

JOICFP NEWS

Kazutoshi Yamaji Dies at 90

Japan loses active supporter of population and development issues

JOICFP Senior Adviser Kazutoshi Yamaji, 90, died suddenly in Tokyo on September 5 of heart failure. A leading supporter of population and development issues domestically and internationally, and widely recognized for his humanitarian beliefs, Yamaji served as chairman of JOICFP from 1971 - 1988 after holding the position of executive director of JOICFP.

Following his graduation from Kyoto University, Yamaji began his career in 1930 as a journalist with the Mainichi Shimbun, a major daily Japanese newspaper that is well-known for its contribution to spreading awareness of population issues within Japan. He held many distinguished posts during his life including the position of official secretary to former Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi.

Yamaji's involvement in the population and development field was intensified during his years with Kishi, the first parliamentarian to recognize the importance of population issues to the future of the world. Kishi went on to establish the Japan Parliamentarians Federation for Population (JPFP) in 1974, the world's first suprapartisan parliamentarian body supporting population and development issues. Yamaji was instrumental in supporting Kishi's efforts in this field in his position as the former prime minister's right-hand man.

As a key player in the population and development field, Yamaji did much throughout his life to develop guidelines for the activities of parliament and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) including JOICFP. He also played an important role in gaining the support of the Japanese government for international bodies such as UNFPA and IPPF.

Yamaji was also one of the founders of JOICFP in 1968 and maintained his close affiliation with the organization



Kazutoshi Yamaji

up until the time of his death. As the leader of a mission to China in 1980, he helped pave the way for more open relations between Japan and China in the field of population.

Contribution to China

Through this mission, an agreement was drawn up to begin the Integrated Project (IP) in China which is now helping to improve the way of life at the grassroots. Yamaji's contribution to China was remembered in a message of condolence sent to his family by Chinese government officials.

Following the death of Kishi, Yamaji maintained his involvement in the population and development field and actively supported the work of JOICFP President Takeo Fukuda. As a prime minister of Japan, Fukuda followed Kishi's footsteps and took the lead in the population and development field.

The funeral ceremonies for Yamaji were held on September 7 and 8 and attended by

500 people. Dr. Nafis Sadik, executive director, UNFPA, and JOICFP Chairman Chojiro Kunii joined the many parliamentarians, government officials, representatives of NGOs, friends, colleagues and family members attending the ceremony.

Addressing the mourners, Fukuda recalled the support provided by Yamaji and his contribution to population and development issues. "Yamaji was an ideal partner to Kishi, not only in the political sphere, but also in the population and development field," he said. "Kishi was the first to realize that population issues were a priority matter for the future of the world." Stating his appreciation that Yamaji and Kishi together worked to bring population issues to the attention of the public, Fukuda added that it was because of their efforts that he

recognized the importance of these issues.

"Every year, the population of the world increases by 100 million people," Fukuda said. "At this rate, the present world population will increase from 5.5 billion to reach between 8 to 10 billion within several decades." Calling for action to tackle the problem, Fukuda said that population issues will determine the future of all human beings. "There is no time to delay. We must take action now," he said. "Twenty or 30 years can pass so quickly." In summing up Yamaji's contributions to the field, Fukuda called on people to carry the torch in the population and development field.

Following the death, the Yamaji family received condolences from all over the world. Among the messages received were condolences sent on behalf of Dr. Fred Sai, president, IPPF, by Secretary-general Halfdan Mahler and Assistant Secretary-general Mark Laskin; Joseph Van Arendonk, deputy executive director, UNFPA; and Bernard Aluvihare, former assistant secretary, IPPF.

Migration on the Continent

Lamine N'diaye, director, Africa Division, UNFPA, and Dr. Richard Turkson, regional director, Africa Regional Office, IPPF, spoke to JOICFP NEWS on July 30 about migration in Africa. Below are highlights of their comments.

Lamine N'diaye

Migration is going to be a very big issue in Africa. It is created by inequalities — economic and social disparities — that push a lot of people to look for other places where they can improve the quality of their lives. On the African continent, some countries are relatively well off compared to others, and these attract people from countries where the economic situation is less promising.



N'diaye

Another kind of migration affecting Africa is international migration. There is resentment with this migration in Europe where countries are revising their immigration policies to be more restrictive. However, there are some jobs in those countries that the nationals do not want to do which require the work of immigrants.

