

**ICA General Assembly and Global Conference “A New Decade in Action”
Thematic Workshop E1: Inspiring the Next Generation: Youth and Co-operatives**

SETTING CO-OPERATIVES AND COOPERATION TO TAKE ROOT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Consumer Co-ops Exist in Japanese Universities!

Consumer co-ops exist in $\frac{1}{4}$ of Japanese universities. As of 2013, the number of 4-year universities is 782. Of this number, 192 universities or 25% of the total universities in Japan have consumer co-ops.

A university co-op is organized by students, faculty and university staff. Approximately 1.3 million students, out of 2.56 million 4-year university students in total, or 51%, are members of university co-ops.

A university co-op supports the basis of campus life by conducting various businesses, such as dining halls, bookstores, stores selling computers, stationery and daily necessities, travel agency, housing agency, agencies for driving schools, foreign language courses, courses for those aiming to become civil servants and especially mutual aid programs.

The students, faculty and university staff are supporting the basis of campus life by themselves in terms of co-operatives.

General Stores



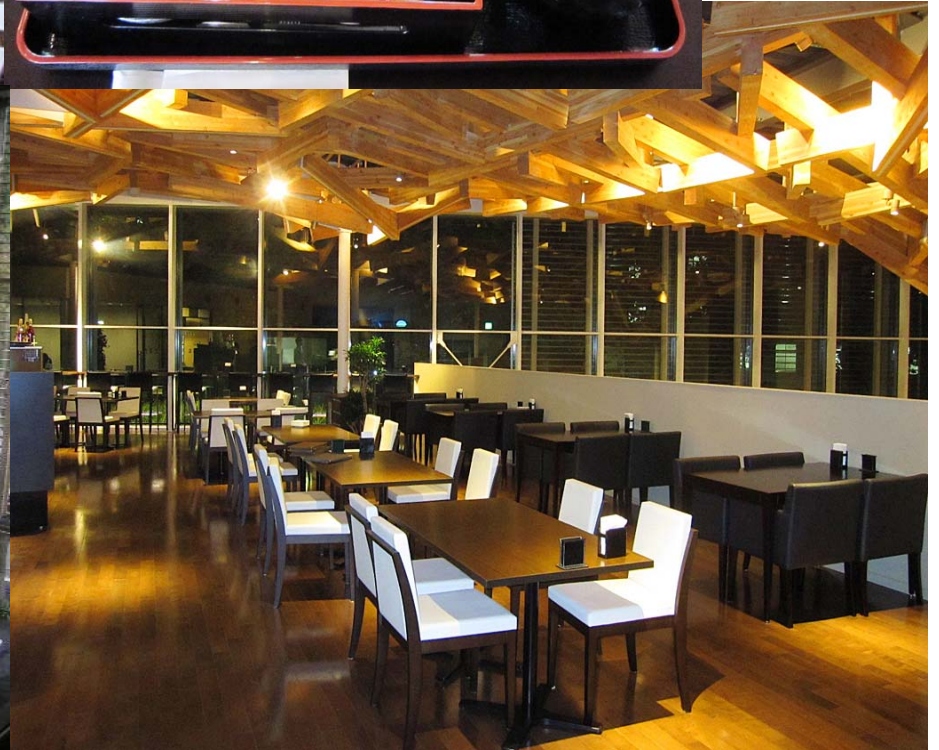
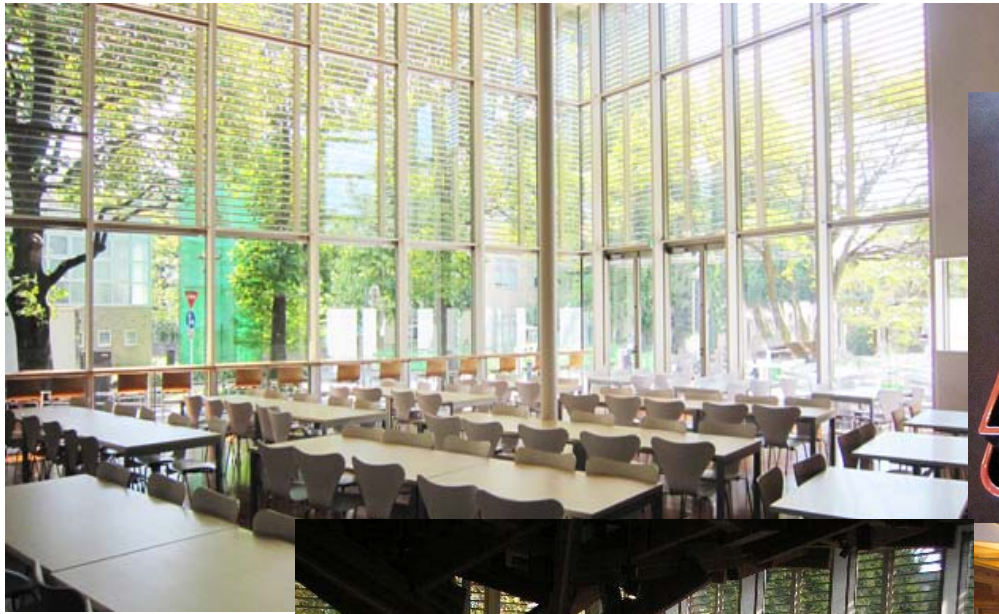
Bookstores



