



**Leading at the Grassroots:
A Study of the Influence of Asian Rural Institute Graduates on
Communities**

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Asian Rural Institute

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Executive Summary

The Asian Rural Institute (ARI) in Tochigi, Japan has focused for more than forty years on training rural leaders, mostly from Asia and Africa. The curriculum provides leadership skills on an organic farm with the motto “*That we may live together*”. This study was launched to learn how the now more than 1300 graduates have influenced their communities and organizations following their nine-month experience living in community and focusing on the connection between food and life. The goal of the study was to provide recommendations for future curricula as well as to provide a model for ARI for ongoing assessment of graduate influence on communities.

Researchers traveled to eleven countries and visited 229 graduates, 32% of graduates in those countries. Unstructured interviews were used to obtain qualitative information from graduates about their experiences. Thematic analysis with Nvivo software was used to systematically analyze the transcripts of 202 recorded individual interviews and the extensive field notes taken from visits to graduates, their sending bodies and communities. Key concepts at ARI were explored: serving the marginalized, the value of rural life, foodlife, rural leadership, servant leadership, community building, community development, and spiritual growth.

Visits also included organizations called sending bodies that make referrals of potential participants to ARI with the expectations that they will accept the graduate back into their organization upon graduation. Deeper understanding by ARI of these organizations, and vice versa, is needed for more satisfactory integration that meets both organizational and graduate needs and aspirations, especially in a global climate of donor interest in project funding.

Participants with a basic proficiency in English are referred to ARI from faith-based and secular NGOs as well as from graduates. The primary source of referrals has changed from predominantly faith-based entities in the beginning to more recently NGOs and graduates. The percentage of women participants has increased from 10% to 47%.

While on campus, the major emphasis on “*learning by doing*” combines experiential and classroom learning by living in community and rotating leadership. This was key to a deeper understanding of and appreciation for other cultures and values, including time and resource management. Challenges, especially during the first three months, of cultural and language adjustment were surpassed by the benefits of skills in engaging with a wider world in terms of economics, culture, religions and cross-cultural relationships.

Graduates are given an opportunity to return to ARI for further training. Japanese Graduate Interns may continue for one year to deepen learning, while international graduates may return after five years as Training Assistants. Managing the balance between work and learning for the latter continues to be a challenge.

Graduates leave with a written dream or plan for how they will implement their learning on return home. Comparison of those “reflection papers” with field data showed that 53%

were able to implement their plans in whole or in part; however, that does not include the significant impacts all graduates have had in their communities but had not envisioned during their time at ARI. Their ability to do so depended on the practicality of the plan in addition to the context they were returning to. The most important factor determining if the plan was implemented or not was how the plan fit into the vision and financial capacity of their sending body.

Graduates' ability to implement plans also depended on geographic, political and social factors. For this reason, information on each geographic region visited was documented for the following locations: East Africa, Indonesia, Northeast India, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Western Africa and Japan. The context of each was briefly described and then graduate activities explained in terms of their relationship to a faith-based organization, secular development organization, government or independent activity. It was evident that the highest graduate satisfaction as well as the ability to effect sustainable change happened when there was a good relationship and congruity between graduate and organizational aspirations but in all cases interventions had to be developed to specific contexts.

Numerous factors affect what graduates are able to implement when they return to their unique home settings. Social structures of family and community especially impacted women, who hold the key to food production along with household and childcare responsibilities in contexts with fewer opportunities than men in access to capital, land, education and leadership roles.

In contrast to Japan, graduate contexts were often described in terms of "*lacks*" of infrastructure such as basic commodities, communication, health care and education. Road access is the first and most influential change, making these accessible in addition to agricultural inputs and marketing opportunities. Land availability for smallholder farmers is increasingly challenging with increasing prices, urban expansion, generational subdividing and multinational purchases of large tracts, supposedly intended to increase food production but rarely benefiting local communities.

The combination of these challenges and farmers' desire to meet their immediate felt needs makes it more difficult for graduates to promote organic practices where the benefits tend to be long term. Acceptance of organic practices is further complicated by widespread promotion and subsidization of chemical inputs, which often have short term benefits but may not be sustainable over the long term. When livelihood needs are not able to be met people migrate, youth for better opportunities without the labor of farming which many consider a last resort, and women in desperation to feed their children. War and corruption lead to further devastation in the wake of trafficking of drugs, arms and humans. Government policies can help or hinder specific groups of people with internally displaced people often continuing to be at the mercy of those who caused them to be displaced in the first place. Signing of agreements may mean that "*the war is over but the conflict continues*" if basic needs for human dignity are not met.