The migration situation is unavoidable because of the population factor. Africa's population is growing at a rate of 3%, but the economy is not growing. In other words, there are countries which cannot accommodate the new entrants into the labor market. For survival these people have to look beyond their frontiers. As long as the countries don't improve their economic situation the flow of migrants will intensify in the future.

Richard Turkson

Migration on the African continent can be attributed to various sources. One major cause is people trying to find fertile farming land. Population pressure on limited land resources does lead to all kinds of problems including migration.

IPPF aims to improve the quality of life of the population through FP. For a long time we have worried about the population resource imbalance. But if we can encourage individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of

their children, some of the pressures that we do have on available resources will be considerably reduced and thereby the quality of life would be enhanced.

Migration can also be the internal movement of people within a country. For example, rural-to-urban migration. But if life is made more attractive in the rural areas, people are less likely to move to the cities in search of non-existent jobs.



Turkson

Another cause of migration, political turmoil, is something that has to do with the sustainability of institutions that are foreign to us in Africa. When we talk about democratization, we are basically talking about the Westminster model of parliamentary democracy in its various forms, which have not survived too well in the "alien" cultures of Africa. I do not know what the alternatives are, but this long search for viable forms of government — viable within the context of our cultures — has led in most parts of Africa to such problems as political turmoil and to the kinds of situations from which people have to flee.

Plan of Action for Africa

The 5th UNFPA/IPPF/JOICFP Tripartite Project Review (TPR) Meeting for the African Region provided participants with an opportunity to review tripartite cooperation and the development of the Integrated Project (IP) in Africa and to discuss the future program development in the field of population and family planning (FP) and maternal and child health (MCH) in the region. The meeting, held in Tokyo from July 27 - 30, was attended by Lamine N'diaye, director, Africa Division, UNFPA; Dr. Richard Turkson, regional director, Africa Regional Office, IPPF; and representatives of JOICFP.

In the four countries of Tanzania, Zambia, Ghana and The Gambia, the IP is jointly funded by IPPF and JOICFP with support from UNFPA on a regional basis. The project in Ethiopia, meanwhile, is the only UNFPA-funded country IP in Africa and is presently in its first phase. One of the topics discussed in Tokyo was the establishment of an institutional collaborative framework with IPPF, which recently created the position of officer-in-charge of the IP in Africa. As another part of this collaboration, IPPF has been conducting monitoring missions in the IP areas since 1992.

During the TPR, participants examined progress made since last year in the projects in Tanzania, Zambia, Ghana, The Gambia and Ethiopia and identified areas for further discussion. As part of these talks, a procedure for independent evaluation was also discussed and finalized at the meeting. It was agreed that an independent evaluation will be conducted with the support of both UNFPA and IPPF by the first half of 1994. This evaluation will involve two consultants and target the countries of Tanzania, Zambia, Ghana and The Gambia.

PANFRICO-IV

The Regional Workshop of the Integrated Project (PANFRICO-IV), scheduled to be held in The Gambia from September 27 - October 1, was also on the meeting agenda. Participants suggested that French-speaking countries such as Central African Republic, Madagascar and Senegal be invited in addition to the 12 nominated countries — Cameroon, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia — and that the workshop should include intensive discussions on lessons and experiences gained from field observations.

While in Tokyo, the UNFPA and IPPF

representatives met with Japanese government officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Ahead of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, the Japanese government is reviewing its current bilateral assistance in the field of population and FP. The discussions with the UNFPA and IPPF officials were very timely and effective for increasing government awareness and understanding of the needs in Africa.

The representatives also expressed their appreciation to the Japanese government for serving as host to the Tokyo Conference on African Development scheduled to be held from October 5 - 6 and voiced their wish that the population issue be seriously addressed at this conference.

As another activity, the African representatives paid a courtesy call on Kazutoshi Kato, mayor, Toshima City. N'diaye and Turkson expressed appreciation to Kato, who also serves as president of the Municipal Coordinating Committee for Overseas Bicycle Assistance (MCCOBA), for the support extended by the local government association to countries in Africa.

An Opportunity to Share

For a team of healthcare professionals from Fukushima Prefecture, a visit to China provided a welcome opportunity to observe the activities of the Integrated Project (IP) being conducted at the community level. The study tour had special significance for the visitors, many of whom have contributed to the development of the project in China since 1983 by assisting study tours of Chinese IP personnel in Fukushima. The team, which was in China from July 31 - August 9, was completely self-funded.

