



ARI Training Report 2007

Tomoko Arakawa, Curriculum Coordinator

Firstly, I am wholly thankful for God's abundant blessings and guidance on our 2007 Rural Leaders Training program at the Asian Rural Institute. I am also deeply grateful for the assistance and cooperation of friends and supporters, who helped make it possible for us to complete this year's training program and send out 23 quality graduates of 11 different nationalities.

This year we continued to emphasize practical leadership training through group field management as a core of our training. In this field management system the group leader was rotated every three weeks, and by the end of November, each participant had completed their leadership term. At the conclusion of each leadership term, group members together with staff members did a "leader's reflection" from the point of view of "servant leadership," the standard that ARI holds as an ideal image of a leader. In addition to this leader's reflection, this year, we discussed the roles of followers -



how followers are able to support a leader efficiently and how a follower can contribute toward the benefit of a whole group. Based on this discussion, we also reflected on each member's contributions and roles as a follower. Through this system, we believe that each participant was able to nurture his or her servant leadership, both while they served as a leader and during the time they were a supporting member of the group.

Summarizing the participants' written reflections of the training, there were three big areas of learning that impressed them most. The first was Servant Leadership in the daily field management activities as mentioned before. But also they observed that through taking part in the daily life of a self supporting community, they gradually changed their image of themselves as a leader. Now they are loud proclaimers of Servant Leadership. Many participants determined to change their own way of leading their people in their own homes, organizations, and communities. **They strongly say that they will listen to the voices of the people and stand at the same level as the people and work and sweat together with them.**

The second was practical sustainable organic agricultural training. Participants were able to acquire practical skills in sustainable organic agriculture by involving themselves directly in the daily planning, implementation, and reflection in the production of crops and vegetables and the management of livestock. Now many participants have plans to start their own new organic farms in order to pass on these skills to the local farmers. Especially they see organic farming as a way to rescue those farmers who are in a vicious cycle of huge debt created by purchasing expensive agricultural inputs like chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Many participants would like to introduce immediately the techniques of making organic fertilizers and natural pesticides, utilizing locally available resources.

The third area that the participants came to value deeply was time management. Most of them mentioned that this was the first time in their lives to live according to a well-planned schedule and actually carry out that schedule. They came up with the conclusion that one of the reasons why development moves so slowly in their places was people do not have the concept of time management nor do they have a habit to make a plan based on a schedule. In order to make a scheduled thing happen at a scheduled time, the participants found that they have to change their concept of time management and start practicing it in daily life.

One unique event that took place during this year's training was the Peace Symposium held in September. This symposium was funded by the Asia-Pacific Cultural Center for UNESCO (ACCU) and we invited eight peace activists including four ARI Graduates. All these lecturers are involved in peace movements in conflict areas of the world and we were able to hear their living voices. At the end of the program, we came up with a joint resolution, for using rural areas to promote peace at the grass roots.

This year, the same as in the last few years, for our Rural Community Study Tour, we were blessed with great cooperation from the farmers, government organizations, and agricultural institutions in the Okitama and Shonai areas of Yamagata Prefecture, and the Nikaho area of Akita Prefecture. During the Western Japan Study Tour, the Osaka

Mimani YMCA and the Minamata Anti-Chemical Orange Farmers League provided us special support. We were also given the opportunity to visit Mr. and Mrs. Kaneko and other organic farmers in Ogawa town in Saitama Prefecture, Mr. Toru Sakawa in Iwate Prefecture and Mr. Tatsuo Sakahara who guided us in the Ashio Copper Mine Pollution Study. Their insights gave a tremendous impact to the participants. Also we were fortunate to have a number of visiting lecturers who shared their rich experiences and knowledge.

We hosted 125 working visitors and 46 work camp groups this year also. They stayed in the Nasu Seminar House and our dormitories and joined our community, adding color to our life. Trainees of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers participated in the training program in May and August, two weeks each. We also extended our joint program to Universities and Christian organizations. This year, two summer interns from Wellesly College and four from the Methodist Church General Board for Global Ministries in the US joined and contributed to the field training especially.

All year round this campus was filled with many people, young and old, of different colors and different nations. We, who are different from each other, share a very basic and important element of life - that is food. **Through the cycle of producing and sharing food we are able to draw out the potential and creativity that lie in all of us.** In ARI, each person who gathers here is a vital component to the community. Each one of us was able to have a very special creative experience that will lead to a promising future, through the simple act of sharing food. Once again, we give thanks to God who made this miracle happened in this community and all the people who supported this program.

