

**Health-Medical Cooperatives:
Are they able to contribute to world peace in overcoming
“relation-poor” societies?**

**Everybody, shining one by one, should independently play a significant
role in creating cooperative’s “relation-rich society”.**

(fundamental philosophy of MMH-Coop)

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**Key words : establishment of new hospital, relation-rich society, social business,
IYC (International Year of Cooperatives), world peace.**

Introduction

In March of 2010, a hospital based on Health-Medical Cooperative, “Minami Iryoh Seikyohⁱ (MMH-Coopⁱⁱ)” was newly established at Ohdaka area in Midori ward of Nagoya city, Aichi prefecture, Japan. The hospital named “Minami-Seikyoh hospital” has 313 beds, including emergency care ward, palliative care ward (hospice-like), kidney dialysis system with 30 dialyzers, and complete physical examination center in the plot (17878m²). It has 54 full time doctors including several interns (junior doctors : medical trainees) and 75 part time doctors. It adopts ”7 vs 1” standard nursing care system with 228 full time nurses which corresponds to the highest ranking on the medical treatment fee system. The number of operations was 1281 cases in 2010.

Although a hospital establishment like this scale might be only an ordinary event, the hospital attracted the attention of many people including neighboring residents. Many people belonging to medical and welfare care, cooperatives, building industry, and finance visited MMH-Coop, including some collage professors, some members of the Diet, or central government officers. In addition, a group of cooperatives from South Korea visited MMH-Coop twice. As a results, a total of 20,000 people (except patients) visited MMH-Coop in a year since the establishment of new hospital.

In this article, various aspects of MMH-Coop are to be demonstrated, focusing on the reasons why MMH-Coop has attracted such attention of people, and discussing whether health-medical cooperatives are able to overcome the relation-poor society and to contribute to the world peace in the 21st century or not.

ⁱ “Minami” means south, “Iryoh” means health-care, and “Seikyoh” means cooperative.

ⁱⁱ “Minami” was derived from the name of area where the head quarter situated in the south ward of Nagoya city at the start of the cooperative. Minami-Iryoh-Seikyoh is to be abbreviated as “MMH-Coop” in this article.

Process and outline of the establishment of new hospital

The new hospital was established, bringing together the wisdom and the power of common local peoples. The various plans for it were discussed by a total of several thousand people assembling monthly, 45 times through 3 years or more. These assemblies were named “Sen-nin Kaigi” which meant thousand peoples’ assembly.

Since the start of MMH-Coop, it has been supported by tens of thousands of people called “cooperative members”, and the financial base of MMH-Coop depends on their active attitude to investment. They had also engaged in special campaigns for the investment supporting the establishment of new hospital for several years. As a result, the sum of invested money reached to 1 billion yen in the campaign period. A banker who financed to MMH-Coop amazed at the fact that such amount of money without interests or dividend was invested by tens of thousands of peopleⁱ. Who played a leading role on it? Did any prominent politician or millionaire involve in it? No, such kind of person was absent. Each small contribution of innumerable cooperative members might be the main driving force for the establishment of new hospital.

From a view point of architecture, it was built-up under the original concept different from ordinal hospital constructions. In December of 2010, the architecture of the hospital was awarded as one of the five-best of the year by the construction council of central district of Japan, because of the novel, warm-hearted, and functional designs, fire and earthquake proof structures and so on.

Fig. 1 Appearance of Minami Seikyō hospital



ⁱ About 10 billion yen was needed for the establishment of new hospital. MMH-Coop was financed from several banks for it.

The hospital is surrounded by several types of facilities, such as day nursery, nursery facility for sick children, maternity clinic, bakery with cafe, get-together facility with cookware, small scale accommodation, 2 restaurants, grocery store, coffee stand, travel agency, large scale fitness club, and complete and comprehensive center for medical check-ups. Such facilities and shops as a group, unlike ordinal hospitals, have got a favorable reputation from many visitors for warm-hearted atmosphere around the hospital. (Fig. 1) Though the details of hospital itself are to be omitted because it is not main themes of this article to discuss the diverse and complicated features of hospital, some information may be obtained from the references^{9,10}.

The origin and brief history of MMH-Coop

In 1959, a giant typhoon named “Isewan” raged Ise-bay area, caused a big tsunami, and brought a large number of victims including more than 5000 deaths. Many volunteers attended to the rescue operations from all over Japan. It reminds us the devastating aspects of recent Big East-Japan earthquake and tsunami.

After the operations, some volunteers and local residents joined the movement to organize MMH-Coop, which started with investment by 308 members in 1961.

