

“CUDCC” for Qualified Leadership & Good Governance of Credit Unions

IMPLEMENTATION OF ACCU's Strategic Plan and the “Changing Leadership Competency Strategy” took a significant step forward last December when trainers representing fifteen National Federations attended the “Master Trainers Training” in Chiang Mai, Thailand. This workshop was the culmination of ACCU's efforts in response to member requests to produce a Director Training Program aimed at raising the level of awareness among elected Directors of Credit Unions and Cooperatives throughout the Asia Region.

As part of the program development, an Experts Accreditation and Practicum was conducted last June in Bangkok when twelve experienced Trainers trialed the course, made suggestions and worked hard as a team to further refine the content. We were all thrilled when Bing Cabal and Charlie Samson returned to the Philippines and through the combined efforts of NATCCO and PFCCO, introduced CUDCC to 29 Directors who have now completed the program.

Entitled the “Credit Union Director's Competency Course” (CUDCC), it is designed to cater for the needs of all National Federations and consists of ten modules, all related to a significant area of responsibility assumed by volunteers when they become Directors. A comprehensive manual has been prepared which provides guidance and relevant materials for Trainers when conducting the course on behalf of their National Federation.

Each Module includes a related Project, which must be completed by participants before they achieve recognition for completion of the course, and these must be submitted to the CUDCC Registrar appointed by each National Federation, who is responsible for maintaining the standards as required by ACCU. While the Training Manual and all associated training aids are supplied to National Federations it will remain the intellectual property ACCU, although it will be up to each National Federation to decide on local funding arrangements to conduct the Course.

How will CUDCC be accepted by volunteers?

Credit Unions and Cooperatives around the world have long recognized that good governance is the key to their sustainability as member owned financial institutions.



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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

New Year's Message to Asian Credit Unions

Dr. Augustine K. Lim



DEAR COLLEAGUES, LEADERS and Members of credit unions in Asia! The bright new year of 2006 greets us with a wonder and expectation. As President of ACCU, I would like to convey my greetings of this New Year and a few words of message to you all.

Last year we had suffered from tragic calamities all over the world. The number of deaths is 112,000, about 80% of which was by the great earthquake of Pakistan, and the amount damaged comes to 225 billion dollars. 3 million people lost their houses by the deadly blow of the earthquake in the Kashmir area. The hurricane Katrina, American history never had, made a surprise attack upon the southern coast of the States. The Pope, John Paul II, accomplished the role of cessation of the cold war between East and West, sought reconciliation with Judaism and Islamism, and passed away in the sorrow of the world. In spite of his efforts toward reconciliation, the EU Constitution, which is to hold the fate of European unification, is now in a

dying condition because of the veto by each referendum in France and Netherlands. Simultaneous were the bomb terrors in London, the riots spreading over the whole French territory and color violations in Australia. In China, rose serious birds influenza, concern about 2% raised of Yuan, and tremendous oil demand etc., worrisome nucleus problems of North Korea too. In this maelstrom, there won a peace agreement between Indonesian Government and Antigovernment force. India and Pakistan opened the boundaries of their effective control and hope for Iraq rehabilitation, etc.

Looking back our credit union movement in Asia, I think sometimes we have had hardships difficult to overcome for ourselves, sometimes we have marched with flying colours. Anyhow, I believe each member country has made their efforts to better their own credit unions than ever in their own ways, and probably more or less they've made some achievements or more or less they have hard time in order to survive in the midst of competition or poor management. The problems we have confronted and suffered are perhaps either outside or inside of ourselves. Generally speaking, it exists in ourselves which is the experience of history.

As you know well and as I always emphasize, a primary credit union in the field is alpha and omega for our credit union movement. Everything must come from it and goes back to it. Either International or internal upper organization is the one organized to help these fields, nothing more than that.

In order to achieve this purpose well, higher organizations have to

“People-oriented, people-based, and people-centered are our never-forgotten spirits.”

learn and scrutinize our fields more than ever. In this sense, the last year's workshop in Khavarsk of Russian Far East was well-selected and well-organized; all the concrete and realistic problems were discussed on the table. All the attendees were both active speakers and careful listeners. They were not theorists but specialists who have had practical experiences. Solutions are not brought but produced by themselves.