Dining Halls







University Co-ops Continue to Grow!

The pioneer of university co-op can be found even before World War II, but many university co-ops were created **in the postwar era during the period of economic difficulties**. These university co-ops continue to grow even after the end of rapid economic growth in the 1970s and 1980s in Japan.

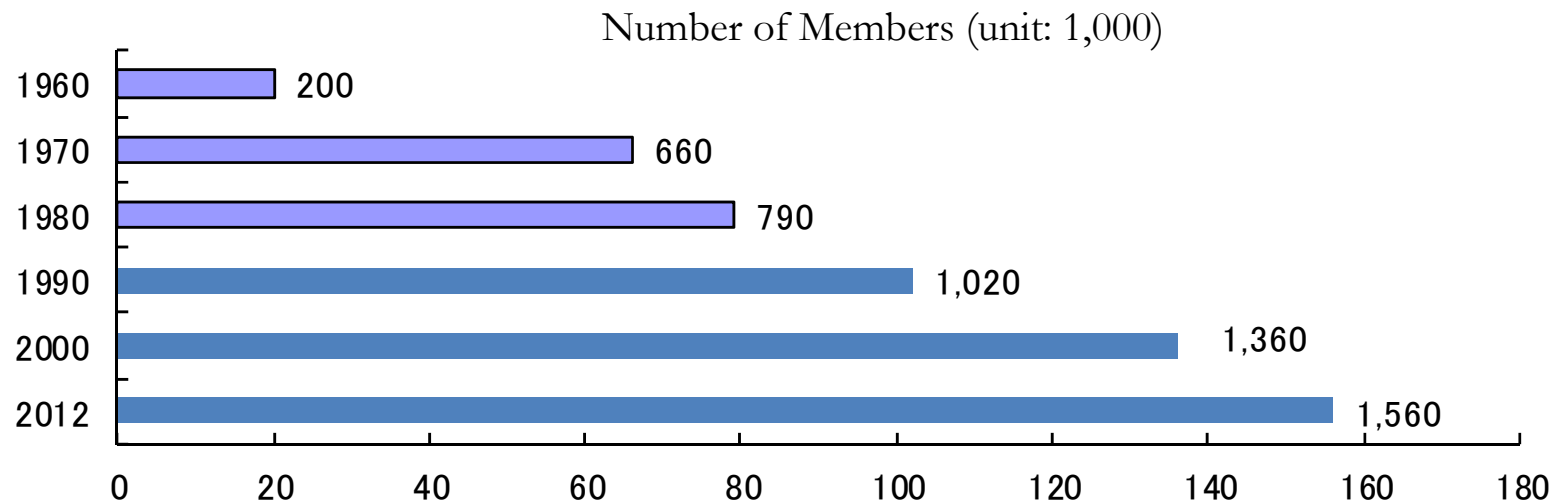
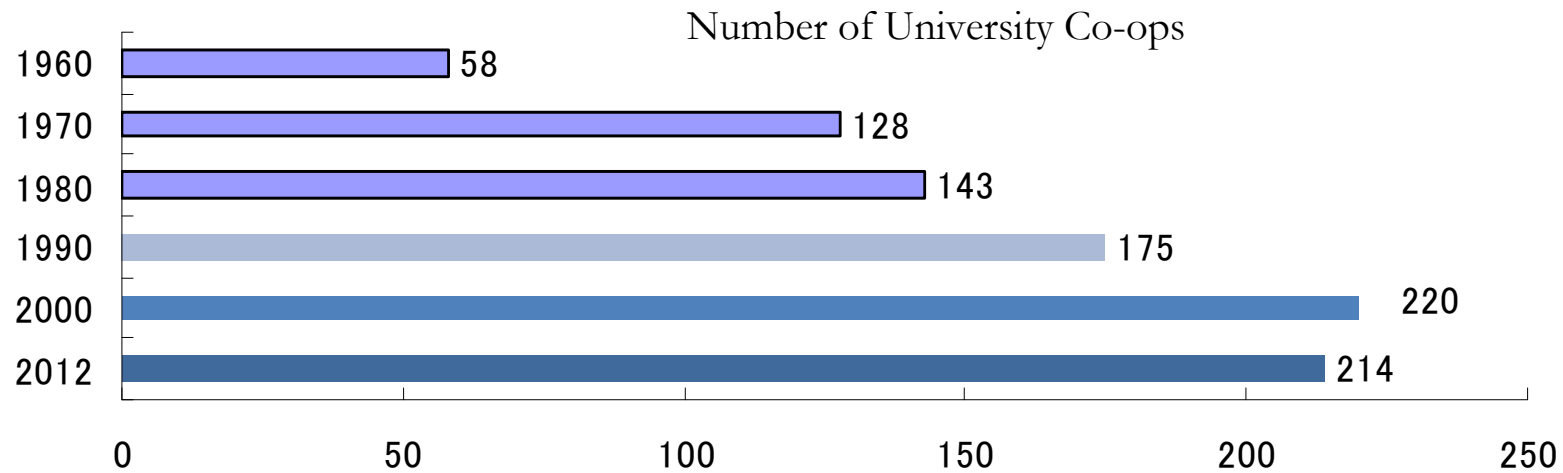
55 years have passed since the establishment of **National Federation of University Co-operative Associations(NFUCA)** in 1958.