Even the best intentions of foreign institutions often create unintended challenges. The chemicals of the “green revolution” leaching into rivers and ground water in Sri Lanka have led the government to ban glyphosate because of the prevalence of kidney disease in rice growing areas. Relief interventions have disrupted community mutual support systems and many survivors have learned to wait on handouts. Trees such as eucalyptus, in spite of their use in construction, are being uprooted in many places because of their adverse effects on water tables and hence agriculture.

Graduates returning home from ARI are faced with many community expectations of gifts and interventions that will bring income much sooner than occurs with needing to experiment with practices from ARI to learn which are applicable in home contexts. Graduates faced many challenges in organic agriculture practices and livestock raising, often feeling guilty if they were unable to replicate the ARI model of a demonstration farm. Those that adopted models such as farmer field schools in communities had more physical results and positive community relationships.

Graduates were significantly more effective in leadership than in implementing agricultural skills. This is in keeping with ARI’s desire to be a leadership training institution using organic agriculture as a means to that end. Effective leadership did not seem to depend on whether or not a graduate lived in a particular community as long as they had captured the importance of being like the people. Those servant leaders who used participatory models of community mobilization and followed them up with support and monitoring contributed towards positive long-lasting development in a wide variety of unique aspects.

Some of the diversity of achievements of these servant leaders is reflected in graduates’ diverse roles. For example, one graduate promoted peace between pastoralists and farmers by introducing night paddocking of animals in farmers’ harvested fields. Another, who introduced conservation agriculture has helped families feed themselves and orphans. Yet another introduced a reflexology practice that brings physical healing. Advocacy of graduates with communities and governments have resulted in a wide range of benefits: stable pork markets in one remote area, death benefits to families of deceased migrants in another area, and communities being supported in advocating for their rights with governments in several countries.

There was wide recognition that the roles of graduates in “rural” areas have necessarily changed over forty years in a changing world. Some now describe little difference between rural and poor urban communities with both being poor and marginalized as well as needing food security and dignity.

Recommendations to help ARI shape a response to these changes and challenges as it heads into the future were developed based on graduates’ and researcher perspectives.

Recruitment and preparation of potential participants:

- Choose participants who have commitment and vision for communities wherever they are working.

- Develop deeper relationships with sending bodies and potential candidates.
- Accept two, but not more, participants from any one organization, area or language group at any one time.
- Develop teams of two to three trusted graduates in geographic areas to assist in screening applicants.

ARI participant experience:

- Strengthen the leadership component beyond rotation of leadership roles to providing tools that support development of leadership and transformational community activities.
- Prepare participants for group facilitation.
- Prepare participants for leadership in gender equity.
- Understand and respect participant contexts.
- Go beyond working with hands in agricultural and livestock aspects, to teaching the scientific method and practical cost-effective methodologies that graduates can translate to their own contexts with fewer or significantly different resources.
- Present curriculum material step by step with repetitive, frequent cycles of action and new information.
- Include marketing, adding value and microfinance components in the curriculum.
- Be aware of, and include aspects on changing world trends.
- Take whatever steps are possible to formalize certification for graduates.

Post-graduation monitoring by ARI:

- Organize ARI staff visits to graduates, sending bodies and communities for purposes of deepening relationships and learning.
- Explore opportunities for ARI graduate internships near their local contexts.
- Explore feasibility of seed money for projects to sending bodies.

ARI continuity:

- Provide continuing education opportunities to equip staff to provide the optimum quality training for participants.
- Clarify the role of Training Assistants and recruit accordingly.
- Develop a strategic plan for long-term sustainability that responds to changing world realities.
- Clarify roles and relationships of staff levels, governing bodies and American Friends of ARI (AFARI) and find an appropriate place for sending body participation.

General:

- Respond to graduate suggestions and give reasons when ideas are not implemented.

“*That we may live together*” has been the guiding principle at ARI for more than forty years. The journey to continue toward that goal over the next forty years has begun well with the fortieth anniversary theme “*Transformation at the Grassroots: walking with grassroots leaders*” and the efforts of staff in already implementing some of the recommendations proposed here.