My dear Colleagues, Leaders and Members of Asian Credit Unions, every credit union is managed in respective country different each other in culture, tradition, environment, among which culture is most influential. Nevertheless we have two precious assets: one is the credit union nine managerial rules all the credit unions should observe, if not, credit union either loses its identity or it is destroyed, and the other is poor people; all the credit unions should nourish, educate, organize and protect. People-oriented, people-based, and people-centered are our never-forgotten spirits.

Dear Colleagues, Leaders and Friends, in this hopeful New Year, especially let's make strenuous efforts to newly build up our credit unions toward more safe and sound institutions. Let's make a start forward our way to go! May God bless you and keep you! ■

Andrew So finds new cause in raising ethical values

CREDIT UNION PIONEERS in Asia would certainly remember Andrew So Kwok-ming for his dedicated work and contribution in building the Asian credit union movement – which he spent a great deal of his voluntary service.

It may seem like a break from his former positions as legislator and ombudsman but Andrew So Kwok-ming thinks his work promoting ethical values in education and business is a continuation of his lifelong career in public service.

“A lot of people say we are fighting an uphill battle, but we are not doing too badly within our scope,” he said referring to his work with the Hong Kong Institute of Education Leadership, a non-governmental organization he helped set up about 1997 to promote ethics and personal development.

The institute runs training courses at cost for parents, teachers and youth workers. Since his tenure as ombudsman ended in January 1999, Mr. So had devoted much of his time to the institute, which he serves as chief administrator.

“The idea of an institute to promote basic human values stemmed from my involvement in education,” Mr. So said. “We [at the institute] promote human values such as responsibility and respect,” he said. “Others may regard love and peace as more important – but we consider sense of duty, especially among the young – to themselves, to society and family and country – as especially important.

“I won’t describe myself as a religious person but I share Christian values. I study Buddhism, Taoism, and I am a Catholic, but I regard my



work as spiritual work. Spirituality is anything that transcends the physical – anyone who is doing some good work for society is performing spiritual work.

“I found that such an institute is so important and should be done by an NGO. I believe the private sector and volunteers are more effective than a [government] agency [in promoting value education and business ethics]. Maybe eventually the government would see the need for it, and start working with [NGOs], or they would subside it.”

Mr. So was the pioneer President of ACCU in 1971. He also served in the Board of ACCU until 1983, then a delegate of the Credit Union League of Hong Kong.

Mr. So is still very much a friend to ACCU in his personal capacity. He was the first person to respond to the appeal of ACCU for the Tsunami rehabilitation fund. Mr. So is an avid supporter of the Asian Credit Union Forum. He attended the Forum in 2002 in Thailand and 2003 in Malaysia as resource person.

EDITORIAL

THE YEAR 2005 culminated with the Master Trainers’ Training on Credit Union Directors Competency Course (CUDCC). Fifteen countries were represented - which means 15 CUDCC programs will be up and running in the year 2006. CUDCC is meant to address the existing challenges in the governance and professional management of credit unions in Asia. The course would equip the credit union boards with broad understanding of the external environment that directly or indirectly pose threats or opportunities to credit unions. In light of these internal and external challenges, credit unions must focus on improving flexibility and efficiency as well as creation of new supporting units to serve the members. Thus, credit union boards must be capable to direct the operation of the credit union to stay relevant to their members and community.

CUDCC is an experiential learning process that equips board with knowledge on professional management combined with basic philosophies and values of credit union. All the master trainers [26 of them] had prepared an action plan to implement the program. The year 2006 would be another milestone for the movement, as the CUDCC will kick off by January. Some federations intend to make it compulsory for directors. ACCU is preparing itself to support the national federations in their implementation.

It could be challenging at first, but nothing is impossible in this world. ■

More than 10,000 credit union enthusiasts turned up at CULT's ICU Day Celebration



INTERNATIONAL FLAVOR: Flags of ACCU's member countries fly high on stage as Board of Directors of CULT greet the more than 10,000 attendees of the celebration (Left Photo) Credit union staff hold a glittering oil lantern to be released to the sky of Chiang Mai. Thousands of lanterns were flown that night symbolizing the number of lives touched by credit unions.