The team was headed by Dr. Kyoko Ishige, director, Nihonmatsu Prefectural Public Health Center and consisted of



Dai children in Xishuangbanna.

seven members of the Nihonmatsu, Hobara and Fukushima prefectural public health centers; Fukushima Health Service Association; and other health-related institutions. Arranged by JOICFP, the study tour was joined by one JOICFP member.

By observing the actual situation of FP/MCH and other health aspects in China, the tour did much to deepen the understanding of the Fukushima officials. To provide the participants with a broad view of the health situation in China, the tour included field observation in the IP area of Jiangchuan County, Yuxi Prefecture, and in Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture. Both are located in Yunnan Province on China's southwest border.

Launched in 1990, the IP in Jiangchuan County has succeeded in improving the way of life at the grassroots. The infant mortality rate (IMR) has fallen from 60.46‰ to 30.63‰, while the contraceptive prevalence rate has increased from 61.22% to 92% between the end of 1989 and 1992. The crude birthrate, meanwhile, has dropped from 2.3% in 1989 to 1.7% in 1992.

During their stay, the Japanese visitors were able to observe many of the activities of the IP and speak with locals to gain an



Participants view a methane-gas-powered light in a farming family's house in Jiangchuan County.

understanding of the community motivation behind the project successes.

In Xishuangbanna, meanwhile, the team was introduced to the hardships experienced by the people living in the poor, mountainous areas of the prefecture. Despite the area's reputation as a popular tourist spot, the team learned that parasite infection is extremely high in some communities and that the IMR is as high as 120‰. The visitors were told that the people of the prefecture were interested in implementing the IP in the future.

An enlightening experience for the Japanese visitors, the tour was effective for deepening the understanding of the health situation in China. Summing up the experience, the team stressed the importance of firsthand observation. [J]

A Broader View of FP/MCH

A group of internationally minded Japanese gained insights into the family planning (FP) and maternal and child health (MCH) situation in China during a study tour organized by JOICFP from August 17 - 30.

The team of nine members was self-funded and comprised representatives from the public health and preventive health field, the mass media and two university students.

This year's tour included visits to two areas where the Integrated Project (IP) is being implemented. The projects in Qujiang County, Shaoguan City, Guangdong Province, and Hepu County, Guangxi Autonomous Region, were launched in January this year under the fourth phase of the IP. The study tour also took in Hainan Province in the south where the team visited Hainan Island, a large island that occupies most



A baby receives a checkup at a health center in Beihai City, Guangxi Autonomous Region.

of the province's 35,730km² of land.

During the observation in the project areas, the team was briefed on all aspects of the IP by local steering committees and held discussions with local people involved in the project. To observe IP activities, the team visited such facilities as stations for epidemic prevention, MCH and FP at the county level as well as town hospitals, farm houses and homes for the aged.

Launched only eight months ago, the projects in the two areas are still in the initial stages and have target populations

of 47,300 and 42,188 in Qujiang and Hepu counties, respectively. According to the results of a baseline survey taken last year, the infant mortality rate is 38.29‰ for Qujiang and 37‰ for Hepu. In both counties, socioeconomic status is very low, while parasite infection is very high. During their observation of the IP areas, participants learned that the project had already had a positive impact on the awareness of the community people, particularly through its various healthcare and IEC activities.

The time spent in Hainan Province offered a different perspective of FP in China. Around 1.1 million of the province's 6.864 million people belong to minority groups. Under the Minorities' Population Policy, groups such as Hainan's Li and Miao ethnic minority groups are allowed to have two to three children per couple.

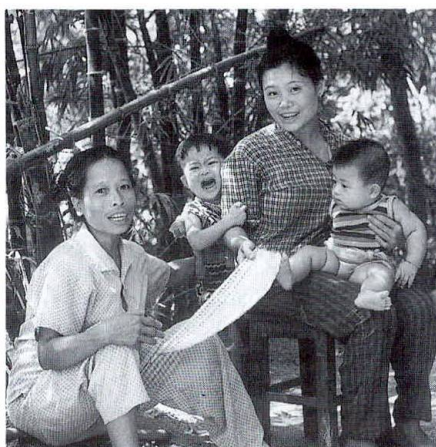
Well-received by the team members, the study tour provided insights of different FP/MCH situations in China. As such, it did much to deepen the understanding of the tour participants of the FP/MCH needs of people in communities in China. [J]

Building a Support Network

A study tour to Vietnam, arranged by JOICFP from July 26 - August 6, gave Shojiro Kuroiwa, vice mayor of Yabe Town, Suzaka City, an opportunity to take a more active part in the international cooperation activities set in motion in Nagano Prefecture by his wife, Teruko Kuroiwa. A member of the Suzaka Women's League, Teruko Kuroiwa has carried out an active campaign to support health, community development and women in development activities promoted in Vietnam under the Integrated Project (IP) since returning to Japan from a JOICFP-organized study tour last year.

