



NEWSLETTER

Japan International Labour Foundation

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Third Workshop Devoted to Detailed Study of Organizing and Education Manual: Meeting to Evaluate Zimbabwe Workshop and 2000 Southern Africa Project

JILAF Southern Africa Project

JILAF is conducting an aid project targeting the trade unions in four southern African nations (Namibia, Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe), with financial assistance from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The project goal is comprehensive "capacity building" of unions in the region. JILAF's role is to sponsor workshops to train union officials in charge of union organizing and education.



ZiCTU General-Secretary Chibebe speaks during the opening ceremony.

The three-year project, set up with the close cooperation and assistance of ICFTU-AFRO, was kicked off in 1999. Pilot projects were held in each member nation during that year. In light of the progress made during the pilot projects, the general-secretaries of all participating unions met under one roof in May 2000 and decided to create their own organizing/education manual specific to their region of Africa. A detailed manual was put together at workshops in Namibia (May) and Zambia (July). The proposed manual was then deliberated upon at the Zimbabwe workshop on March 12-14, 2001.

Zimbabwe Workshop

The Zimbabwe workshop was originally scheduled for September 2000, but

was postponed three times due to internal conflict in the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZiCTU). After continual internal political power struggles, ZiCTU called an emergency general meeting on February 25, 2001 and an entirely new leadership was ushered in. The Zimbabwe workshop was the first workshop to be held under the new union leadership. The workshop was held in Zimbabwe's second-largest city, Mutare, located 280 kilometers southeast of Harare near the border with Mozambique.

The workshop was attended by 19 officials in charge of union organizing and education from both ZiCTU's head office and regional offices. Wellington Chibebe, the newly-elected general-secretary, attended the opening ceremonies on the first day as well as the afternoon's discussion session. Two union organizing and education officials each from the NUNW (Namibia), ZACTU (Zambia) and BFTU (Botswana) took part as facilitators. Financial Affairs Bureau Chief Fidel Rugambo from ICFTU-AFRO headquarters also attended and Deputy Secretary Katsuo Fujimoto represented JILAF at the workshop.

Workshop an Educational Forum

Discussions over the three-day workshop were based on the handbook for union organizing developed during the Namibia and Zambia workshops. The manual was divided into 10 chapters, which covered: an analysis of global and regional conditions, the nature of union organizing, the legal framework for unionization, the role of union leaders in unionization, management of union information and communications sys-

tems, the role and function of union organizers in increasing union services and activities, labor/management relations, strategic unionization techniques, data collection and management and operational principles of trade unions. The thick handbook numbered around 100 pages.

As the list of chapters shows, the book is notable for its coverage of the range of issues that the labor movement faces as a whole, from technological issues that union organizers and education officers face in organizing and the effects of globalization on unions to the questions of what a trade union is and what its role in society is.

Each page of the handbook was examined one by one, first for spelling and grammatical errors and then for content. For that reason, the workshop itself was an educational experience for everyone.

The workshop participants were all in their 20s and 30s and most were directly involved in union organizing at the local level. They were full-time union officials whose job was to travel to their particular regions and organize the local people into the unions. They were serious and diligent and the lively discussions lasted from 8:30 in the morning until after 7:00 in the evening.

Evaluation Meeting for the JILAF Southern Africa Project

After the workshop, the union organizers and education officers of the four southern African nations met to hold the final project evaluation meeting of fiscal 2000. At the meeting, it was agreed that (1) ZiCTU would compile the results of the Zimbabwe workshop, (2) further study of the handbook would be held at the final workshops in Botswana and Namibia based on ZiCTU's report, and (3) an overall evaluation meeting would be held following the last workshop.

Learning Center in Kovilpatti, India Begins Its Third Year

JILAF established a learning center in Kovilpatti, in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, in January 1999 with the help of ICFTU-APRO. Two years after the opening, JILAF's Mr. Yamada and Mr. Yamamoto toured the learning center to observe operations there, arriving at the site with Mr. Haridasan, the head of the APRO-New Delhi office and Mr. Jaganathan, a local Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) official.