WHEN SAHAPHON SANGMEK, General Manager of CULT informed that more than 10,000 credit union enthusiasts would attend the 2005 Celebration of the International Credit Union Day on December 11, there appeared to be no reason to doubt that the expectation would work. Busloads of credit union enthusiasts, wearing fuchsia shirt, came in the morning of December 11 to Chiang Mai from different provinces of Thailand, to celebrate the International Credit Union Day just like one family. After all, the celebration was very organized considering the number of people attended.

The celebration kicked off with the educational forum in the morning of December 11. Mr. Manit Ratanasuwan and Mr. Sunai Setabunsang, Deputy Ministers of Agriculture and Cooperatives offered different perspectives in the modern management of credit unions in the competitive economic environment. Mr. Bobby McVeigh, the immediate past Chairman and current Director of the World Council of Credit Unions, inspired the attendees in his presentation of the Canadian experi-

ence – which highlighted its beginnings and achievements. McVeigh impressed the credit union leaders in sharing that one in every three Canadians is a member of a credit union and that the credit unions offer all services the banks offer. After the educational forum, attendees visited credit unions and important tourist places in Chiang Mai. The city is one of the famous tourist destinations in Thailand.

Well-known Asian credit union leaders such as Dr. Augustine K. Lim, President of ACCU and other Board members of ACCU such as Dr. M. Letchumanan, Treasurer and Mr. Michael Koisen, Secretary graced the celebration. Along with the ACCU Board of Directors were the 26 participants of the Masters' Training on CUDCC from 15 countries in Asia. The Board of Directors of the Asian Women Cooperative Forum (AWCF) also joined the fun-filled celebration in the evening of December 11. The sprawling ground of the Chiang Mai 700 Years Stadium had racked up an impressive occupancy record, managing to fill space as more than 10,000 attendees joined in the evening celebration.

Attendees released glittering oil lanterns to the sky of Chiang Mai, suggestive of the number of lives touched by the credit unions in Thailand.

Since 2000, CULT had set a record of more than 3,000 to 5,000 attendees in the International Credit Union Day celebration. This year's celebration is the biggest ever. The credit union Chapter in the South happily accepted the hosting of the 2006 ICU Day celebration. It will be organized in Phuket in the month of December. Mr. Supachai Srisupaaksorn, President of CULT extended invitation to the international delegates. Sahaphon said CULT usually organizes a belated celebration of the ICU Day because it coincides with His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's month long birthday celebration in December.

ICU Day, celebrated annually across the globe since 1948, offers an excellent opportunity to promote the credit union difference. Each year, the international day of observance brings people together to reflect upon their cooperative history and achievements while promoting the international credit union idea. ■

WCCS Double Bash Celebration: 25th Anniversary & ICU Day

LIKE A CANDLE that gives light in the midst of darkness, was how Dr. Letchumanan, founding Chairman, described the Workers' Cooperative Credit Society (WCCS) at the double bash celebration on November 27, 2005: the 25th anniversary and International Credit Union Day celebration.

Thrilled members of WCCS from across Malaysia waited for the announcement of the lucky recipients of free air tickets to Bali, Indonesia, television sets and motorbikes at the almost filled Stadium of Juara, Bukit Kiara in Kuala Lumpur. "This is our simple way of showing our gratitude to our members for their growing support to WCCS and their incessant effort to reach economic sustainability," said Gopal, General Manager. The celebration highlighted the theme of the ICU Day: **"Members**

Make it Happen" Campaign making it as one of the important missions of WCCS.

The celebration was also an opportune time for WCCS to honor great leaders and pioneers whose unrelenting commitment have upheld the present organizational values, financial strength and good image of WCCS in the country.

Founded in 1980, WCCS was organized to serve the lowest income-earning people and protect their human rights. "WCCS is achieving



HONORED: Pioneers and Leaders are honored for upholding organizational values, good image and financial strength of the Workers' Cooperative Credit Society at the celebration on November 27 in Kuala Lumpur.

our mission. We have helped our members get out of poverty. This is an achievement we are celebrating today," said Dr. Letchumanan.

By M. Annamalai, DE, WCCS-Malaysia

"CUDCC"

When those first credit unions were formed and members raised their hands to volunteer for election as Directors, they accepted enormous responsibility on behalf of their members.