Impressed with the enthusiasm of the people she met in IP communities in Vietnam in 1992, Kuroiwa organized a series of events to win support for women in Vietnam. Since her trip, she has written a 12-part series of articles for the local newspaper of Suzaka; organized 20 lecture meetings; held three photo exhibitions and published a booklet on Vietnam. The proceeds of the book, some US\$1,500, have been used to establish revolving funds in IP communes.

Kuroiwa, who joined the 1992 tour as a representative of the Nagano Chapter of Women's Leagues, has also been instrumental in gaining further support from members of the women's leagues for the IP in Vietnam. In 1992, the Nagano chapter donated a total of US\$3,850 to the project. Most of the funds have been used to support small-scale income-generating projects. Under the scheme, families borrow US\$50 to set up small enterprises. Since the loan system was established in 1991, all loans have been repaid with interest. The scheme, first launched in Nghi Long



Women and children of Nghi Long Commune in Nghe An Province.

Commune, Nghe An Province, has now spread to 10 of the 70 communes where the IP is implemented.

Women's Network

To further expand the ties that have been established between women in Japan and Vietnam, this year's study team included two representatives of the International Women's Education Association of Japan. The association, which aims to establish a women's network in Asia, is planning a study tour to Vietnam this year. The five other members of the tour included the vice mayor, a government official, two educators and a midwife. All members were self-funded.

Aimed at deepening mutual understanding between Japan and Vietnam and strengthening the network in Japan to support the Vietnamese people, the tour included observation of IP activities in four provinces. In Hanoi, the members received a briefing on the IP in Vietnam at the Ministry of Health and paid courtesy calls to the Embassy of Japan and UNFPA, where the members held discussions with the country director for Vietnam. The team also visited Tu Du Hospital and a family planning and maternal and child health center in Ho Chi Minh City.

Providing varied insights into the health and community development situation in Vietnam, the study tour was welcomed by participants as an effective vehicle for creating awareness and gaining support for the people in Vietnam.

Keys to Refining FP Programs

A mix of senior administrators of family planning (FP) programs of government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) made for very lively discussions during the Seminar on Family Planning Administration for Senior Officers II, held in Japan from August 23 - September 10. Attended by 16 participants from 15 countries and one observer, the seminar was marked by the active involvement of participants in the Tokyo sessions and keen interest in the field observations in Oita Prefecture.

Exchange of Experiences

A forum for the exchange of information and experiences to improve FP program administration, the seminar offered Japanese postwar experiences in FP and maternal and child health (MCH) and the country's demographic transition process as a case study. The seminar was sponsored by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and executed by JOICFP. Course leader was Dr. Minoru Muramatsu, former chairman, Population Association of Japan.

Providing participants with a broad understanding of FP/MCH promotion in postwar Japan and the activities of the Integrated Project (IP), the Tokyo sessions also offered insights into such issues as adolescent health, IEC activities, reproductive health and AIDS. Participants showed particular interest in the session on "Family Planning and Reproductive Health: Taking a Women's Point of View," presented by Yuriko Ashino, deputy executive director, Family Planning Federation of Japan (FPFJ). The first of its kind, the session stimulated active discussions among the participants.

Self-reliance Strategies

Throughout the seminar, participants showed genuine interest in learning the keys to the success of FP/MCH promotion in Japan. Among the areas highlighted as important to this success were the utilization of midwives and public health nurses to promote FP and the collaboration between government organizations and NGOs. Impressed with the high level of self-reliance achieved in Japan, the participants were especially interested in the self-reliance strategies of the Japan Family Planning Association including the sale of IEC materials.

The field trip, the highlight of the seminar for most participants, provided firsthand observation of healthcare activities conducted by both government and NGOs in Oita Prefecture. In particular, participants were impressed with the role played by *Aiiku Han* MCH volunteers, who effectively promote healthcare in rural communities in Japan.



Participants examine IEC materials at a community health center in Long An Province.

3 Perspectives of Population & FP

Three participants of the Seminar on Family Planning Administration for Senior Officers II spoke with JOICFP NEWS about the family planning (FP) challenges in their countries and gave their impressions of the seminar. Below are highlights of their comments.