Student movement affected the building of university co-ops, thus university co-ops were strongly influenced by student movement.

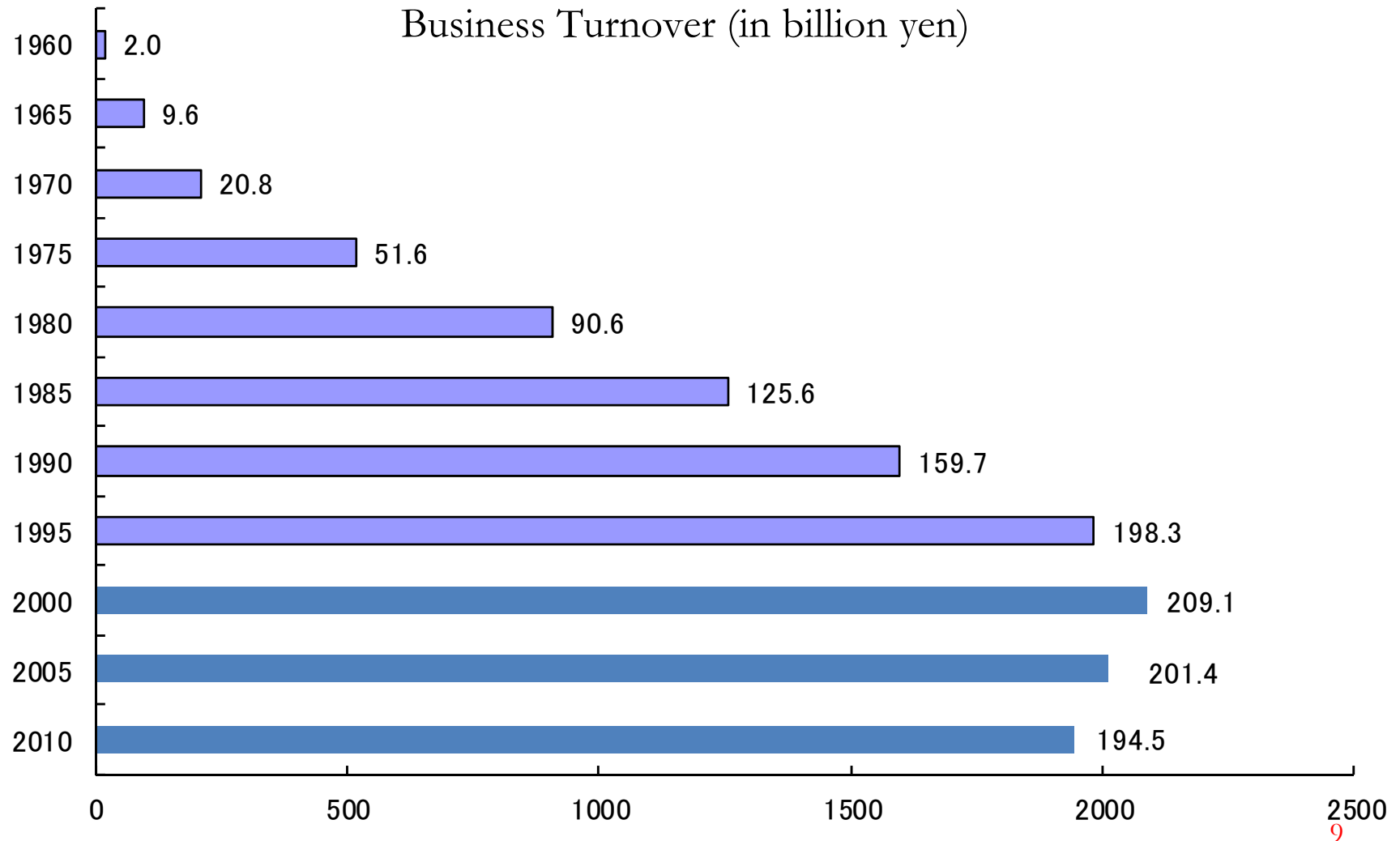
However, as university co-ops became widely spread, they have been able to demonstrate **the merit as a co-operative**.

The causes for its success are making university co-op an entity owned **not only by students, but also faculty and university staff**; and the establishment of **business association** in each region, which made it easier to handle various businesses.

The Number of Co-ops Slightly Decreased, but the Number of Members Continues to Grow!



Although the Turnover Fell Since the 21st Century Because of Deflation



Cooperation, Collaboration, Independence and Participation are Our Core Mission

The good things about university co-ops are that they do not only support the foundation of campus life, but also collaborate with the university as a research and education institution and contribute to the improvement of research and education, as well as nurture the spirit of cooperation among students, faculty and university staff members through participation in co-op activities.

In 2006, Japanese university co-ops made “**Vision and Action Plan of University Co-ops in the 21st Century**,” in which we declared that we will collaborate with universities on the basis of cooperation, but are independent financially and organizationally as a co-op, while promoting more and more members’ participation as well as promoting our social participation as a co-op.

Cooperation, collaboration, independence and participation are university co-ops’ core mission.

From this standpoint, university co-ops have been actively contributing to **peace** in Japan and the world, and **environmental improvement** in the university, region, Japan and the world.

Financial Difficulties of Japanese Universities and the Response of University Co-ops

National universities in Japan were incorporated in 2004 and this movement was followed by many public universities. A lot of universities, including private universities, are experiencing **severe financial difficulties**.

Therefore, many universities have been trying to improve their financial circumstances by bringing in convenience stores and restaurants from the private sector to the campus and receiving a part of the profit.

University co-ops are carried away on **the current of commercialization of universities**.

This caused university co-ops to discuss with the universities to have the universities recognize that a university co-op belongs to the students and faculty members, which is followed by a **mutual agreement**. University co-ops are expected to be of assistance to the university and conduct useful activities.

These activities have been gradually delivering good results.

Universities in the Globally Networking Era and the Response of University Co-ops

However, due to **declining of birth rate combined with the aging population** and decrease of number of student candidates, universities and university co-ops are facing great difficulties under the tough circumstances.

In order to survive as universities in the world under global networking, Japanese universities must enhance their level of research and improve their educational content. It is also imperative for Japanese universities to accept foreign students from various countries, in addition to Japanese students.