The group first observed classes at the school, where the 51 students sat in their crisply pressed school uniforms. The building is divided into two rooms. One is used for upper-level students while the other is for two classes of lower-level students. The three young teachers

school immensely.

We didn't have the opportunity this time to visit students' homes, but were told that the students' families lived in quite severe poverty. For that reason, attending school was a real treat for them. The school also has a kitchen where lunch is prepared for the students and we saw a cook preparing the day's fare. The school lunches are another reason that the students love coming to school.

The learning center does have its problems, though. One student told us, "I have three younger sisters and I want them to come to school too, so please let more students attend the JILAF center or build more schools." However, it is next

to impossible to respond to the wishes of the local people for more schools with our limited resources without diluting the quality of education provided.

Another issue is what will happen to the children after they graduate from the learning center. There are calls for vocational training so the students won't be forced to return to manual labor. Many local people have expressed a strong desire for technical

training such as carpentry classes for the boys or sewing classes for girls or computer classes for both sexes. The difficult choice becomes whether to expand the present learning center to accommodate more students or provide follow-up help to graduates.

This region of India is pushing hard to establish measures against child labor. The regional government has opened seven public elementary schools in the area expressly for child laborers. The ILO also operates three schools under the IPEC (International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labor). It is said that these schools are beginning to compete with one another to provide better levels of education.

During the evening of the day we toured the school, an honors ceremony and festival were held for the students. We presented each student with a metal plate in hopes that the honor would stimulate their desire to attend school and pursue an education.

The festival began with overly-long speeches by guest speakers. We got a little restless, but the students seemed to be used to it and sat quietly throughout the speeches. We were quite impressed. The speakers included high-ranking officials in the local Labor Ministry, the president of the Chamber of Commerce and labor union representatives. It appears that JILAF's learning center has earned the goodwill of the local community at large.

During the visit to the learning center, we also had the opportunity to meet with Ryuichi Ishii, who formerly worked at JILAF and is now Consul General in Chennai. Mr. Ishii told us that southern India is now riding the wave of the IT revolution and explained the situation behind the remarkable economic development that we saw.



A typical class at the learning center.

in beautiful saris seemed to enjoy their work and one of the students told us that the teachers were "like goddesses." Perhaps it was partly the excitement of having important guests from a faraway land, but all the students and teachers alike seemed to enjoy their time at

FROM JIMBOCHO

The Hindu World and the IT Revolution

Mysteriously enough, in India the rising and setting sun glows a crimson red against the purple sky.

I visited the JILAF Learning Center in Kovilpatti, Tamil Nadu in southern India and the article above describes that tour. Here I'd like to describe the intense impressions I brought home from this region of India.

Even in March, it is dry and hot with temperatures over 30 degrees. The food is intensely spicy and aromatic. The temples overflow with brilliantly col-

ored and sensuous-looking Hindu gods and goddesses. The women dress in colorful saris and the bearded men look like solemn philosophers. And the traffic! Pedestrians, sacred cows, bicycles, motorbikes, pedicabs, cars and buses packed with riders all involved in a crazy, tumultuous race to the finish line. And all these scenes are covered in the heavy odors of India and a veil of dust. But I was overwhelmed by the human touch and the deeply intriguing country that is India.

This region of India has traditionally had a shortage of water. Neither agriculture nor industry has prospered and the poverty there has been extreme. Over the last few years, however, the region has produced many successful IT engineers and IT colleges are booming. The IT revolution has become the engine of economic growth there. The local people are saying that the future is bright.

(Yamada)

Cooperating with JILAF's Widening Activities in My New Position

I remember that the relationship between the Japan International Labor Foundation (JILAF) and I started seven years ago, in the winter of 1994.

I was working for the International Department of the headquarters of the Japan Telecommunications Workers' Union (ZENDENTSU; presently All NTT Workers Union of Japan) when I was transferred in April 1994 to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions' Asia Pacific Regional Office (ICFTU-APRO). Before my departure, officers and staff of JILAF held an encouraging party for me at which they said "we will have close relations."