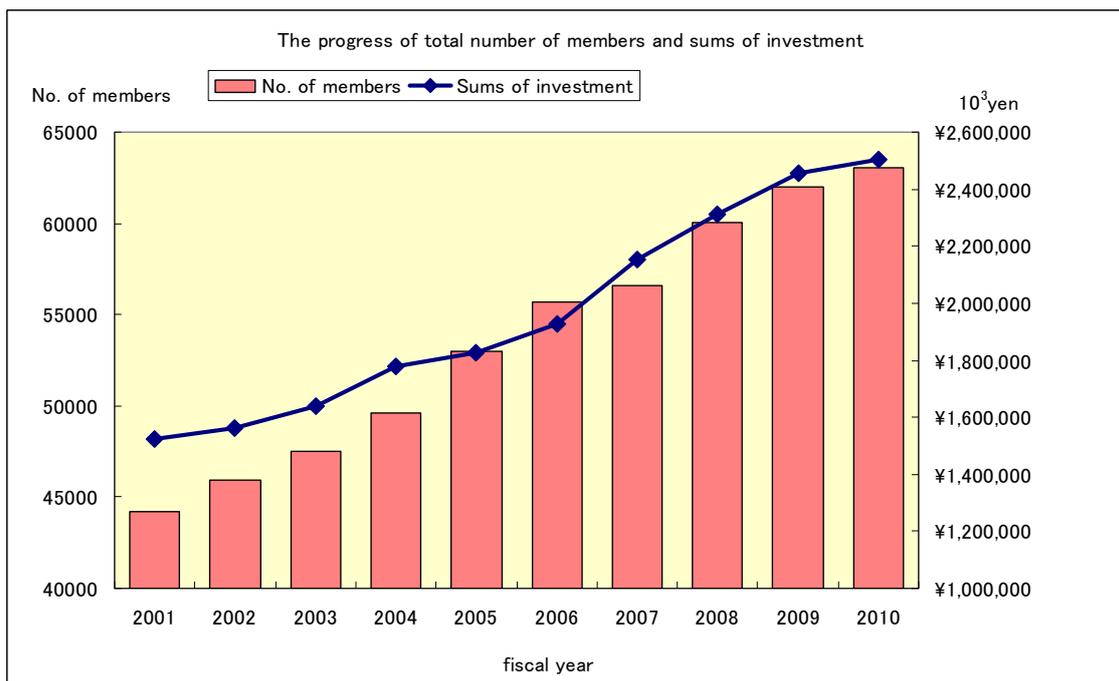
On the other hand, Hoshizaki clinic, which previously established and managed by local residents since 1953 on the base of settlementⁱ activities, played a major role for the organization of MMH-Coop. In addition, these areas are notorious for air pollution discharged from lots of factories and dense traffics, and air-pollution related diseases.

After that, MMH-Coop pursued various activities including consultations for daily lives, health checkups, mutual helps, and so on through HAN activities (described later).

Since then, 50 years have passed. Although MMH-Coop has encountered many sorts of difficulties, such as deficit financing and shortage of doctors and nurses, it has achieved considerable advances as shown in appended table.

ⁱ Welfare services for the people in slum areas, begun in England in the 19th century.

Fig. 2 Changes of total number of members and sums of investment



In April of 2011;

- MMH-Coop is staffed with 650 full-timers and 384 part-timers.
- The facilities and offices have now exceeded 40. (**Appended Table**)
- The total assets have built up to about 16 billion yen with debt of 10 billion yen.
- The balance of income and expenditure was in the black as a whole for 17 successive fiscal years, except 2010 when new hospital was established.
- The sum of “investment” for MMH-Coop has exceeded 2.5 billion yen. (**Fig2**)
- The number of MMH-Coop members has exceeded 63,000 (**Fig. 2**), belonging to 11 blocks and 79 branches (**Appended Fig.**)

A documentary film-making is now going on for the 50th anniversary of MMH-Coop.

Every department of MMH-Co-op is now preparing for the 50th anniversary events planned in November of 2011 including a documentary film of MMH-Coop.

Movie producer Kunio Takeshige and movie director Masao Koike, impressed on various aspects of MMH-Coop, especially how to build up the relationship of persons to persons, and persons to societies, proposed MMH-Coop to film them.

Kunio Takeshige commented, “I was amazed and moved at first, and decided to film these unique and wonderful MMH-Coop. I approached movie director Masao Koike to film them, because we are both on the way of searching for objects which can help next

generations to lead Japan into mature society in the 21st century. I dare call it miracle“.

Masao Koike commented, “Today in Japan, many people tend to be individualistic, and are apt to show passive attitude for mutual help or mutual dependency in daily life. In MMH-Coop, however, there is some atmosphere to overcome such attitudes of social relationship, permitting mutual inconveniences and troubles. MMH-Coop will make a new model of human-relationship, in another words “relation-rich society”, which is different from common types of blood-related or community based societies.

MMH-Coop welcomed this proposal, and situated the movie show as one of the main events of the 50th anniversary.

Investment and dividend (interest) system in MMH-Coopⁱ

As mentioned above, the investment system of MMH-Coop has a unique character (non-dividend-paying system). In Japan, cooperatives usually adopt investment system with some sort of dividend. On the contrary, an investment system without dividend or interests was independently decided in the board of directors at the start of MMH-Coop, and consistently maintained for 50 years, irrespective of red or black balance. The sum of such “investment” has now reached 2.5 billion yen or more, and still increasing, as well as the number of members, though the investors (or members) are permitted to withdraw the invested money at any time. (Fig. 2)

Such “investment” system may reflect the trust of local people to medical and welfare cares or businesses of MMH-Coop. They might have no expectation for dividend or interests when they invest for their own demands, that is, safe and sound community, job creation by non-profit enterprises, relation-rich society, and peaceable life.