University co-ops shall collaborate with universities proceeding with reforms. In this collaboration, university co-ops shall endeavor **to provide research and education tools** starting with computers, **provide electronic text system** developed for educational purpose, **provide education tools using Massive Open Online Courses** and **provide means of promoting face-to-face education between faculty and students** that becomes increasingly important.

Japanese and Asian University/Campus Co-ops in the World

Based on these achievements, in addition to conducting exchanges with **co-ops in university and high school level in Asia**, Japanese university co-ops have also been maintaining exchanges with **student services organizations in Europe and the United States** for years.

In Europe, organizations that provide student services are government or quasi-government agencies, such as CNOUS in France and DSW in Germany. Meanwhile, in the US, universities are competing with each other to provide students services, such as dormitories, dining halls and scholarships.

In regard to these two types of student services, i.e. **government-backed type** and **market competition type**, the type of student services that exists in Japan and Asian countries is co-operative, i.e. **co-operative type** as represented by Japanese university co-ops.

We are proud of this and want to spread this concept from Asia to the world.

NFUCA and ICA Committee on University/ Campus Co-operatives in the Asia and Pacific

NFUCA plays a central role in ICA Committee on University/Campus Co-operatives in the Asia and Pacific.

The President of NFUCA serves as the Chairperson of this committee.

This committee was **established in 1994 as a sub-committee** of ICA Asia and the Pacific consumers' co-operative committee, and was **recognized as a full-fledged committee on the occasion of 2008 ICA-AP Regional General Assembly, Hanoi, Vietnam**. During its long history, the committee has been organizing meetings and workshops almost every year.

Through these kinds of activities, meaningful interactions between co-ops in university and high school level in Asia have been more and more deepened.

In July this year, a workshop on university/campus co-op was held in **Seoul, South Korea**, which attracted **95 participants from 8 countries**. The workshop was filled with enthusiasm of the participants, including Regional Director of ICA-AP who participated in the workshop and provided guidance as well.

The ICA-AP Committee on University/Campus Co-operatives will conduct **a meeting and workshop in Bali, Indonesia next year.**

The Significance of Seoul Workshop

In Seoul workshop, we looked at each country's practices in one year after 2012 Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) workshop, which were based on resolutions made in the 2012 workshop.

For example, in this workshop, in addition to the 9 countries constitute the Committee this far, there were **participants from Sri Lanka**. All participants of this workshop extended their warmest welcome to participants from the new country.

The participants also watched keenly **the development of university co-ops in this one year in South Korea**, the host country of this workshop. We learned how the development became possible based on what background, what were the things that KUCF are proud of, what were the problems and what were the prospects for the future.





The Response to ICA Blueprint for the Co-operative Decade

Japanese university co-ops welcomed ICA Blueprint for the Co-operative Decade, as a guideline to develop co-operatives around the world in all areas for 10 years until 2020.

The instability and unsustainability of capitalism—that took over the world after the end of the US-Soviet Cold War and the fall of communism in Soviet and Eastern Europe countries—were exposed at the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers (also known as “Lehman Shock”) in 2008. During this period, co-operatives were proven to have resilience and contributed to the recovery of world economy.

The goal of the Blueprint is to boost the position of the business form of co-operative to the acknowledged leader position in the areas of economy, society and environmental sustainability until 2020.

Japanese university co-ops have a profound understanding of the Blueprint and want to incorporate it into our activities as a guiding principle to make co-operative business as a model preferred by people, and make it a business form that has the most tremendous growth spurt.

Five Interconnecting Themes of the Blueprint Strategy for the Co-operative Decade

The Blueprint strategy involves concentrating on these 5 critical interlinked themes:

1. Elevate **participation** within membership and governance to a new level
2. Position co-operatives as builders of **sustainability**
3. Build the co-operative message and secure the co-operative **identity**
4. Ensure supportive **legal frameworks** for co-operative growth
5. Secure reliable co-operative **capital** while guaranteeing member control

Adaptation to the Vision and Action Plan of NFUCA

In the context of vision and action plan (cooperation, collaboration, independence and participation) stated by National Federation of University Co-operative Association, the Blueprint can be translated into the following:

