

## COMPLETION REPORT

### A Comparative Study on Consumer Cooperatives of Vietnam and Japan

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Consumer cooperatives are enterprises owned and democratically managed by consumers which aim at fulfilling the needs and aspirations of their members. Through the “Comparative Study on Consumer Cooperatives of Vietnam and Japan” funded by Sumitomo Foundation, the research team has explored that:

1. The model of consumer cooperative in Japan is different from the current common cooperative in Vietnam. While common cooperatives in Vietnam link producers or service providers together, the consumer cooperative goes one step further: linking consumers, directly connecting producers and consumers, reducing intermediate costs, together with increasing the efficiency of scale of cooperative through buying in large quantity for many.

2. Consumer cooperatives in Japan have a long history with an advanced legal system, a million of shareholding members, and a comprehensive system of services. High members’ satisfaction is a main driving force for the continuing efforts of consumer cooperatives in Japan. Japanese consumer cooperatives are outstanding examples of consumer cooperatives model with their well-organized structure, sustainable mechanism and business activities together with strong vision and mission.

3. There are thousands of cooperatives in Vietnam. However, up to now, there exist only a few consumer cooperatives and they are at the early stage of development. The current state of consumer cooperatives in Vietnam shows that they have great potential to develop more but are apparently constrained by lack of certain mechanism and policies as well as capacity and resources from the consumer cooperatives themselves.

After much studying, field trip and in-depth interviews, the study has also confirmed that the current situation of production and distribution of agricultural products and foods in Vietnam are similar to that of Japan in the year of 1950s-1960s when consumers are seeking places where they can buy safer goods that they can trust at reasonable prices. Vietnamese consumers are also seeking safer food and products. Moreover, they are seeking places where they can buy safer goods that they can trust at reasonable prices.

Consequently, this helps draw out lessons and experiences from Japanese consumer cooperatives in that period which can be applied for Vietnamese consumer cooperatives. Lessons learned for development of consumer cooperatives include: (i) increasing fixed members of consumer cooperatives and creating more conveniences for members; (ii) developing cooperative brand product based on consumers’ needs; (iii) implementing the home delivery services; (iv) establishing a national federation for consumer cooperatives in the country.

The study has reconfirmed that experiences of Japan have shown that the model of consumer cooperatives has been highly effective in leading to the elimination of middlemen, achieving economies of large scale purchases and ensuring better quality of goods. In the context that consumer cooperatives in Vietnam have begun to grow in number and taken interests of producers and consumers, the success of this model in Japan demonstrates that it is very potential and feasible for Vietnam’s consumer cooperatives development.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

<p>Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)</p> <p>- 22 – 23 March 2018: Son Tra District People’s Committee and Ngu Hanh Son District People’s Committee</p> <p>Name of conference: Collective economy</p> <p>Title of presentation: Consumer cooperatives: Lessons learned from Japan</p> <p>Presenter: Dr. Quach Thi Xuan Ms. Vo Luong Binh Nguyen</p> <p>Organizer: Da Nang Cooperative Alliance</p>
<p>Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)</p> <p>We expect to publish an article in the fourth quarter of 2018 (October – December) on Da Nang Review of Socio-economic Development.</p> <p>Title: Consumer cooperatives in Japan: Lessons learned for consumer cooperatives development in Vietnam</p> <p>Author: Dr. Quach Thi Xuan and Ms. Vo Luong Binh Nguyen</p>
<p>Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)</p>