Many volunteers bear MMH-Coop’s movements and businesses.

1) HAN and HAN-meetings in MMH-Coop

HAN is a fundamental group of members, comprised from 3 to 20 neighboring members. HAN meeting may serve as a chance of simple health checkups including measurement of blood pressure, physical tests, occult blood test of feces, bone density test. It may include group-walking, healthy-cooking, exchange of mutual hobbies or interesting information, consultation about problems of daily life and so on. Many staffs of hospitals or clinics including doctors, nurses, nutritionists or the others may voluntarily attend HAN meetings as instructors or supporters. HAN meeting may serve

ⁱ Everyone is qualified as a member of MMH-Coop if he or she invests 1000 yen or more. The average amount of investment, therefore, shall be around 40,000 yen/person. The amount of investment is restricted to less than 3 million yen/person by the agreement of board of directors of MMH-Coop. The invested money yields no dividend as a rule.

as chances of good human relationship, health study, and effectively collecting lots of demands of members and investment money.

Total number of HAN has reached to 725, and HAN meetings were counted 4200 times or more in the last fiscal year.

Perhaps the most systematic experience of recent decades is the famous Japanese HAN groups which are found in many types of co-operatives, mostly in consumer co-operatives. These were started in the late 1960's, when Japanese co-operators were experiencing weakening participation at the grass-root level and were considering ways of revitalization. The HAN groups became successful instruments, with activities today covering a wide range of areas, from household necessities to broader issues of culture, welfare and peace. The special features of these HAN groups are among other things, that they are systematically integrated in the whole organizations of the societies : an interesting example of a combination of very local autonomy with the responsibility for, and identity with, the whole. In another words, (it is) an expression of how to encourage member identity in all its basic meanings.

**“Co-operative values in a changing world” by Sven Åke Book
Report to the ICA Congress, Tokyo. October, 1992”².**

2) Mina-Sen movement

In Japan, it is considerably difficult to recruit medical staffs, especially doctors and nurses. The management of hospitals and clinics usually depends on the success or failure of the recruitment. Despite much effort, however, the results were rather poor.

Then, the board of directors of MMH-Coop proposed a recruit movement of medical staffs by the power of own members. That is called “Mina-Sen” movement. “Mina” means everybody and “Sen” means thousand. In another words, it was a proposal of movement of own members to approach to 1000 competent candidates for recruitment. In March of 2011, it reached 840 contacts, getting 21 part-time doctors, lots of nurses and the other staffs. It has been considerably contributed to resolve the shortage of staffs, especially doctors and nurses. All these efforts have also been pursued voluntarily.

3) Subaru (Pleiades : Six-star)-project : derived from the Five-star Doctor in WHOⁱ

It is very important to train the staffs after the employment, especially for junior

ⁱ Five-star Doctor : Care provider, Decision-maker, Communicator, community leader, and Manager by Dr Charles Boelen (WHO)

doctors (medical trainees). MMH-Coop has put emphasis on their training from the viewpoint of patients or people, instead of letting it to be exclusively the task of senior doctors. The “Subaru” project was realized in order to educate and train the junior doctors to get wider viewpoints. The members of Subaru project voluntarily lead the junior doctors to attend the HAN meetings, in adjusting the schedules or the contents, planning and carrying out the welcome or farewell parties for them, and consulting for their daily problems in order to promote their satisfactory training lives. Following these efforts by members, young doctors will get to the sixth star, that is, excellent doctors of cooperatives

4) 1Bu-1Kai movements (movements to develop one or more welfare activities or businesses in every block of MMH-Coop)

A) “Namo”ⁱ (Fig. 3) and “Charinko tai” (Fig 4) in Hoshizaki block

The introduction of nursing care insurance system in Japan in 2003 gave us a chance to make helper stations. It also gave us an extra chance to observe our residential areas in detail. As a result, we strongly realized the necessity of group homes because we found many senile dementia persons reflecting the aging society in Japan. In Hoshizaki block, several members set up a “Charinko-tai”, that was a bicycle squad to look for vacant house suitable to remake to group home. After the strenuous efforts, they found a suitable house, negotiated with the owner, borrowed it in reasonable payment, and remade it to a group home consisted of 8 rooms. It required about 10 million yen, which was gathered as “investment”.

They recruited staffs, offered various furniture, and have smoothly managed the facility ever since. The group home, named “Namo”, is an initial skilled nursing facility in MMH-Coop, welcomed by neighboring people, and managed in black balance, where persons of dementia senile were revitalized to get self-confidence. As these episodes had spread through a lot of people, 8000 or more people visited such a little Namo in 6 years, who were amazed at the revitalized dementia senile tenants. Visitors were entertained with tea ceremony by the tenants who had once lost the way to their own houses frequently. These phenomena are called as “Visiting-Namo therapy” for dementia senile,

ⁱ “Namo” is a dialectic suffix in Nagoya area of Japan, which gently urges someone to agree.