1. **Members' Participation:** University co-ops actively seek the members' participation, reinforce the activities of Student Committee, not only General Assembly and Board of Directors, and make everybody aware that a university co-op belongs to the students and faculty members.
2. **Social Participation for Sustainability:** University co-ops learn from each other that they are also part of the socioeconomic activities, and connect university co-ops' day-to-day activities to the sustainability of Japan and the world's socioeconomic activities.
3. **Identity as Activities and Awareness of Cooperation:** University co-ops clearly state that they are co-operative ventures of students and faculty members, realizing together the significance of co-operatives through day-by-day activities and try hard to disseminate it to the university and community.
4. **Collaboration with Universities toward Legal Framework:** University co-ops try to make arrangements with universities to ensure the basis of co-op activities, and make efforts to enhance and strengthen co-operative related laws in the society.
5. **Independence from the Basic to Gain Capital:** In order to realize the aforementioned issues, NFUCA has to strengthen its financial health while maintaining democratic control by its members.

Cooperation

To contribute to the enrichment of university life through the cooperation of undergraduates, postgraduates, international students, and faculty.

Collaboration

To collaborate in the realization of university philosophies and goals, as well as contribute to the enrichment of higher education and advancement of research.

Independence

To work as an independent organization in revitalizing universities and their communities, as well as contribute to the enrichment of society and its culture.

Participation

To encourage the active participation of members, broaden cooperative experiences, and realize a sustainable society that is kind to both people and the planet.



What Are the Actions to Accept the Blueprint?

To accept ICA's Blueprint for Co-operative Decade and take actions, we have to pick up the meaning of and understand deeply **the thoughts behind the Blueprint**, and flesh out the details in the medium- and long-term policy of our organization.

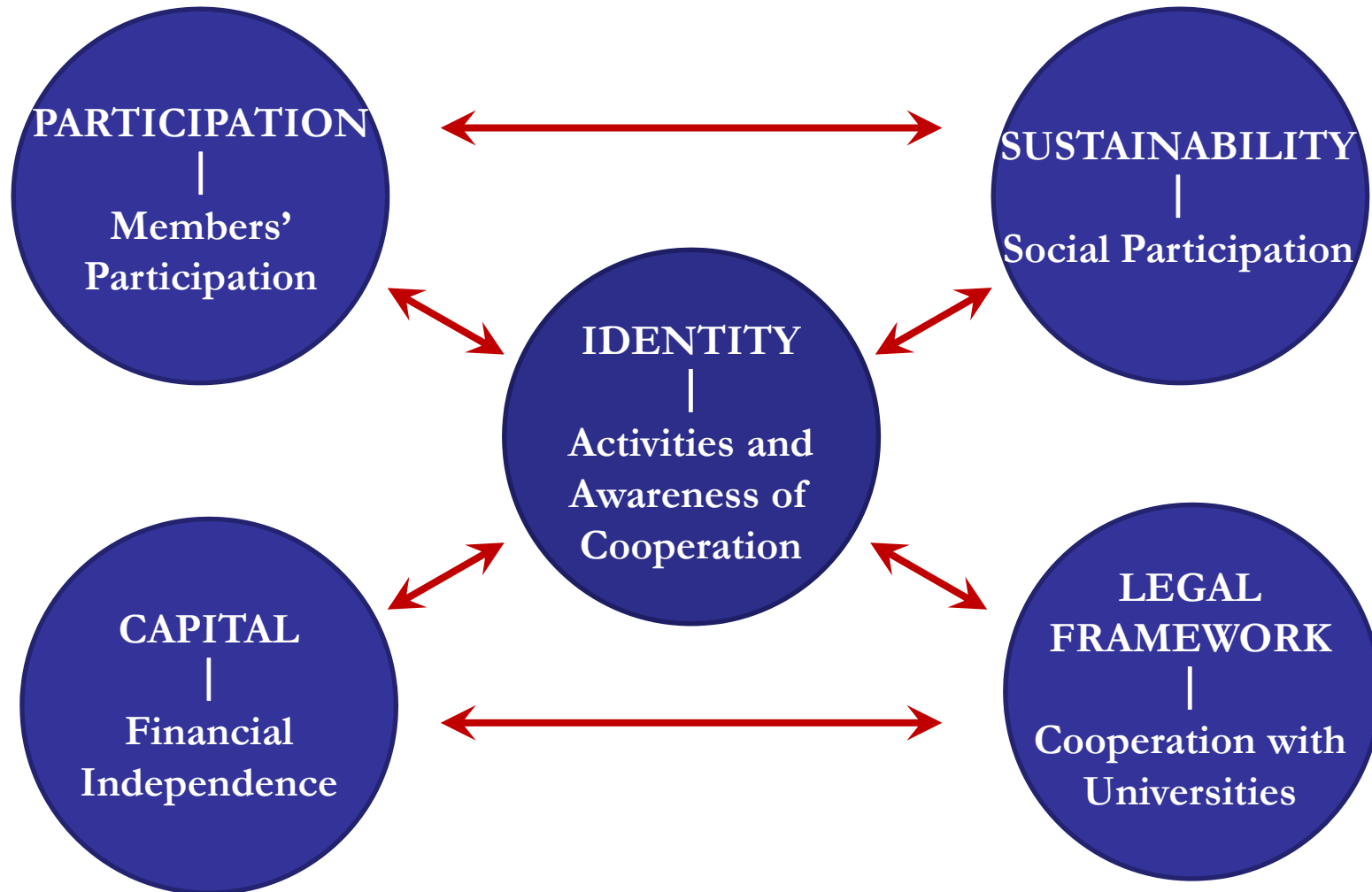
NFUCA is working on the formulation of action plan on the basis of this concept.