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Acronyms

ABCD	Asset based community development.
AIDS	Autoimmune Deficiency Disorder.
ARI	Asian Rural Institute.
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asia Nations.
CSA	Community supported agriculture.
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization.
GI	Graduate intern.
GIS	Graduate impact study.
GDP	Gross Domestic Product.
HDI	Human Development Index.
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Disorder.
KNF	Korean natural farming.
ICA	Institute of Cultural Affairs.
IPM	Integrated Pest management.
IPPM	Integrated pest and production management.
IDP	Internally displaced person.
INGO	International non-government organization.
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.
NGO	Non-government organization.
SACCO	Savings and credit cooperative.
SB	Sending body.
SALT	Sloping agricultural land technology.
TA	Training assistant.
TZS	Tanzanian Shilling.
UN	United Nations.
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme.
VAT	Village action team.
VDC	Village development committee.
WWOOF	World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms.

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Glossary

Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a chronic life-threatening condition caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

Agarwood is the soft dark resinous heartwood produced by various Southeast Asian evergreen trees when they become infected with a fungus or mold develops and bores into the tree. This fragrant resin is used to produce incense, perfumes and traditional medicines.

Al-Qaeda is a radical Islamic group organized by Osama bin Laden in the 1990s to engage in terrorist activities.

Al-Shabaab is an Arabic phrase meaning "*the Youth*", often used to refer to a Somalia-based militant Islamist group aligned with Al-Qaeda.

Artemesia is an aromatic or bitter-tasting plant of a genus that includes wormwood, mugwort, and sagebrush and used in herbal medicine for the treatment of malaria.

Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) is an approach to community based development, based on the principles of appreciating and mobilizing individual and community skills and assets (rather than focusing on problems and needs). It is community-driven development rather than development driven by external agencies; and builds on appreciative inquiry, social capital, and participatory approaches to development, community economic development models and efforts to strengthen civil society.

Asian Rural Institute (ARI) is a registered vocational institute for agricultural training located in Nishinasuno, Tochigi Prefecture, Japan.

Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) is a political and economic organization of fifteen Southeast Asia countries with a goal of accelerating economic growth, social progress and sociocultural evolution among its members, alongside of protecting regional stability and opportunities for member countries to resolve differences peacefully.

Biosand filter (BSF) is a simple household water treatment device, which is an innovation of traditional slow sand filters specifically designed for intermittent use. A BSF consists of a concrete or plastic container filled with specially selected and prepared sand and gravel.

Bokashi is the Japanese word for fermented organic matter and is one of the fermented fertilizers made at ARI by mixing organic materials such as rice bran and chicken manure with soil (clay soil or sub soil from the forest) and other materials including rice husks and wood charcoal.

Brown zone is one of three zones designated by the Burmese government: white are those areas under total government control, brown are contested areas, and black are areas over which the government has no control (Eubank, n.d.).

Community-based organization (CBO) is a public or private non-profit entity (including church or religious) that is representative of a community or a significant segment of a community, and is engaged in meeting human, educational, environmental, or public safety community needs.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a concept describing a community-based organization of producers and consumers. The consumers agree to provide direct, up-front support for local growers who will produce their food; growers in turn agree to do their best to provide a sufficient quantity and quality of food to meet the needs and expectations of the consumers.

Conservation agriculture is any system or practice which aims to conserve soil and water by combining surface cover (mulch) with reduced or zero tillage to minimize runoff and erosion, as well as improve the conditions for plant establishment and growth.

Cover crop is one grown for the protection and enrichment of the soil.

Cronyism is the appointment of friends and associates to positions of authority, without proper regard to their qualifications.

De facto capitol is a capitol existing in actuality, especially when contrary to, or not established by law.

De facto single-party state is a dominant party state that, unlike the single party state, allows (at least nominally) democratic multiparty elections, but the existing practices or balance of political power effectively prevent the opposition from winning the elections.

Diaspora includes people who are living outside the area where they or their ancestors have lived for a long time.

Denmark style pig raising is an intensive form of raising pigs where grower pigs are housed indoors in group housing and pregnant sows are housed in gestation pens and give birth in farrowing crates.

Digging is a term used for manual farm work such as hoeing.

The “Do No Harm” principle is combined with values of humanitarian imperative, neutrality and impartiality to guide the Sphere Project code of conduct adopted by UNICEF and international NGOs for their humanitarian work.

Earth University (2014) is an agricultural university in Costa Rica with an innovative curriculum where “*You will develop and run your own business while at EARTH. In your first year, you will form a company with four to six classmates and create a business plan that analyzes financial, social and environmental factors. Once the project is approved, the University will grant your company a loan to operate the business during your second year. In the third year, you will close the business and formally evaluate its profitability and effectiveness. After repaying your loan with interest, you share the profits among your group.*”

Ebola virus (filovirus) is a virus that causes an infectious and generally fatal disease marked by fever and severe internal bleeding.