Fig. 3 Group home “Namo”



Fig. 4 Charinko-tai (Bicycle-squad)



which may be “new culture of Dementia care, or “person-centered care” itself proposed by Kitwood T & Benson S. in 1995⁴. After that, almost all facilities in MMH-Coop are intended to establish in the way as Namo did, which showed the power, wisdom and independent spirit of “common” local peoples.

B) Yuyu village (which means village of leisurely life style) in Meinan block

It is a multifunctional welfare village, which is consisted of several facilities (Iryase, Kimama tengu-en, Waiwai and Gayagaya, as described later).

It was established as an initial trial of welfare village in MMH-Coop. On the process of construction, many people assembled frequently, discussed about the local needs for aging society, and collected “investment” for it (the amount reached 270 million yen). Through the period of completion ceremonies, which continued for several days, about 10 thousand people visited to tour them. About two hundred members, trained by the construction committee for the establishment, guided the visitors voluntarily.

Iryase, which means “welcome” as a dialect of Nagoya area, is a group home with 14 private rooms and 4 additional guest rooms. The latter also serves as a shelter for victims of domestic violence. Iryase also has a function of day service office.

Kimama Tengu-enⁱ, which has 48 rooms for short stay service, also works as an adult day service office for 30 attendants.

Waiwai, which means onomatopoeia of chatting sound, is a row house (27 rooms) for various generations. It was established for the people who were once alienated in competitive or struggling life styles. It was made from the hope of peaceful symbiosis.

Gayagaya, which also means onomatopoeia of chatting sound, serves for various cultural activities and get-togethers.

The village also provided some chances to return to social life for young persons who once depressed and withdrew from society, after they attended the activities of the village as volunteers.

C) Small scale multifunctional facility “Mouyaiko”ⁱⁱ in Hoshizaki block

In Hoshizaki block, another facility called “Mouyaiko” was established in 2007. Following Namo, the members of “Charinko-tai” (bicycle squad) not only looked for vacant house, but played an advertising role for MMH-Coop. They recruited people to join MMH-Coop, and collected investment money. They also took an active part for planning the layout of facility, and have been voluntarily supporting the management there after.

Though the facility itself placed in a back alley may not be conspicuous, a ward-officer or a chairperson of a senior citizens’ club attended the management meeting at times.

ⁱ Kimama means carefree life style. Tengu, named after the trade mark of a cannery that had been operating there before Yuyu village was established, is a best known type of goblins in Japan. They are noted for the long nose. The “en” means facility.

ⁱⁱ “Mouyaiko” means sharing in dialect of Nagoya area in Japan.

D) Small scale health care facility for the elderly “Anki” annexed to new Hoshizaki clinic in Hoshizaki block.

An establishment of health care facility for the elderly had been a long held dream of MMH-Coop and the member of Hoshizaki block, where aging phenomenon was rapidly progressing. On the other hand, timeworn Hoshizaki clinic had to be reconstructed. Based on the previous experiences to establish “Namo”, the members of Hoshizaki block arose again to resolve the above two problems. They started to look for suitable land in 2005, and finally found it in 2006. They decided the aim of special investment for the project as 50 million yen, which was achieved in 2007 on schedule.

On the other hand, negotiations with the welfare department of Nagoya city were tenaciously carried out to get authorization and subsidy, and finally they succeeded to get them (the subsidy was 25 million yen).

Needless to say, innumerable dialogues with the neighboring people were carried out and a lot of members joined in the activities in the block and branches as volunteers.

As a result, Hoshizaki clinic and small scale health care facility for the elderly “Anki” (29 beds) were newly established in 2008. After that, both are sustaining black balance according to the increased number of patients and tenants.

The number of visitors have summed up to 1000 after the establishment.

E) Nonbiri village (which means “village of take it easy”) 7(Fig. 6)

Based on the experiences of Yuyu village, a multifunctional welfare village consisting of several facilities (group home “Honwakaⁱⁱ” of 9 rooms, row house “Aiaiⁱⁱⁱ” of 18 rooms, get-together facility “Ohimachi^{iv}”, small scale multifunctional facility “Osabori^v”, coffee shop “Chara^{vi}” and small farm “Seichan^{vii}”) was born in Tokai city adjacent to Nagoya city in 1009.

A dream came true! It had long been an eager wish of members in Tokai block to realize some sort of welfare facility. About 10 years had passed until they got a chance for it. Their efforts were sharply accelerated after a landowner provided a land (about 2640 m²) on the extremely low rent if it could contribute to establish welfare facilities.

They immediately organized “assembly of 100 members” that was soon converted to promoting committee of the plan. On the guidelines of the committee, lots of members

ⁱ “Anki” means peace of mind as a dialect of Nagoya area.

ⁱⁱ “Honwaka” means “comfortably” or “warmly”.

ⁱⁱⁱ “Aiai” means “love-love”.

^{iv} “Ohimachi” means “home party” or “get-together” in this case.

^v “Osabori” means “skip or lazy attitude”.

^{vi} “Chara” means “write off” something or so.

^{vii} “Seichan” is the name of a man who offered the farm.

joined to the campaign. To achieve these aims, they visited nearby residents selectively in the evening when more people might be at home (so-called “sunset-visits”).As a result, new investment reached to 60 million yen, which was equivalent to 20% of the expenses of the construction. New members increased by 1800. The number of blanches in Tokai block was doubled.