Asian Rural Institute Graduate Class List of 2007

country	name	SENDING organization
<i>Bangladesh</i>	Ms. Arati Modhu	The Society for Training and Rehabilitation (STAR)
<i>Cameroon</i>	Mr. Joseph Mbah Tenjoh	Benevolent Community Education and Rural Development Society (BERDSCO)
	Ms. Mbivka Berinyuy Jane-Francis	NAVTI Foundation
	Mr. Eric Dindze Tangka	Kumbo Development and Orientation Center (KUDOC)
	Ms. Fomujong Florence Mah Fon	The Center for Environmental and Agricultural Development (CEADEV)
<i>Ghana</i>	Rev. George Offin Owusu-Ababio	Kumasi Southwest Baptist Association
<i>India</i>	Ms. Kaling Toshang	Dorcas Noble Fund
	Ms. Hringwar Reeta Anal Sinruwng	The Widows Welfare Society
<i>Indonesia</i>	Rev. Bahara Sihombing	Huria Kriten Indonesia
	Mr. Gede Suarna	Protestant Church in Bali
	Ms. Emmy Lasmaria Rajagukguk	Panti Asuhan Elim - HKBP

<i>Laos</i>	Ms. Phonsavanh Dittaphong	Houey Hong Vocational Training Center for Women
<i>Madagascar</i>	Mr. Vincent Mbolaniaina Rekotoarisoa	Association VOVONA
<i>Myanmar</i>	Rev. Nang Ngwe Kyi	Shweli Shan Baptist Convention
	Rev. U Aung Saik	Church of the Province of Myanmar
	Rev. Tial Chin Thluai	Thantlang Association of Baptist Churches
<i>The Philippines</i>	Ms. Jade Alipoyo	Local Empowerment Foundation
	Mr. Dario Telen Lacaya	Guinles Farmers Multi-Purpose Cooperative (GUIFAMCO)
	Ms. Genalyn Magsigay Oliveros	FRIEND Foundation
	Rev. Fred Balintay	Pinatubo Bethal Christian Church
<i>Solomon Islands</i>	Mr. John Mark Male	Asia Pacific Sustainable Development
<i>Sri Lanka</i>	Br. Daminda Chandrasiri Udumulla	Smyrna Church
	Mr. Sarath Chandra Pathma Mallawarachichi	SEWA Lanka Foundation

Course Description of the 2007 Rural Leaders Training Course

Leadership

Leadership Theory
Spirit of Rural Leaders
Community Organizing
Appreciative Inquiry
Presentation and Facilitation Skills
Independent Learning

Development Issues

Environment and Development
Nutrition and Development
Micro Credit
Gender Issues
Human Trafficking in Asia
Social Work

Sustainable Agriculture Study

Basic Science
Concept of Sustainable Agriculture
Integrated Farming Systems
Crops and Vegetables
Livestock
Dangers of Chemical Farming
Natural Farming in Tropical Areas
Appropriate Technology
Impact of Globalization
Overview of Japanese Agriculture
GMO Issues
Food Processing (elective)
Three Dimensional Agriculture
Cooperative Movement in Japan
Theory of Self-Sufficiency of Farming
Alternative Relationship Between Producers and Consumers

Workshop

Participatory Learning and Action
Materials Development for Disaster Management
Peace Symposium "Peace from the Soil"

Practical Field Study

Crops & Vegetables and Livestock emphasis

Spiritual Nurture & Guidance

Morning Gathering, Meetings, Consultation

Foodlife Work

Basic work toward food self sufficiency

Field Management Activity

Group management of assigned field and livestock

Leadership Reflection

Observation Trips

Ogawa town, Saitama Prefecture, Rural Community Study Tour, Western Japan Study Tour, Ashio Copper Mine

Research and Preparation

Oral Presentations

Report Guidance

Japanese Language and Culture Instruction

Community Work

Rice transplanting, Rice harvest, Forest management

Orientation Sessions

Institute Events

Harvest Thanksgiving Celebration

Reflection Sessions

Other

International Fellowship Programs, Homestay Programs

Total Instruction Hour - 1915.5