This has never changed, we have all volunteered on behalf of our members to do the best job possible and while Management has generally been trained to do their job, it has not always been possible for the Director to access relevant training. So here now is the opportunity for Directors to ensure the sustainability of their Credit Union through good governance and qualified leadership, it is no surprise that some National Federations are already moving to make CUDCC compulsory for all Credit Union Directors. As we move to more



CUDCC Master Trainers representing 15 countries: Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Hong Kong, India, Korea, Nepal, Malaysia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, Sri Lanka, Taiwan ROC and Thailand

intense Regulation, the Regulators will welcome CUDCC as a significant indication of Credit Unions and Cooperatives being responsible and sustainable Member Owned Financial Institutions. Director Training has the enormous impact throughout the

Credit Unions and Cooperatives of Asia and ACCU is to be congratulated on taking this crucial step in response to the needs of its Member Federations.

By Bill Field, ALMI, Chairman, WAW Credit Union ■

Russians Exerting Development of Credit Unions in the

By DR. AUGUSTINE K. LIM, PRESIDENT-ACCU

PLEASE EXCUSE me for my writing on the Conference at Khabarovsk. I wish to share you all my experience. As President of ACCU and of NACUFOK, I was invited to attend the International Conference on Microfinance of Small Business. I was supposed to make welcome speech, present "Prospects of the Development Movements of the Credit Unions of the Republic of Korea. Experiences, problems" and play the role of a leader of section work on "the State support and legal regulation of micro-financial activity, the practice of creation and development of legislative base of micro-financing in Asia Pacific region." This Conference was co-organized by four institutions: Inter-regional Association of Economic Cooperation of Subjects of Russian Federation "Far East and Zabaikalye," Government of Khabarovsk Region-Ministry of the Economic Development and International Relations of Khabarovsk Region, Association of Asian Confederation of Credit Unions and Inter-regional Association of Credit Unions of the Far East and Zabaikalye.

On October 31, I with my Secretary flew three hours over to Khabarovsk by Dalavia Air. At about eight o'clock p.m, I stepped down on the land of Russia full of my concern and interest. Hope and even fear because I was first here in this vast country in my life. About two hours passed for immigration procedures. Our dear Russian Chairman Vladimir and Ranjith hugged us with warm welcome. Once again, I felt credit union people are always and everywhere surrounded by warmth of friendship. Is this solidarity we ever foster? Sure it is! Our Chairman, Vladimir V. Mamaev drove us with his van and along the road to Hotel Intourist in down town. The evening street lamps



WOMEN LEADERS: Dr. Augustine K. Lim (5th from left) and Ranjith Hettiarachchi (3rd from left), Ekaterina Ovchinnikova (center), General Director Interregional Association of Credit Unions of the Far East & Zabaikalye and women leaders of Russian credit unions

were twinkling with peaceful snugness unable to express in language.

Around 9 o'clock on October 14, Vladimir drove his van to Hotel Intourist to take us to the hall of the session of the Legislative Assembly of Khabarovsk Region where the day's program was to be conducted. The hall plenary session went on was already full of participants from Moscow, three Republics, six areas, two regions, two territories. The number of participants was 104. They were specialists from the various fields: governments of special regions, cooperative societies, credit consumer cooperatives, advisors, lawyers, the legislative assembly of special territories, the savings banks of Russia, and fund of support of small business etc. Their active and sincere participation was most outstanding, at which I was much impressed.

At 6:30 p.m. after the day's program ended, we moved from Hotel Intourist to the Spring of Health for the next day's section work. It took one hour by bus to this Spring of Health, which seemed to be used for either

education and training or sanatorium or rest. The weather seemed to be early winter cold and dreary. It was considerate of me to carry my overcoat with me for winter.

In the evening, here we were treated with special Russian dishes and entertainments. In particular, the Russian folk performances, dances with songs, were par excellence: the most unforgettable I've ever experienced.