On the other hand, these plans were accepted as a public work by the authority of Tokai city after frequent negotiations. As a result, Tokai city subsidized it with 30 million yen.

Fig.5 The opening ceremony of Nonbiri village



The group home with day care service unit “Honwaka” was established as a facility of Nonbiri village in Nov. 2008. The recruitment of staffs and tenants was relatively easy owing to the abundant communications through the “sunset-visits”.

On the process of construction, many members voluntarily joined to it, making wood-decks around the house, decorating and waxing the interior walls, gardening, hedge-planting, making a mail box, and so on.

After the establishment, Nonbiri village became a friendly facility for local residents, the small pathway in the plot was utilized by children as a route to elementary school, and the elderly people often called on the coffee shop “Chara” for chatting after ground-golf matches. Performance of “Owari-manzai” by neighboring elementary school

ⁱ “Owari” is an old local name of Nagoya area. “Owari-manzai” is a kind of Japanese traditions performing singing and dancing at visited homes to celebrate New Year.

children was done as one of the celebrations for the establishment of Nonbiri village. Many volunteers gathered to help the village management.

On the process of village establishment, the range of cooperation was widened from that of staffs and members to that of MMH- coop and local government staffs, house designers, house builders, neighboring communities, and others.

As the village has stable management power as described above, it was in the black in the first fiscal year and thereafter. The number of visitors to the village have summed up to 2000 or more after its establishment.

It might be attained by uncompromising attitude of staffs and members to get the result. In 2010, Aichi prefecture awarded the village as a “special contributor for kind-hearted community”.

5) Roles of Clinics

MMH-Coop has 5 clinics and 2 dental clinics. MMH-Coop, to begin with, started after the establishment of clinic in Hoshizaki area (**see appended Table**). Every clinic, which was established one after another, continuously pursued medical services, including preventive and welfare services to local people for 50 years. Every Clinic has been utilized as a place for HAN meetings, and also worked as a center of cooperative activities, where staffs of clinics voluntarily attended to as supporters or specialists. Every facility or office annexed to clinics has been functioned as a center for nursing and/or welfare services in aging societies.

The development of MMH-Coop and the establishment of new Minami Seikyo hospital should be deeply dependent on the tenacious activities of clinic-staffs and members.

6) Inter co-ops' co-operation named “Dream project”

The representatives of MMH-Coop (No. of members : 63,000), Cooperatives of universities in Tokai area (No. of members : 100,000), and Consumers' cooperative of Aichi (No. of members : 400,000) had been got together to research for the possibility of developing new businesses since 2007. As a result, they started a project to study “inter co-ops' co-operation” named “Dream project” in 2008.

They opened a restaurant “L' espoir”, a coop grocery shop “Nandemo-kandemoⁱ”, and a café “Rochdale” in the plot of new hospital. Such business type as an inter co-ops' co-operation should be a first trial in Japan, based on mutual philosophy, that was, cultivation of human resources, protection of foods and lives, and supporting of healthy communities. It is paid attention as a prototype of social businesses.

ⁱ “Nandemo-kandemo” means everything.

7) The improvement of management strategies ; the innovation of notions

Evaluating the history of MMH-Coop in the context of income and expenditure, the balance had usually been red before 1992. The director of Minami Seikyou hospital said at the statement of inaugural address in 1993, "We have long-term debt as 2.1 billion yen. We have run out of the reserves, and a deficit of 100 million yen has accumulated."

In 1993, the collapse of bubble economy was evident in Japan. Honey moon period depending on borrowing money freely had passed away. MMH-Coop was almost on the brink of bankruptcy. Then, the administration of MMH-coop commenced the efforts for improvement of management, though a little too late.

Then, the new managers of MMH-Coop refused such conventional notions which had been dominant in MMH-Coop as follows;

- The better medical practices shall be achieved if we utilize the more human resources even if we have to pay the more personnel expenses.
- We have no need to be in black balance, because MMH-Coop is a medical institution indifferent to moneymaking businesses.
- It is a waste of money to pay for taxes in case of black balance, because near half of black balance should be paid as taxes in Japan.
- Employees of MMH-Coop should work 5 days a week (off on Saturdays and Sundays) in the same way as government employees do, and their salaries and allowances for retirement should be paid on the same level as government employees are allowed.
- Red balance in medical institutions should be inevitable due to the poor health care payment systems in Japan.

At the same time, the guidelines for improvement of management systems and innovation of notions were introduced and practiced as follows;

- Induction of self-evaluation with cost accounting system.
- Setting the aim of black balance in income and expenditure
- Reinforcement of co-operation between staffs and members.
- Adopting "diversity and inclusion" as a management strategy
- Independency, mutual self-help and others as the fundamental philosophy of cooperatives) .
- Self-innovation of thinking and practices in accordance with the situations.
- Independence from any political parties or powers

"Managing the nonprofit organization" by P.F. Drucker^{1,3,5} and "Co-operative values in a changing world" as a report to the ICA congress Tokyo, 1992 by S.Å. Book² played significant roles for references in the processes.

