taicang County in Jiangsu Province outside of Shanghai municipality, I visited the building site of the IP Training Center. We had previously discussed the plans in Beijing and the Japanese team had very high expectations for this center which represents a very significant bridge between Japan and China.

On return to Japan, we organized a meeting to report on the visit. A video film prepared by our Chinese colleagues documented the above events and was very useful in this meeting. The mission members from JOICFP, the Japan Association of Parasite Control and the Hoken Kaikan Group spoke in detail on the assimilation of the IP in China.

We were asked many questions by the members of the press, medical associations and preventive health at the meeting. Discussions were also held on how the agricultural cooperatives and women's associations in Japan can cooperate with China in the future. Further practical cooperation efforts such as those initiated under the IP will be expected of Japan. [J]

DIARY

JOICFP Program Officer Hideyuki Takahashi visited Ethiopia to attend a tripartite IP review meeting and visited Kenya to hold discussions with officials of IPPF and the Kenyan government while in Africa from June 6 - 20.

Dr. Hirofumi Ando, deputy executive director, accompanied by Jyoti S. Singh, director, Technical and Evaluation Division, UNFPA, visited JOICFP to exchange information while in Tokyo from June 21 - 24.

Cecile Joaquin-Yasay, executive director, Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development, visited JOICFP on June 28 to exchange information.

Heather Lynch, Henry Luce scholar, visited JOICFP on June 30 and July 1 to exchange information about school health programs.

Katsuhide Kitatani, consultant, UNFPA, accompanied by Kyoichi Nakamura, information officer, Information and External Relations Division, UNFPA, attended a press conference on the state of world population on June 30 while in Japan from June 25 - July 3.

JOICFP Program Officer Sumie Ishii and staff member Sono Aibe were in Laos to prepare for the UNFPA-supported "Sustainable Community-based FP/MCH Project with Special Focus on Women" and in Thailand to exchange information with UNFPA officials while out of Japan from June 27 - July 10.

An 11-member Chinese mission led by Yao Jianhe, director, Family Planning Commission, Yu Yao City, Zhe Jiang Province, was in Japan from June 28 - July 11 to study community-based healthcare including parasite control activities under a seminar organized by the JAPC in cooperation with JOICFP.

Eight participants from eight Asian countries took part in the Seminar on Population Aging, held in Japan from July 5 - 16. The theme of the seminar was "health promotion and medical services for the elderly to meet the changing needs of an aging population."

JOICFP Program Officer Hiroshi Taniguchi was in Indonesia from July 8 - July 21 to gather information for *Integration* magazine.

Dr. Adi Sasongko, project director, IP, Yayasan Kusuma Buana, Indonesia, was in Japan from July 11 - 14 to hold discussions with JOICFP in preparation for the Management Workshop to be held in Indonesia from October 14 - 23.

Colleen Cording, education resource consultant, Asia/Pacific Region, Tampax Health Education Service, and Emiko Okazaki, brand manager, Marketing Division, CBIC, visited JOICFP to exchange information about IEC materials for women's health on July 20.

Representatives from 11 countries participated

in the 15th APCO Parasitologists' Meeting, held in Tokyo from July 19 - 21. The event was organized by JAPC in cooperation with JOICFP.

Dr. Hirofumi Ando, deputy executive director, UNFPA, visited JOICFP on July 28 and 29 to exchange information.

Lamine N'diaye, director, Africa Division, UNFPA, and Dr. Richard Turkson, regional director, Africa Regional Office, IPPF, were in Japan from July 26 - July 31 to participate in the 6th Tripartite Meeting for the Africa Region and to meet with Japanese government officials.

A nine-member evaluation team organized by JOICFP was in Vietnam from July 26 - Aug. 6 to exchange opinions with key persons involved in the IP and to observe community-based healthcare and development activities. The mission was accompanied by JOICFP Program Officer Sumie Ishii and staff member Mariko Honma.

JOICFP Documentary Series

A New Documentary Film

Maria

33 mins., Color; English, Spanish, Japanese



Our latest documentary film features two Marias from Guatemala — a country over 50 percent of whose population is comprised of indigenous people.

Nana Maria, a traditional birth attendant and faith healer who still follows the Mayan tradition closely, strives to protect the health and decrease the burden of the women in her village. Citydweller Maria Teresa wishes to get closer to indigenous women like Nana Maria.

This touching film outlines the awakened women trying to protect themselves through action.

Distributed by

Sakura Motion Picture Co., Ltd.

Yoyogi Center Bldg., 57-1 Yoyogi 1-chome

Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 151, Japan

Tel: 81-3-3320-6311/Fax: 81-3-3320-7666

Telex: J34799 ITCINBTH

16mm • VTR (Beta, VHS/NTSC, PAL, SECAM)

JOICFP NEWS is a monthly newsletter published by the Japanese Organization for International Cooperation in Family Planning, Inc. (JOICFP). JOICFP NEWS welcomes your comments, suggestions and contributions. Please mail to:

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