Uganda

Bernice Nima, executive director, Family Planning Association of Uganda

The most outstanding challenge facing the family planning association is to change our orientation from an urban-based clinic service to a rural delivery system. We need to strengthen the integrated approach and community-based distribution to improve service delivery. Integration is cost-effective

because the same person can provide FP, MCH, nutrition and primary health care services. It would also confuse rural populations less if there were not a number of



Nima

people providing information.

Our next challenge is the program on family life education (FLE) for our out-of-school youth. Our third challenge is to retrain our staff in the management and counseling for AIDS.

Our fourth challenge is to strengthen the association's institutional capacity and logistics for effective management. Our fifth challenge is to explore and strengthen collaboration with government agencies, donors and other non-governmental organizations involved not only in FP, but in other related health areas such as MCH, AIDS and safe motherhood.

One point I would like to mention about the FP/MCH field in Japan is the importance of official support for health projects. The government defines policies and creates an official "motto" or slogan for the mission. The community then organizes and works towards that slogan and can look back and see if those objectives have been achieved. In this way, there is official guidance and the

government is actually involved in what is going on at the grassroots.

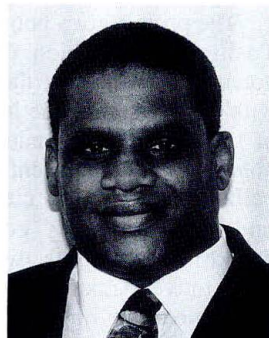
Another point worth noting is the effective use of volunteers. There is a strong spirit of voluntarism in Japan and it has been effectively exploited and used to promote health. However, at the grassroots level, I feel that women have been overused and men's groups have been under-used in Japan. All the FP volunteers and MCH volunteers here have been women. In our situation, I would like to use both men's and women's volunteer groups.

Saint Lucia

John La-Force, executive director, Saint Lucia Planned Parenthood Association (SLPPA)

Family Planning services are mainly provided by the government. But the government cannot do this on its own because of financial limitations. At present, it obtains contraceptives through the USAID project, but this project will cease in July 1994. I have a lot of fear that the government will not be able to provide contraceptives on its own accord through the FP program in the future. Hopefully, SLPPA will be able to obtain contraceptives from IPPF to fill the gap.

SLPPA is not self-reliant. We realize 40% of our budget in local income and depend on



La-Force

IPPF for about 60%. This total still does not cover our needs, especially in such areas as IEC material production.

This seminar has been quite revealing in terms of methods we can adopt to promote self-reliance. On return to Saint Lucia, I will try to come up with as many ideas as possible to promote self-reliance during meetings with the board. However, self-reliance is always very difficult with a

very small population. Saint Lucia has a population of about 138,000.

That is why we need to have regional groupings such as the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States to procure supplies and produce IEC materials cost-effectively.

Papua New Guinea

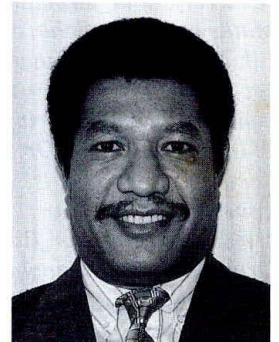
Dr. Onne Rageau, vice president, Papua New Guinea Family Planning Association

The total fertility rate of PNG is about 5.6 and our population is officially just over 3 million. Realistically, however, I think it is closer to 4 million.

One of the major problems we are facing in FP is the lack of coordination between the Health Department and the FPA. The government makes policies, but they do not reach down. Only the people in the upper levels practice FP because they know about its benefits.

One of the main things I have learned from the seminar is the importance of integration. In PNG, people are having problems obtaining essential medical services for such problems malaria, chest infections and diarrhea. Health centers in PNG are such in name only and have virtually no drugs. Thus, most villagers go to big hospitals to get medical services. Family planning, however, is preventive healthcare and is best promoted at the community level. It does not work well to promote FP through the big hospitals which are filled with sick people. These people do not want FP.