It was a simple and natural innovation of notions for us to achieve black balance in order to continuously develop MMH Coop as a nonprofit organization.

It was also a simple and natural innovation of notions for us to change ourselves. We refused the notion that we could get nothing if social systems remained unchanged, but we agreed the notion that we could get nothing if we remained unchanged.

8) MMH-Coop and world peace

As Japanese people experienced the devastative war, including the disasters from atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, MMH-Coop has often sent delegations to the peace march and World Conference against A-and-H bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The relationship of MMH-Coop and peace, however, should not be restricted in such categories. Every movement and business in MMH-Coop should play an important role for peace-keeping activities. The spirit for peace-keeping should be rooted in cooperative movement itself as described later.

Discussion

Sincere wishes to send a message from MMH-Coop to world peoples are compacted in this article.

As United Nations declared to celebrate the International Year of Cooperatives (IYC) in 2012, cooperatives will attract attentions and be evaluated worldwide next year.

From the viewpoint of the world cooperatives, the cooperatives relevant to medical and welfare care seem to exert less influence. We can rarely find cooperatives of that kind in abroad. UNIMED in Brazil, for example, is reported to be an extremely big medical cooperative, but we have little information about it, especially the roles of the members. MMH-Coop itself may only be a little cooperative in the corner of the world. The scale or the number, however, should not be an essential problem. On the contrary, the smaller may have an advantage over the larger, depending on the conditions as described later.

Although we nowadays are not experiencing world war, some local wars appeared every now and then, the gap between the rich and the poor has widened, the environment has progressively worsened, and the world has been overcast by the threat of terrorism. In Japan, people are facing with the trend of fewer children and aging society, and increasing rate of unemployment, refusal to go to school, and suicide. In addition, Big East Japan Earthquake, accompanied with crisis in Fukushima No 1 nuclear power plants, came on as though to compound them. The scale of these problems is so big and serious that such a little MMH-Coop may not able to compete

with them. Just a minute! Is it really?

MMH-Coop was established in the context of peoples' efforts to overcome the terrible disaster of big Ise-bay typhoon, as described above. Any health-medical cooperatives in Japan should be a sort of voluntary grass-root movements to compete with the poor situations in medical and welfare care systems. MMH-Coop, which is situated in the air polluted area and consisted of rather poor people, is never exceptional one. MMH-Coop has almost no significant subsidy from the government and no special sponsors. In spite of such poor situations, the number of members of MMH-Coop reached 63,000 or more, and the sum of investment with no interests exceed 2.5 billion yen. Many members ambitiously contribute to MMH-Coop's activities and businesses as volunteers. They have now established the hospital attracting attentions from lots of people. Where is the origin of such energy? Was there any special politician or genius?

The answer may be very simple. It was resulted from the sincere practices of the fundamental philosophy of MMH-Coop, "Independent people, shining one by one, should play a significant role for creating cooperative's relation-rich society". No genius or special politician was found. No such person was needed. It will be enough if we have peoples living in common daily life.

In MMH-Coop, the board of directors is now consisted of 38 members, in which women are predominant (65%). In addition, steering committees of the branches are overwhelmingly occupied with women (80%). Although the majority of them are homemakers who have never received any special educations as business managers or organizers, the power of women must be indispensable in MMH-Coop's HAN activities, events, ceremonies, delivery of information papers, acquisition of new members and additional investment, and among others, management of facilities. When observing these women to display remarkable ability in daily activities or businesses of MMH-Co-op, they remind us an attractive role of women in micro-credit system of Grameen bank in Bangladesh. It is not an old story that women in Grameen bank, who were common, uneducated or rather poor people, won the Nobel Peace prize. This episode provides us the following message, "It is not necessarily great politicians or so to realize and keep the world peace." The spirit of independency and mutual self-help and so on in MMH-Coop seems to have a lot in common with that of Grameen Bank.

The history of MMH-Coop shows steady services of medical and welfare care for local people, assisting activities for the social movement of victims of pollution related diseases, continuous support for the physically disabled people, consistent participation for peace-keeping movements as a part of nation who had experienced the devastating war including atomic bombs to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, efforts for the improvement of management and the innovation of notions, expansion of members and investment,

cultivation of staffs to be active to collaborate with members, establishment of facilities and successful management as a “1Bu-1kai“ movement and so on.

All these episodes may only show an accumulation of common efforts. Feat is not a proper expression for them. MMH-Coop never hopes for feat. In another words, MMH-Coop has only achieved a common situation whenever and wherever you could do.

In the memorial lecture for the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo of Norway, Muhammad Yunus⁶, referring to the significance of social businesses, mentioned as follows, “Social business will be a new kind of business introduced in the marketplace with the objective of making a difference in the world. Investors in the social business could get back their investment, but will not take any dividend from the company. Profit would be ploughed back into the company to expand its outreach and improve the quality of its product or service. A social business will be a non-loss, non-dividend company.”

It is a so amazing mention, isn't it! It is just the same system as MMH-Coop adopted for 50 years since its foundation. MMH-Coop, which is only a smaller cooperative and lies in Far East of the world, successfully anticipates the social business in the future. It is a very interesting phenomenon, isn't it!