At nine thirty on the next day, October 15, our section work began. All participants divided into three sections. The first section I belonged to was to deal with "the State support and legal regulation of micro-financial activity. The practice of creation and development of legislative base of micro-financing in Asia Pacific region." Here we entered into the more detailed bottom of this problems, regulation is necessary to protect but sometimes it impede development, another time it threatens entity. A subject of economic entity requires legislation for its maintenance and its being sustainable. Nevertheless,

s in the Market Economy



RUSSIAN ENTERTAINMENT: *In particular, the Russian folk performances, dances with songs, were par excellence: the most unforgettable I've ever experienced.*

when social and economic situation changes and difficult to keep its identity, legislation is obliged to be changed. This is a matter of legislative techniques. Many heated debates were exchanged in this section work.

After the section works ended, we went into plenary session in which the head of each section performed before the whole participants what his or her section had discussed. Applauses and bursts of laughter arisen at every humor and wit of presenters. At 13:30, on October 15, closing of the conference went this way. To tell the truth, it was great fortune that my participation earned me some valuable experiences from this conference. First, Russian people are very more interested and exerting themselves in developing their societies which require the principle of cooperation by people and competitive principle of market. They seem to pretty much count upon credit union or savings and credit society. Second, in order to increase the subjects of small business in quantity, they expect that micro-finance play a great

role and the subjects of small business make the best of use of micro-finance to develop their societies. In this sense, in spite of a little delay, it is praiseworthy for Russian people to have introduced market economy of capitalism. If well led, it would bring vitality to Russian societies and riches to both people and Russia.

Third, they have a good culture of debate and discussion in dealing with the matters they confront in their socioeconomic reality. During the full two days conference, they were all active participants, all listeners and all presenters. They summarized what they had presented, discussed, questioned and answered in the conference and adopted the resolution abbreviated for the attendants in which every matter to have been discussed in detail was described concisely. I have been still sorry to part Russian friends and Khabarovsk. Vladimir and his people drove us to the Khabarovsk Airport and saw us off to the last. I have to praise the Russian people for their beauty of being humane. ■

Forum Inspires Russian CEO



PARTICIPANTS OF THE ASIAN Credit Union Forum [ACUF] in 2004 in Korea and 2005 in the Philippines might have vivid recollection of the friendly Russians at the forum. One of them is Elena Volintsva, CEO of the Credit Consumer Cooperative "Trust" [CCCT]. "I learned a lot from the two forums I attended [in 2004 & 2005]. It was great opportunity for us to experience the warmth of credit union people no matter what country they represent. The fact that I belong to the global community of credit unions is very inspiring," said Elena. She published her experience in the newspaper wherein she highlighted the ACUF, the learning from the CEOs workshop, the friends and network relations she established. I am inspired by the Novaliches Dev't. Cooperative we visited in the Philippines particularly on how they help members fulfill their dreams," said Elena. "I am excited in attending the Forum in Sri Lanka in 2006 and wish to see all my friends again," said Elena.

Elena organized CCCT on her birthday. She said it was her birthday present. It had initial membership of 13 and share capital of Rubbles 4,000 (1US\$ 28 Rubbles). Today [after 3 years], it grew to 1,000 members and 17 million Rubbles in Shares and Savings. Elena claims the success was due to the sincere intention of the credit union to help people improve their lives. ■

FSCT playing dynamic role in CU development



NEW YEAR GREETINGS: Dr. Sawat Saengbangpla presenting a gift to Khunying Sudarat

DR. SAWAT SAENGBANGPLA, President of the Federation of Savings and Credit Cooperatives of Thailand (FSCT) along with Vice-President Mr. Anek Srisumronrungs, Secretary Ms. Sumron Siriwat, and Committee Member Mr. Chahomphol Dhuyasumhon paid a courtesy visit to the office of Khunying Sudarat Keyuraphan, Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives. "This is a gesture of support to the program of the government in promoting and strengthening cooperatives as means of achieving economic prosperity," said Dr. Sawat.

FSCT has taken a step forward in helping developing credit union movements. ACCU received financial contribution from FSCT in organizing the Advance Training on Credit Union Management, held on January 22-28, 2006 in Thai

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Dr. Kiriwandeniya Appointed Chairman of People's Bank



AWARD TO RESPECTED CU LEADER: Dr. P.A. Kiriwandeniya (left) receiving the ACCU Recognition Award being handed by the Forum Chief Guest Tan Sri Kasitah Gaddam at the Asian Credit Union Forum in 2003 (file photo)

HIS EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT Mahinda Rajapaksha appointed Dr. Kiriwandeniya, Chairman of the SANASA Development Bank Ltd. (SDBL) and Leader of the SANASA Movement of Sri Lanka as the Chairman of the People's Bank.