Family planning should be integrated with something that is not so technically difficult to implement such as parasite control. We should go to the communities where the parasite infection rate is high; provide treatment; show them that they have parasites; and give them health talks which include FP information. In this way, we can involve the community. [E]



Rageau

Extending a Helping Hand

Local governments in Japan strengthen support for people in developing countries

A visit to Japan gave a government official and project directors of the Integrated Project (IP) in two African countries a rare opportunity to express their appreciation to members of the Municipal Coordinating Committee for Overseas Bicycle Assistance (MCCOBA) for the support extended to the people of their countries. In talks with local government officials, Dr. Gottlieb Mpangile, director of programs, Family Planning Association of Tanzania (UMATI), and director, IP, and Dr. Mathewos Wakbulcho, coordinator, IP, Ethiopia, explained that the support of local Japanese governments is contributing to improving the way of life in IP communities. Dr. Mathewos was accompanied on his visits to local governments by Dr. Adem Ibrahim Mohammed, director, Bureau of Health, Oromia Region, Ethiopia, an area where

UMATI Awarded

The Family Planning Association of Tanzania (UMATI) was awarded this year with the Matsushita Electric Union (MEU) International Volunteer Activities Prize. The MEU honor was the third for UMATI which was awarded a prize of US\$20,000 for its contribution to improving the quality of life and the well-being of people living at the grassroots in Tanzania. The association was nominated as the most worthy recipient of the award by the government of Tanzania and by the workers of the Matsushita Electric Co.'s factory in Tanzania. Among UMATI's activities considered by the MEU for the award were those being conducted under the Integrated Project (IP). This year's prizes were targeted at non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Africa and were also awarded to NGOs in Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire.

The MEU award was established in 1990 by the union to celebrate the company's 45th anniversary and are viewed as a means to establish solidarity among the workers of the union and grassroots NGOs.

Christina Nsekela, executive director, UMATI, officially received the prize from the union on July 27 in Osaka, Japan.



Musashino Mayor Masatada Tsuchiya (front) speaks with the two Ethiopian officials.

the IP is implemented in rural communities.

A pioneering body, MCCOBA has been active in donating reconditioned bicycles and other materials and equipment to developing countries since 1988 to support the promotion of integrated healthcare and community development efforts at the grassroots.

Comprising 14 local governments and JOICFP, the organization sent a total of 7,025 bicycles overseas by the end of 1992, 3,175 of which were sent to Africa. Of the 3,000 planned to be sent overseas this year, MCCOBA intends to send 2,400 to Africa. In addition to bicycles, MCCOBA has also sent a range of other items such as reconditioned treadle sewing machines to support women in development activities.

Notebook Donations

The project got a boost this year from Toshima City which donated 20,000 notebooks to support the IP. Produced with the support of the local cooperative of 180 printing companies in the city, the notebooks are being sent abroad with the collaboration of the city office which budgeted to jointly cover the bookbinding costs with the cooperative. Arakawa City further broadened the impact of these activities by arranging for the donation of pencils from the pencil manufacturers' cooperative in the city. To date, 100,000 pencils have been donated under the scheme and are being sent abroad with the notebooks within the spaces between the bicycles in the shipping containers.

During his stay in Japan, Mpangile paid a courtesy call to Mayor Teruo Ishizuka of Itabashi

City on September 6 and to Mayor Shingo Amano of Shizuoka City on September 13. The two Ethiopians, meanwhile, paid a courtesy call to Mayor Masatada Tsuchiya of Musashino City on September 6. They later visited Deputy Mayor Nobuo Tomita of Arakawa City with Mpangile on September 10.

Commenting on the bicycle donations from MCCOBA, Mpangile said that the bicycles served as a source of motivation to improve the effectiveness of their work. "In rural areas where means of transport are expensive or scarce, the bicycles are a

working tool for the field workers who conduct their home visits after they have finished their farm work," he said. The bicycles are often used to carry goods and sick people, he added.

Motivating the Community

Noting the effectiveness of the donations, Mathewos said that notebooks from Toshima City will be used as a motivational tool to promote health education among school children. "I appreciate the donations because they motivate the community," he said. "When the people gather for distribution, we tell them the concept of the IP and about family planning." The IP director added that he hoped that further efforts for technical transfer would be made in the future to promote self-reliance among the communities.

The Tanzanian representative also made time to pay a courtesy call to the Voluntary Deposit for International Assistance (VDIA) of the Ministry of Posts and Communications on September 13 where he met with Terutoshi Sano, director, VDIA Office. 1



Itabashi Mayor Teruo Ishizuka shakes hands with Mpangile.

Women Take Initiative

Mothers' Clubs stimulate Indian women to seek better way of life

Dr. D. N. Chatterjee, project director, Integrated Parasite Control and Family Welfare Project, Dooars Branch, Indian Tea Association (ITA), spoke with JOICFP NEWS on July 20 about the project which is being implemented in Dooars with the support of UNFPA and UNICEF and the technical cooperation of JOICFP. Below is an outline of this comments.