At ICFTU-APRO, I was mainly engaged in the information and public relations division and youth division. My most cherished memory is my direct engagement in the school project for child workers that was launched in Pakistan by the APRO at that time. JILAF also addressed the issue of child labor, and I joined the initial investigation for implementing the project. The enthusiastic survey and preparations by JILAF bore fruit as the Nepal Schools Project in 1997, and is achieving great results now.

In June 1996, I returned to the International Department of the headquarters of ZENDENTSU after working for the APRO, but I remained involved in the activities of JILAF in Japan. Unexpectedly, my relationship with JILAF became closest when JILAF started an International Activist Training Course in 1996.

All NTT Workers Union of Japan (ZENDENTSU) has been using this program for developing human resources that are closely related to international activities, and young officers are sent to the program every year. Frankly speaking, the curriculum was initially underdeveloped and there were many training problems. Hence, I raised strong opinions in the meetings with the persons in charge. In this way,

PROFILE



Michihiro Ishibashi
Program Officer, ACTRAV
ILO International Training Center
(living in Turin, Italy)

Born in 1965. Worked at the International Department of the Japan Telecommunications Workers' Union (ZENDENTSU) from 1992. Transferred to ICFTU-APRO between 1994 and 1996. Returned to the headquarters of ZENDENTSU in 1996 and served as Director for International Affairs from August 1997.

Executive Secretary of CI-JAC (now PT-LINC) from September in the same year. Concurrently, Assistant Executive Secretary of UNI-LC Japan from January 2000. Has occupied the present position since January 2001.

I think I significantly contributed to this program. I want to stress that, as a result of the training, young officers have increased their ability two- and three-fold.

Since the end of last year and just after leaving the NTT union where I had worked for a long time, I have been working at the ILO's International Training Center in Turin. I first thought the relationship with JILAF would be suspended for a while. But the Worker Activities Bureau (ACTRAV-Turin), which I belong to, has a cooperative relationship with JILAF in receiving trainees when they visit Japan. This year's program will take place in early November, and I am in charge of the Training Center side. The relationship with JILAF will be maintained.

When I look back over these last seven years, my relationship with JILAF has become increasingly closer even though I have occupied different positions. This reflects the widening activities, initiatives and contributions of JILAF.

I am pleased to cooperate with JILAF in my new position.

Letter from a Trainee (13)

Nights of "Drink, Dance and Sing"

My first business trip at JILAF was the POSITIVE (Participation-Oriented Safety Improvements by Trade Union Initiative) seminar in Mongolia in late January. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word "Mongolia"? Cold, of course. The past

couple winters in Mongolia have been particularly cold and snowy, in fact, and several million livestock have been lost. All we seem to hear in the media from Mongolia these days is bad news, so everyone who heard I was going there looked at me like, "You poor thing!"

So there I stood in Ulaanbaatar International Airport, quaking with fear. The temperature was minus 25 degrees Celsius and the streets were packed with snow and ice. But the first thing I saw was the warm and smiling faces of people who looked just like the Japanese. The only thing that distinguished them from a crowd of Japanese people was that nearly everyone of them wore a fur hat (just like you've

seen on television).

For the six days I was in Ulaanbaatar, I was always surrounded by these warm and smiling faces. The POSITIVE trainers and provincial union leaders continually filled my vodka glass and asked me to dance, and always with a smiling face. Just like they say, the Mongolian people love to drink and dance and sing. Night after night of undiluted vodka shots, twirling dances and singing started to wear me out.

Those nights remain a wonderful memory. I'd love to go back to Mongolia to meet the people with those smiling faces again. Next time, though, it sure would be nice to experience a warm, summertime Mongolia.

JILAF trainee **Mamiko Suzuki**
(All NTT Workers Union of Japan)



Many POSITIVE trainers are women.

Inside Out

Due to the reshuffling of personnel in government offices and related organizations, there have also been major changes in the JILAF staff. Executive Director Hidekazu Yamaguchi has returned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Executive Director Masakatsu Tsukamoto has resigned. JILAF's new executive director is Sadataka Takai, formerly of the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare.