Government owned People's Bank is the largest commercial bank of the country employing more than 10,000 staff members and operating more than 300 branch networks. At the inception, the bank was established to serve the cooperative sector. Dr. Kiriwandeniya has a great challenge to lead the People's Bank and focus on its original objective while maintaining high standards in the SANASA Development Bank and SANASA movement.

Dr. Kiriwandeniya is a prominent credit union leader in Asia. He was recipient of the 2003 ACCU Recognition Award, a well-regarded title bestowed to individuals with valuable contribution, dedicated involvement in strengthening savings and credit cooperatives in his country and Asia

as a whole.

Dr. P.A. Kiriwandeniya is a well-known cooperator in Sri Lanka since 1978. He pioneered the revitalization of Savings and Credit Cooperative movement in Sri Lanka. He served in several key positions in Sri Lankan cooperative sector, such as First Secretary and President of the Federation of Thrift and Credit Cooperative Societies Ltd. in 1982- 2000 and President of the National Cooperative Council of Sri Lanka. He was an active member of the Board of ACCU. He had served as Secretary from 1987-1988 and 1996-1998 and President from 1989- 1990.

The movement honored Dr. Kiriwandeniya on December 21 at the Oriental Hotel in Colombo. Dasanayake, General Manager of SANASA Federation said it is a sign of trust bestowed upon our Leader and this is something that the movement should be very much thankful. Dr. Kiriwandeniya indicated his eagerness to interact with credit union leaders at the 2006 Asian Credit Union Forum in Sri Lanka. ■

“Savings, Foundation of every Thai Family,” Minister



SAVING HABIT: Khunying Sudarat (4th from left) putting in saving to a saving box while Mr. Pimon Srivikorn, Member of Parliament (3rd from left), Mr. Supachai Srisupaaksorn, CULT President (5th from left) and other high ranking government officials look on.

WHEN KHUNYING SUDARAT Keyuraphan, Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives mandated the Cooperative Promotions Department (CPD), Credit Union League of Thailand (CULT) and the Cooperative Auditing Department (CAD) to promote credit unions in Bangkok last March 2004 at the Annual General Meeting of CULT, it created high spirits and challenge for the three organizations to work as a team to reach the vision of the Minister. In response to this call, the three organizations successfully organized the 3rd seminar on “Strong Economy and Strong Community with Credit Unions” last January 15 in Bangkok.

Speaking at the seminar, the Minister explained that Bangkok, considered as one of the Mega Cities in Asia, has a diverse population. She said the philosophy of “People Helping People” practiced by credit unions over the years would be a big help to solve social and economic problems in the Bangkok communities. The Minister underscored

savings as the foundation of every Thai family to the extent that the habit of savings creates and encourages individual choice and responsibility.

“Credit union ensures that members assume bigger role in providing for their own sustainability, rather than depending for financial support,” said Mr. Supachai, President of CULT. “In this seminar, we are explaining how much do people due to take on these new responsibilities through financial literacy. The potential benefits about financial literacy extend beyond the individual. It has a positive economic impact to family, credit union, community and the nation as a whole,” said Mr. Supachai.

The program is targeting 300 credit unions organized in a period of two years. At present Bangkok has 50 credit unions. Eight hundred fifty residents of Bangkok attended the January 15 seminar. “The previous two seminars also drew total attendees of 1,600 Bangkok residents,” said Sahaphon, Gen. Manager of CULT. ■

FSCT’s Role

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land. The training attended by the promoters of credit unions in developing countries, is anticipated to build the capacity of developing credit union movements to accelerate their developments. FSCT had also supported similar training in the past.

Further, in January this year, FSCT announced its financial support to credit union development projects for Southeast Asian countries. FSCT would be granting maximum of US\$ 2,400 per project for two projects per year. Thematic issues such as environment, youth and women and innovative credit union development projects are some of the areas that will be supported by FSCT. “The project is the translation of our values: care for community we live in,” said Dr. Sawat. “It is an appropriate time for FSCT to share our resources to encourage innovation and development,” added Anan, General Manager. ACCU is coordinating the applications with member organizations and partner organizations in non-member countries.