Our project covers tea plantation workers and has three major components. The first is parasite control. The second is family welfare, which includes immunization, nutrition, maternal and child health, control of communicable diseases and family planning. The third, is environmental sanitation.

In 1991, I attended the APCO training course in Bangkok where I heard about the role of the mothers' clubs in project implementation. This is how we came up the concept of establishing mothers' clubs under our project.

Mothers' Clubs

Now each tea estate has a mothers' club. To form them, the trade union selects about 20 women workers from each estate. We suggest that the women are literate, active in the community and accepted by the community people. We then give this group five days' training in health and family welfare.

However, before we could start training these women, we had to train our own staff. Communication is very important to this process because illiteracy among the people of the estates is about 60%. For women, only about 15 - 20% are literate. Therefore, we had to develop communication techniques.

There are 125 tea estates with a population of half a million. The estates are divided into seven sub-districts and each of these has an area supervisor. These people are my eyes and ears, are highly skilled communicators and are the ones who organize the training.

After the training, the mothers' clubs

organize meetings in the labor lines — the rows of houses on the estates. Female plantation workers are very busy. They have to work two shifts, both as workers on the plantation and as mothers.

What we expect from the mothers' clubs is that once or twice a week all the mothers from adjoining houses sit and talk together about anything they have learned from us. The content of these talks may not be so technical, but the important thing is that these talks stimulate thinking among the women.

We have found after establishing the

clubs that mothers have come up with their own priorities. Our project priority, is to propagate the small family norm so that people can achieve a better quality of life. We also feel that every couple has a right to decide the size of their family and has a right to the necessary information and services. The mothers' clubs, however, have chosen their own priorities. The number one is alcoholism, a problem that has been on the estates for a century. Thanks to these clubs, alcoholism has now come down on a number of estates.

Another area in which they have been engaged is literacy. They have started night classes on their own and are collecting subscriptions and paying a literate person to conduct them. This was also one of our objectives, but was not a primary one.

Through this experience, I now feel that we must first ascertain the local needs for any community project to succeed. If you first satisfy the immediate local needs it will help to get a project started. Then you can produce your own objectives.

Through the clubs, we have given women a platform. Before, these women workers had no status. Even though women earn more than their husbands because they are much better tea pluckers, the husband is the lord of the house. Now we have given them a kind of identity. The club members wear a special sari with a green border and carry a kit bag with some material when they go out to do project activities so that people know that the mothers' club is coming.



D. N. Chatterjee

Project in Nepal on Track

The groundwork was laid in Nepal for the implementation of the new UNFPA-supported regional project entitled "Sustainable Community-based FP/MCH Project with Special Focus on Women" during the visit by a JOICFP mission, which was in the country from July 27 - August 7. The project is to be implemented in the new area of Sunsari District and the former Integrated Project (IP) area in Panchkhal, Kavre District.

Joined by Project Coordinator Subarna Shrestha and resource person Savitri Basnet, the JOICFP mission visited Sunsari District. Among the progress noted was the establishment of a district-level local steering committee and the formation of health committees in all six project villages. One of the major points discussed with committee members was the function of the steering committees and the importance of maintaining a broad composition of people with different backgrounds and skills.

The visit also provided the mission with a good opportunity to distribute copies of

JOICFP's recent publication: *The Evaluation Report of the Integrated Family Planning and Parasite Control Project in Nepal*. The publication contains the results of an independent evaluation conducted by Dr. Ramesh



A volunteer displays a VDIA-supplied health kit.

Kant Adhikari and Jeev Krishna Shrestha from November 1 -17, 1992. The report was welcomed by the people involved in the new project as a source of strategies to improve project effectiveness.

Meanwhile, the mission also learned that progress was being made in Panchkhal where project workers and female volunteers have received training. A total of 155 primary healthcare kits donated under the Voluntary Deposit for International Aid (VDIA) scheme were also brought for distribution to personnel. In a meeting with members of the cooperation committee of Panchkhal, the mission also discussed the project and various issues concerning its sustainability.

While in Nepal, the JOICFP mission paid a courtesy call to the UNFPA Country Support Team Office for South & West Asia and met with Team Leader Shahida Azfar and team members Joo-Hyun Lee and Dr. Rita Thapa.