Ecotourism is tourism that is directed toward exotic, often threatened, natural environments, especially to support conservation efforts and observe wildlife.

Eden is the garden where according to the account in Genesis, Adam and Eve first lived, or a place of pristine or abundant natural beauty.

Eucalyptus is a fast-growing evergreen tree native to Australia that has been widely introduced elsewhere. It is valued for its timber, oil, gum, resin and as an ornamental tree.

Farm, Meal Service and Income Generation (FAMSIG) is a monthly meeting of representatives from farm, meal service, and income generation sectors at ARI to discuss needed outputs and use of farm produce.

Farmer Field School (FFS) is a group-based learning process that has been used by a number of governments, NGOs and international agencies. A “*school without walls*”, it was originally developed to promote Integrated Pest Management (IPM) but is now used to aid in solving a variety of agricultural problems.

Faith-based organizations are of three types: congregations; national networks, which include national denominations, their social service arms and networks of related organizations; and freestanding religious organizations, which are incorporated separately from congregations and national networks (Vidal, 2001).

Fetzer Institute is a foundation based in Kalamazoo, Michigan, established by broadcast pioneer, John E. Fetzer (1901-1991) that uses its philanthropic resources to help build the foundation for a loving world.

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is a United Nations agency that works on international efforts to defeat hunger by helping developing countries modernize and improve agriculture, forestry and fisheries practices.

Foodlife is a word coined by ARI founder, Dr. Toshihiro Takami to represent the inseparable connection between food and life.

Golden Triangle is one of Asia’s two main opium producing areas, an area of around 950,000 sq. km. (367,000 sq. mi) that overlaps the mountains of Laos, Myanmar and Thailand. The other is the Golden Crescent encompassing Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan.

Graduate Intern (GI) is a Japanese ARI graduate who stays on for an additional year at the institute to deepen learning in a specific area.

Graduate Impact Study (GIS) is a study for ARI to give a picture in time of what ARI graduates are doing and how their organizations and communities experience them.

Green manure is fertilizer consisting of growing plants that are plowed back into the soil.

Green Revolution describes the large increase in crop production in developing countries achieved by the use of fertilizers, pesticides, and high yield crop varieties beginning in the 1960s.

Green village is a designation given by the Indian government to a community that preserves its ecosystem while sharing it with tourists.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is one of the primary indicators used to gauge the health of a country's economy. It represents the total dollar value of all goods and services produced over a specific time period and can be thought of as the size of the economy.

Gun Widow is a woman widowed because of the armed conflict in Manipur, Northeast India.

Gurkhas are Nepalese soldiers from various hill areas who served in the British and Indian armies, closely associated with a forward-curving Nepalese knife and reputation for fearless prowess.

Hikikomori is the phenomenon of reclusive Japanese adolescents or adults who withdraw from social life, often seeking extreme degrees of isolation and confinement.

Homestay is a visit whereby a guest is cared for in the home of a host. In the context of ARI it is intended as an opportunity for intercultural learning and sharing.

Human Development Index (HDI) is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and having a decent standard of living. This is assessed by life expectancy at birth, mean of years of schooling for adults aged twenty-five years and more, and expected years of schooling for children ready to enter school.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is a virus that interferes with the body's ability to fight organisms that cause disease. Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a chronic life-threatening condition caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). Usually the two are referred to together as HIV/AIDS.

Indigenous Microorganisms (IMOs) are beneficial microbes that inhabit soil and all living things and are involved indifferent processes such as fermentation, decomposition, as well as nitrogen and nutrient fixation.

Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) is a global community of non-profit organizations advancing human development worldwide by empowering authentic and sustainable transformation of individuals, communities and organizations through methods and values.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) or Integrated Pest Prevention Management (IPPM) is an ecosystem based strategy that focuses on long-term prevention of pests, or their damage, through a combination of techniques such as biological control, habitat manipulation, modification of cultural practices, and use of resistant varieties. It may also include limited use of pesticides.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are people who have not crossed an international border to find sanctuary but have remained inside their home countries. Even if they have fled for similar reasons as refugees, they legally remain under the protection of their own government, even though that government might be the cause of their flight.

International non-government organization (INGO) is an organization that has the same mission as a non-governmental organization (NGO), but is international in scope and has outposts around the world to deal with specific issues in many countries.

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is a governmental agency that coordinates official development assistance (ODA) for the government of Japan.

Janatha Vimukthi Peramanu (JVP) is a communist and Marxist-Leninist party in Sri Lanka that was involved in two armed uprisings against the ruling governments in 1971 and from 1987-89, then entered democratic politics in 1994.