Hisao Yamamoto, director of the Research and Public Affairs Department, and Keiko Iida, of the Educational Cooperation

Department, have both returned to the Japan Institute of Labour. Kenji Yoshikawa took over the Educational Cooperation Department in February. In April, Mikiko Tottori was named new Research and Public Affairs Department Director and Akemi Maeda was named to the Exchange Program Department.

Please welcome all the new staff members and thanks to the returning staff as well.

Yuki Ito has transferred from the Exchange Program Department to the Educational Cooperation Department.



Sadataka Takai
Executive Director

I entered JILAF this past April. I first learned about JILAF while working in the International Labor Affairs Division of the former Ministry of Labor, but it was only during training that I first learned the details

of JILAF's activities. I realized not only how noble the project goals are but how fundamentally important they are.

Before joining JILAF, I worked for a regional labor administration organization in Iwate Prefecture, where I was involved in labor standards, job security and employment equality. That work was based on the concept that emphasizes frontline organizations that interact directly with citizens.

I don't know how much my former experiences will help me at JILAF, but my motto is to work hard with a forward-looking attitude. I hope I can fill the shoes of former Executive Director Tsukamoto. Thank you.



Akemi Maeda
Exchange Program Department, from the
Employment and Human Resources
Development Organization of Japan

One month has already passed since I joined JILAF. I've lived in Nara, Okayama, Hiroshima, Kochi and Shizuoka prefectures and always felt that moving to new places was my forte. But the crush of people in Tokyo and the throngs during rush hour left me speechless and the myriad subway lines left me confused. Since then it has been one new experience after another.

JILAF's everyday affairs are completely new to me because I don't have much international experience, and every day I keenly feel my lack of knowledge.

I will work hard each day to reach as quickly as possible the treasured goal of being able to say with confidence, "I work for JILAF!" and I ask for everyone's help in moving toward that goal. Thank you very much.



Mikiko Tottori
Director of Research and Public Affairs
Department

I was named director of the JILAF Research and Public Affairs Department on April 1, 2001. Prior to this, I worked at the Japan Institute of Labor, a think tank of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

I am happy to embark on a new journey, working for a new organization in a new job. Over the last 10 years, I have worked chiefly on domestic projects and concentrated mainly on domestic political and economic issues. I am looking forward to directing my gaze to the world at large while operating on the new stage of development aid to developing countries and I look forward to pursuing shared ideals with new associates. To be able to contribute even a little to development aid activities is a joy for people who live in prosperous countries and I think it will be a good opportunity for me to take a look anew at my own country.

I pledge to work hard and I look forward to having exchanges with a variety of different people. Thank you very much.



Kenji Yoshikawa
Educational Cooperation Department

Before joining JILAF this February, I worked for NGOs as a development worker for around 20 years, primarily in Southeast Asia. While working with NGOs, I worked together with people from labor unions and was very impressed by the unions, which have been playing a significant role in establishing a global society as a non-state actor. Then I was very attracted to JILAF, founded by labor unions with their long history and great achievements, and its projects focusing on empowering union members to be able to share global common interests among unions.

As an associate member of the Educational Cooperation Department, I will be working on Field Projects, particularly social development projects against child labor in India and Nepal.

Since there are many things to learn about the union movement, I look forward to your help and further cooperation. Thank you.

JILAF Calendar (March – May 2001)

1. Invitation Program

- China A Team (May 8 to 19)
- South Asia Team (May 24 to June 6)

2. Field Projects (only those projects conducted by specialists sent from Japan)

- Review of status of 2000 projects and

arrangement of 2001 projects (February 26 to March 9 in Pakistan, Thailand and the Philippines)

- Inspection of operations at the India Learning Center and arrangement of future operations (March 5 to 13)
- Zimbabwe Capacity Building Seminar

and Evaluation Meeting (March 9 to 17)

- ICFTU-AFRO Project Assessment Meeting (March 18 to 25 in Kenya) Surveys, etc.
- ILO Local Survey and Meeting with ICFTU-APRO (February 26 to March 6 in Indonesia and Singapore)