From this idea, university co-ops in Japan co-operate with universities across the country **to fully support the students to learn** advanced general knowledge and expertise that are appropriate to modern society, and to be able to play an active part in the society by working in a profession suitable for them.

In this context, university co-operatives are actively promoting **student exchanges** bilaterally and multilaterally, and want to contribute to **the increase of membership** of ICA Committee on University/Campus Co-operatives for Asia and the Pacific.

NFUCA wants to link the resolutions of the workshop held in Malaysia last year with the ICA Blueprint toward 2020.

Five Interlinked and Overlapping Themes of the Blueprint Strategy



A Quiet Transformation of Our Society

Thus the chart illustrates the concept described before.

The basic line is the co-op members' **identity**, meaning that they are aware of the co-op significance and conduct consciously each and every activity that co-op has been doing so far.

Co-op members should not only use the co-op as their habit, but also **participate** in co-op activities consciously and aware that these actions will lead to the **sustainability** that affects the survival of today's society.

For that reason, if co-ops build a good relationship with the university, it will be easier for co-ops to play an active role toward **legal framework**.

Through these activities, co-ops must strengthen their financial base, and consumer co-ops and other types of co-ops must be able to play the role that **capital** has been playing in the capitalist world so far.

Therefore, it is **a quiet transformation of our society and the world**, realized through day-to-day activities of our consumer co-ops and other types of co-ops.

Leadership Circle and Contribution to Global Development Co-operative

In preparation for this General Assembly, ICA Board is considering to create a **Leadership Circle**, comprising representatives from co-operatives around the world to drive the Blueprint to success.

Japanese co-operatives, such as agricultural co-ops and consumer co-ops have been working together for this purpose.

ICA also has launched the **Global Development Co-operative**, an international initiative to support co-operative businesses around the world, focusing on agricultural co-operatives in Africa, and called co-operatives around the world to support the initiative.

University co-ops in Japan are doing exchanges with various types of co-operatives through Japan Joint Committee of Co-operatives and other forums, and have been conducting activities **to contribute to this important movement towards the Co-operative Decade.**

Towards 2014 ICA Asia Pacific Regional Assembly

The next ICA Asia Pacific Regional Assembly will be held in Bali, Indonesia in 2014.

In this occasion, NFUCA would like to hold a meeting of Committee on University/Campus Co-operatives, as well as a workshop that will advance the results of the 2013 workshop.

We would like to conduct a variety of activities to realize the plan towards 2020 we have decided in the previous workshop, while linking the plan with ICA Blueprint for a Co-op Decade.

In addition, we would like to ask university/campus co-ops from various countries to send their representatives to come and attend the meeting and workshop.

The spread of co-ops in universities from Japan to Asia, then Asia to the world is the hope of NFUCA.



Thank you for your attention!