Voice of Voices

By Chojiro Kunii

Going to China

Two years ago, after I made a decision to visit China this year, my daily life began to change dramatically. My afternoons were spent taking slow walks around my neighborhood using a walker for support. I was determined to rehabilitate my body after my long illness to ensure that I was strong enough to meet with my old friends in Beijing.

My colleagues in Tokyo were going to accompany me to China and I wanted us to reminisce about the events of the last 10 years with our Chinese friends. This trip would also provide an opportunity for me to show my appreciation to the people in Fukushima Prefecture who have received study tours of Chinese visitors over the last 10 years.

I viewed the trip as a high point of my life's work. In Beijing, our colleagues from government and non-governmental bodies were waiting. These were the people who have been tackling China's population problem through activities in the maternal and child health and community development fields for the last 30 years.

Integrated Project

Thanks to our joint efforts in the last decade, the philosophy of the Integrated Project (IP) of Japan has been accepted in China at the township, county and village levels in regions as far as Inner Mongolia and Yunnan Province.

On the morning of the ceremony held in Beijing on June 12 to mark the 10th anniversary of the IP in China, government officials welcomed us with speeches. That afternoon, during the ceremony at the Great Hall of the People, I was deeply moved by the project experiences that were recounted by people from different walks of life who have been involved in the IP.

In the villages, the IP philosophy from Japan has won the hearts of a broad spectrum of people including village leaders, the elderly and mothers. The Chinese people have related to what we Japanese experienced in the years after WWII. China has also undergone many changes since the the People's Republic of China was established in 1949. More recently, the Chinese people have been steering a course toward peace and development. In particular, rapid development that has been taking place in coastal zones and this has been getting a lot of attention in the media.

In Taicang County near Shanghai, we attended a ceremony at the building site of the IP Training Center. In her address, Peng Yu, vice minister of the State Family Planning Commission, commended the Japanese efforts and expressed her high hopes for the Training Center. The center's approximately 13,000 m² site has already been prepared.

The ceremony in Taicang was very moving for me. As I looked back on the hard work that led up to this event, I quietly prayed for the success of the Training Center. J

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Workshop for the Production of Video Script on Women's Health

JOICFP is organizing the above workshop under the joint auspices of UNFPA and IPPF.

Date: November 29 - December 4, 1993

Venue: Tokyo and Saitama Prefecture, Japan

Participants: Representatives from Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, UNFPA, IPPF and other related agencies

Objective: To produce a regional prototype video script to facilitate the production of a video which promotes awareness of women's health issues

Note: Self-funded observers are welcome to attend this workshop. For further details, please contact JOICFP.

DIARY

JOICFP Program Officer Aiko Iijima was in Nepal and Thailand from July 26 - Aug. 7 to hold discussions on the "Sustainable Community-based FP/MCH Project with Special Focus on Women" and the use of VIDA funds.

An eight-member study group headed by Dr. **Kyoko Ishige**, director, Nihonmatsu Health Center, Fukushima Prefecture, was in China from July 31 - Aug. 9 to observe IP areas. The mission was accompanied by JOICFP Program Officer Yukio Honma.

Mark Mellman, researcher, Mellman Lazarus Lake, Inc., visited JOICFP on Aug. 3 to gather information on FP in Japan and Japanese international cooperation activities for a research program of the Rockefeller Foundation.

Juliet Richters, lecturer, Department of Public Health, University of Sydney, visited JOICFP on Aug. 27 to exchange information on women's health and FP in Japan.

A nine-member study team was in China from Aug. 17 - 30 to observe IP areas. The mission was accompanied by JOICFP program officers Yukio Honma and Yoshitsugu Kanno.

JOICFP Program Officer Ryoko Nishida was in the Philippines from Aug. 29 - Sept. 3 to discuss the UNFPA-supported regional project entitled "Sustainable Community-based FP/MCH Project with Special Focus on Women" with officials of the Department of Health and UNFPA.

Dr. **Nafis Sadik**, executive director, UNFPA, was in Japan from Sept. 5 - 9 to give a series of lectures in Tokyo, Kobe and Yamanashi Prefecture and to meet Japanese government officials and members of parliament. She also attended the funeral ceremony on Sept. 8 for the late Kazutoshi Yamaji, senior adviser and former chairman of JOICFP. She was accompanied by Dr. **Hirofumi Ando**, deputy executive director, UNFPA, who was in Japan from Sept. 1 - 10.

New Appointment

Dr. Muneo Yokogawa, professor emeritus, Chiba University, was appointed chairman of the Japan Parasite Control Association (JAPC) on September 1, 1993.

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. City-dweller 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.

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