On the other hand, P.F. Drucker also described about the significance of “social sector” in his work, *Post-Capitalist Society*³. It does seem as if he predicts the MMH-Coop today in 20 years ago, even if the content does not exactly correspond to the “social business” suggested as above by M. Yunus. Some of the Drucker's descriptions should be quoted to avoid misleading;

To foster autonomous community organizations in the social sector is therefore an important step in turning government around and making it perform again.

But the greatest contribution that the autonomous community organization makes is as a new center of meaningful citizenship. The Megastate has all but destroyed citizenship. To restore it, the post-capitalist policy needs a “third sector,” in addition to the two generally recognized ones, the “private sector” of business and the “public sector” of government. It needs an autonomous social sector. . . .

Citizenship in and through the social sector is not a panacea for the ills of post-capitalist society and post-capitalist policy, but it may be a prerequisite for tackling these ills. It restores the civic responsibility that is the mark of citizenship, and the civic pride that is the mark of community.

Muhammad Yunus, having an intention to create a world without poverty, mentioned “The poverty produces a threat for peace.” He was awarded for “Peace Prize”, not for

“Prize in Economics.” It is obvious that he has been intending not only to eradicate economical poverty but also to realize the world peace. We would like to add one thing to it that the poverty of thought or spirit may also produce a threat for peace.

Then, how is the relationship between cooperatives and peace? In “Co-operative values in a changing world” reported for the ICA congress 1992 in Tokyo, S.Å. Book² described as follows:

(5.1 Basic ideas and ethics)

Evidently, there is a basic frame work of ideas which have always been associated with the concept of Co-operation. I have identified the following as the most common:

- equality(democracy)
- Equity(social justice)
- Liberty(voluntariness)
- Mutual self-help(solidarity and self-reliance)
- Social emancipation (mobilization of human resources)
- Altruism(social responsibility)
- Economy (meeting peoples' economic needs)
- **Internationalism(International solidarity and peace)**

The 1984 ICA congress in Hamburg of Germany, based on the Trunow and Deneau report, also emphasized the action to struggle for peace in combination with environment protection etc. In the post war period when the Japanese cooperatives were founded in devastated areas, the common slogan was “For better life and peace”

It is obvious that peace is one of the fundamental issues of world cooperatives. Although it is sure that the DNA is inherited in MMH-Coop, only such slogans or campaigns may be insufficient for the world peace.

As described in the report by S.Å. Book, every cooperative expands the number of members, accumulates investment money, promotes mutual self-help, and develops various movements and businesses. In MMH-Coop, a lot of movements and businesses have been developed by the members based on the 1-Bu-1Kai movements as described above. Even if their scales are smaller, these movements and businesses can not be successfully managed by temporary campaigns, but need continuous and steady efforts. It is usually essential for them to expand the human relations and to respect the others. If they can not reach a consensus in any problem, they discuss about it until they get the agreement. It is a common sense of cooperatives to collaborate to solve the problems. There is no space in cooperatives to injure the others or to scramble for anything. They say, “Scrambling shall produce shortage, sharing shall produce excess.” The World wars

in the 20th century were caused by scrambling for territories and/or colonies, resulting in innumerable disasters and miseries.

On the contrary, movements and businesses in cooperatives, which need collaboration and share, shall produce a spirit of peaceful relationship, safety in daily life and mutual help or mutual reliance. We would like to create a diverse and inclusive environment⁸ in MMH-Coop where every member can contribute to the communities. That is, in another words, a change of social system “from relation-poor society to relation-rich society”. These changes may be achieved more effectively one by one, if anything, in smaller communities. If such smaller communities were born here and there in all over the world, they might become significant cornerstones for world peace. It reminds us a Captain Neil Alden Armstrong’s remark at the landing on the moon surface from the space craft, Apollo 11 in 1969, ”That’s one small step for a man, one giant step for mankind”.

Recently, a group of cooperatives in South Korea visited MMH-Coop twice. It was an initial international exchange of cooperatives experienced in MMH-Coop. In the welcome party, the senior managing director of MMH-Coop, referring to the colonial rule in Korean Peninsula by Japanese imperialism, apologized to the Korean visitors. The visitors welcomed it and proposed mutual friendship and solidarity. It was a warm-hearted and valuable international exchange.

MMH-Coop expects mutual understanding beyond national borders, which will promote international reliance, and moreover, the world peace as well.

Summary

One of the health-medical cooperatives located at the south-east area of Nagoya city and neighboring municipalities was demonstrated.

The cooperative, called “MMH-Coop”, has been attracting much attention of people, especially after the establishment of new hospital last year (in March 2010). But, it was not necessarily the new hospital to have been paid attention. MMH-Coop has developed various management systems and movements, such as investment without dividend, 1Bu-1Kai movement, Mina-Sen movement, thousand peoples’ assemblies, Pleiades Project, Dream Project, innovation of notions and so on. These movements and/or systems in MMH-Coop are also favorably appreciated.

We discussed the first possibility of MMH-Coop converting social system from “relation-poor society” to “relation-rich society”, and the second possibility to be a sort of social businesses longstanding for 50 years in MMH-Coop, and the final possibility for contributing to the world peace through the common cooperative movements and businesses in daily life.