Remarkably, FSCT and CULT are continuously extending commendable cooperation to visiting credit union leaders in Thailand.

For more information on the project, please e-mail ACCU at accu@aacccu.coop or send fax to: 66-2-374-5321.

Deadline for the submission of project proposal to ACCU is February 25, 2006. Applications should be submitted through ACCU.

Rebuilding communities & businesses remain big task a year after Tsunami



Solomon is still concerned that a most backward fishermen community [in the area of operation of DPG] are now living in an unhygienic temporary shelters. "They immediately need shelter to establish their lost family," said Solomon.

THE DEC. 26 TSUNAMI HAS—and is still—caused untold suffering for millions of people across Asia and parts of East Africa. And as the world marked the first anniversary of one of the worst natural disasters in history, the mental scars have far outlasted the physical ones in places like Kalutara in Sri Lanka — an area supported by the Asian credit union movement for the rehabilitation of 15 credit unions. The rehabilitation package includes construction of office building, 6 months salary of the General Manager and loan fund for microfinance. Dasanayake, General Manager of SANASA Federation said it would take time to heal the wounds but credit union members started to move on. Dasa said the credit union office buildings would be completed in January 2006.

Based on the report, the credit unions are making significant progress in mobilizing fresh capital through savings and shares. Dasa pointed out the big task for SANASA is supporting the credit unions build their capacity on microfinance to open up opportunity for members to start a sustainable business leading to continuous recovery. We are very thankful to Asian credit union movement for their unrelenting support to us, said Dasa.

Bakhter Solomon, the Executive Director of the Development Promotions Group, India was thankful to ACCU members for their contribution. The fund provided seed capital to DPG's 22 Self-Help Groups. It helped generate small income to meet the daily needs of the survivors. DPG had mobilized donations to build houses but was not enough to meet the requirements of the people, who at this present day are still suffering the impact of the disaster. Solomon is still concerned that a most backward fishermen community [in the area of operation of DPG] are now living in an unhygienic temporary shelters. "They immediately need shelter to establish their lost family," said Solomon. All of them belong to working class families, which have been making ends meet on daily labor in the trawlers and mechanized boats, owned by wealthy fishermen, said Solomon. The Government has constructed for them temporary habitats with "literoo" walls and roofs. Eighty five percent of the occupants use the sheds only for night stay due to the extreme heat from the "literoo" that emanates during the sunny day.

In Thailand, there has been much greater recovery in the past year, said Sahaphon Sangmek, General Manager of CULT. ACCU in partnership

with Rabobank Foundation supported the rehabilitation program of CULT. From the beginning, the Thais were blessed with good infrastructure and much better government coordination.

Most notably, Indonesia recorded the highest death toll and devastation on properties. The fund supported [by the credit union movement in Asia] for the rehabilitation carried out by CUCO was small amount compared to what they would actually want to achieve.

All countries affected have decreed a buffer zone of from 100 to 500 meters from the ocean, in which people are not permitted to rebuild to ensure their safety. The land and livelihood issues are key to people being able to build homes again, not continue in camps, and to begin to reconstruct their lives, not continue to depend on aid. One of the biggest quandaries in the tsunami reconstruction process was where to rebuild communities and businesses.

It is crucial now that the credit unions continue to support members and permanent housing so they can move forward to recovery. Ranjith said Microfinance has a scope in the rehabilitation process to sustain the efforts of SANASA, DPG, CULT and CUCO. Hope will still have to be tempered with a lot of patience. ■



from the MAILBOX

EXPRESSIONS OF THANKS FROM THE CUDCC MASTER TRAINERS

I safely arrived in Dhaka. Thank you very much for organizing a excellent Master Trainers' Training on CUDCC and giving us opportunity to attend in the ICU day celebration of CULT. Really, these events inspired us on the spirit of people helping people and power of partnership.

Ratan F. Costa, DE-CCULB, Bangladesh



Thank you for your support and assistance during our stay in Chiang Mai. I back home on 14th after the back-to-back AWCF meeting held in Chiang Mai. It was a very fruitful CUDCC workshop. It is our counterpart to organize in our respective country. We ensure the smooth implementation of this program.

We appreciate your tireless work in promoting and implementing world class Credit Union in this region. Thank you once again.

M. Annamalai, DE-WCCS, Malaysia



COOP EDUCATIONAL STUDY

DEAR RANJITH, LENI AND COL-LEAGUES: Thank you for the Christmas Card. It is wonderful to hear friends from far away places in this yuletide season. Last November 6 to 9, I and three companions from Tagum Cooperative traveled to Singapore and Batam Island, Indonesia on cooperative educational studies. There are many things to learn in the cooperative movement. Singapore is very impressive.

My daughter arrived today from an Asian tour that brought her to Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and Hong Kong. Her assessment is that each place has something unique to offer. But the biggest picture she brings home is a picture of herself riding on an elephant in Bangkok. I hope I can do the same someday. Regards,

Albert Omega, DE-Philippines Batch 2000



GETTING WELL!

DEAR RANJITH:

How are you? Thank you and all friends there for your kind regards. I am getting better and trying to come back to work as soon as possible. Do not forget me, I will email or call you all to remind you I am still here !!

Thank you again, your friendship is the import support for me to get better. Please also extend my appreciation to the friends there !!

Happy New Year!
Warm regards,

Daphnie Kho, DE-CULROC, Taiwan ROC



GREETINGS FROM WANG! (AUSTRALIA)

DEAR MASTER TRAINERS:

Greetings Master Trainers from Wangaratta!

On New Years Day it went over 40 degrees and very uncomfortable. I keep thinking of Daria and Baigalmaa in Mongolia with their low temperatures!!! There is also a very strong wind blowing which means if a bush fire starts, there will be no stopping it.

Hope you all had a very enjoyable Christmas with family. I really enjoyed your company in Thailand and came home very happy that we now have the Director Training Course out in the National Federations and ready to go in 2006. As you commence your Director Training, we will all be interested in how it is going and of-course ready to help where possible. It is a big step forward by ACCU and the benefits to members will prove very valuable in the future.

So let's all keep in touch and help ensure that we provide support and encouragement to each other in this important task.

Bill Field, DE, ALMI, Chairman, WAW Credit Union, Australia



Letters are welcome and should be addressed to the Editor, ACCU e-mail: accu@aaccu.coop.

The editor reserves the right to edit for clarity.

A million Thanks to all of you!

Credit Union People

NEW CEO:

MR. KIRAN RAMKRISHNA KARNAD was appointed CEO of the Maharashtra State Co-op Federation. Kiran brings with him an extensive 30 years experience in banking and 5 years in credit union coupled with an impressive educational background. His first task is ensuring members' needs are met. Mr. Kiran indicated his eagerness to learn from fellow CEOs. He was one of the participants of the Trainers Training on Credit Union Directors Competency Course and planned to institutionalize the program soon. ■



NEW CHAIRMAN:

MR. WITOON NAEWPANIT elected as interim Chairman of the Cooperative League of Thailand (CLT), the apex organization of all types of cooperatives. During his 6 months term, Mr. Witoon is mandated to introduce a more dynamic and member oriented structure for the league. He represents the consumer cooperative sector. CULT and FSCT are active members of the League and also share governance responsibilities in the League. ■



ACCU Diary

January - June 2006

22-28 JANUARY

Advance Training on the Management of Credit Unions
Bangkok, Thailand

9-13 MARCH

CEOs Workshop, *Malaysia*

13-14 MARCH

Regular ACCU Board Meeting, *Malaysia*

25-29 APRIL

Sub-Regional Workshop on the Principles of Good Cooperative Governance
Katmandu, Nepal

8-12 MAY

Business Development Center Training
Bangkok, Thailand

4-10 JUNE

8th Development Education Workshop
Bangkok, Thailand

11-15 JUNE

Regional Credit Union Directors Competency Course
Bangkok, Thailand

Note: regional programs only

The Association of Asian Confederation of Credit Unions is an alliance of national credit union leagues, federations and promotion centers of Asian countries. ACCU works in partnership with members to strengthen and promote credit unions as effective instruments for socioeconomic development of the people.

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