Acknowledgements

As this article was frankly described about MMH-Coop after impressed by the significant and respectable activities of innumerable members in MMH-Coop, the acknowledgement should be dedicated to all the members of MMH-Coop.

If we had to choose someone, however, we could name Mrs. Hiroko Itou (maiden name:Hiroko Iwaki) 、 Mr. Jouji Fukuda and Mr. Noboru Murou as founders of MMH-Coop. These names, however, are actually a tip of the iceberg. It is evident that the wisdom and power of innumerable members have contributed to MMH-Coop's movements and businesses.

Respects and thanks should be paid to General Assembly of UN which adopted the IYC bill. We accepted it as an ideal chance to show the real aspects of MMH-Coop to the people of abroad and to contribute to world peace on it. It is an only one reason for us to demonstrate them in English.

In closing, sincere thanks should be paid to Ms. Madoka Masuda and Ms. Ayumi Takeuchi who checked this article, and arranged the check by .English speaking person.

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Appended Table : Facilities or offices belonging to MMH-Coop in April,2011

- 1) MMH-Coop headquarter organized in 1961
- 2) Minami clinic opened in 1961(annexed to Minami Seikyoh hospital in 1982)
- 3) Hoshizaki clinic incorporated to MMH-Coop in 1965
- 4) Takara clinic opened in1968 (relocated and expanded in 2003)
- 5) Minami pediatric clinic opened in 1976 (renovated in 1998)
- 6) Minami Seikyoh hospital opened in 1976(with 165 beds)
- 7) Minami dental clinic opened in 1978 (renovated in 1998)
- 8) In-hospital branch school “Asunaro” opened in 1981

The first expansion of Minami Seikyoh hospital in 1982

- 9) Fukushima clinic opened in 1983 (renovated and expanded in 1998)
- 10) Minami clinic for disabled persons opened in 1985 (closed in 2005)
- 11) Momoyama clinic opened in 1988 (renovated and expanded in 1995)

The second expansion of Minami Seikyoh hospital in 1989

- 12) Arimatsu clinic opened in 1995
- 13) Minami visiting nursing station opened in 1996
- 14) Arimatsu visiting nursing station opened in 1997
- 15) Visiting nursing station “Izumi” opened in 1998
- 16) Home-nursing supporting center “Nawa” opened in 1999 (suspended in 2010)

Minami Seikyoh hospital was designated as a postgraduate education hospital in 1999

- 17) Kaname hospital (with 60 beds) as a hospital for long term care with home helper station “Kaname” opened in 2000
- 18) Home-nursing station “Arimatsu” opened in 2000
- 19) Designated home-nursing supporting office “Momoyama” opened in 2000
- 20) Visiting nursing station “Momoyama” opened in 2000
- 21) Health care supporting office opened in 2001
- 22) Helper station “Izumi” opened in 2001

Health care festival organized by MMH Coop gathered about 20,000 people in

Motohama park of Tokai city in 2001. (A famous singer, Agnes Chan attended and cerebrated it)

23) Himawari dental clinic opened in 2002

24) Helper station “Ajisai” opened in 2002

The third expansion and renovation of Minami Seikyoh hospital in 2003

25) Home helper station “Hoshizaki” opened in 2003

26) Home helper station “Wakaba” opened in 2003

27) Nursery facility for sick children “Nikoniko” opened in 2004

28) Life net “Minami” (Co.,Ltd) started in 2004

29) Group home “Namo” opened in 2004

30) Home helper station “Wataboushi” opened in 2004

31) Facility for group home “Iryase” and adult day care service office “Iryase” opened in 2005

32) “Yuyu village” with “Kimama Tengu-en” (facilities for adult day care service and short stay service) and Gayagaya (facility for cultivation and get-together) opened in 2005

33) Minami tourist (Co.Ltd) opened in 2005

34) Transport service office for wheelchair users (Okagesama Minami) opened in 2006

35) Apartment “Waiwai”(small scale row house for multi-generations) in Yuyu “village” opened in 2006

36) Small scale multifunctional facility “Mouyaiko” opened in 2007

37) Nonbiri-village with adult day care service unit and group-home “Honwaka” opened in 2008

38) Small scale health care facility for the elderly “Anki” opened in 2008, annexing to new Hoshizaki clinic (relocated and innovated at the same time)

39) Small scale multifunctional facility “Osabori” annexed to Nonbiri-village opened in 2009

40) Apartment “Aiai” (row house for various generations), coffee shop “Chara”, get-together room for nearby people “Ohimachi” and small scale farm “Kenchan” in Nonbiri-village opened in 2009

In March of 2010, Kaname hospital was innovated and expanded

At the sametime,Minami Seikyoh hospital was relocated, expanded and innovated, Minami pediatric clinic was closed, and annexed to Minami Seikyoh hospital.

41) Coop fitness club “wish” annexed to Minami Seikyoh hospital opened in 2010

42) Maternity clinic “Heart” annexed to Minami Seikyoh hospital opened in 2010

43) Small scale multifunctional facility “Minnano-zaisho” with group-home opened in 2010