Jatropha includes any of various plants or shrubs of the genus *Jatropha* (family Euphorbiaceae), one species of which (*Jatropha curcas*) produces seeds that can be used in the production of biodiesel.

Jhum or “*shifting agriculture*” is the word used in the hilly areas of Southeast Asia for the process of growing crops by first clearing the land of trees and vegetation and then burning them. The land is cultivated for several years and then abandoned in favor of another site as soil productivity declines. Practiced by between 200 million and 500 million people worldwide, it is not sustainable in areas with large populations because the soil becomes too poor to support crops without the trees.

Kamaiya is a traditional system of bonded labor in southern Nepal in which a person pledges labor or services as security for repayment of a debt of obligation, which may be undefined. The duration of the debt may also be undefined and the debt bondage passed from one generation to the next.

Kanji are adopted logographic Chinese characters that represent concepts rather than sounds and are used in the modern Japanese writing system.

Karen people are an ethnic group living in Southeast Asia with their own distinct language and customs. They are one of the groups only recently signing a peace accord with the government.

Khat (mira) is a flowering plant native to the Horn of Africa: chewing the leaves has a long history and is said to cause excitement, loss of appetite and euphoria but is not seriously addictive.

King chili (Bhut Jolokia) is often ranked the hottest chili in the world and a favorite of Naga tribes in Northeast India (Roach, 2013).

Klomencapir Act was Suharto’s plan for rural development by touching the lives of villagers and broadcasting with media coverage of those visits (Detik News, 2008).

Koinonia, the Greek word for communion or fellowship, is the name of the central gathering place at ARI for meals and fellowship.

Kopi luwak is the world's most expensive coffee, produced from coffee beans which have been digested by a civet cat in Indonesia.

Korean Natural Farming (KNF) is a methodology that takes advantage of indigenous microorganisms (IMO) to produce fertile soils that yield high output without the use of herbicides or pesticides. It also enables odor-free hog and poultry raising without the need to dispose of effluent (wastes).

Land grabbing is the contentious issue of large-scale land acquisitions: the buying or leasing of large pieces of land in developing countries, by domestic and transnational companies, governments, and individuals.

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), also known as the Tamil Tigers, is the independent militant organization seeking an independent Tamil state in the north and east of the island of Sri Lanka that was defeated in 2009.

Load shedding is the deliberate shutdown of electric power in one or more parts of a power-distribution system, generally to prevent failure of the entire system when demand exceeds its capacity.

Livestock Ladder is a process of a farmer beginning livestock raising with small animals: chickens are at the most basic level, followed by sheep and goats, local cattle and finally dairy cattle. Those farmers with dairy cattle “*are considered to be relatively well-off*”.

Microfinance or Microcredit is the lending of small amounts of money at low interest to new businesses in the developing world.

Moringa is a drought-resistant oil-yielding tree, native to northwest India and widely cultivated elsewhere for its water purifying, nutritional and medicinal qualities.

Mython is an animal distinctive in general hill regions of Myanmar and reported to be a cross between a tsine (wild cow) and Asiatic buffalo, a striking contrast to water buffalo. They will breed true and are a significant part of history in Chin State.

Night paddocking is a system whereby farmers allow pastoralists to keep their cattle overnight in a confined pen for certain periods. The cattle eat the grass, are kept safe overnight and leave their manure for the farmer.

Non-government organization (NGO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level.

NVivo is a qualitative data analysis (QDA) computer software package produced by QSR International, designed for qualitative researchers working with very rich text based and/or multimedia information, where deep levels of analysis on small or large volumes of data are required.

Orphan is a person who has lost one or both parents. One who has lost both parents is often referred to as a “*double orphan*” and one having lost only one parent as a “*single orphan*”.

Participative development is a process through which stakeholders can influence and share control over development initiatives, and over the decisions and resources that affect themselves.

Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) is an approach for learning about and engaging with communities. It combines an ever growing toolkit of participatory and visual methods with natural interviewing techniques and is intended to facilitate a process of collective analysis and learning.

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is an approach used by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other agencies involved in international development. The approach aims to incorporate the knowledge and opinions of rural people in the planning and management of development projects and programs.

Quality control is a system of maintaining standards in products that are produced by testing a sample of the output against the required specification.

Ramon Magsaysay Award is an annual award established to perpetuate former Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay's example of integrity in governance, courageous service to the people, and pragmatic idealism within a democratic society.

Reflection paper is a paper written during the course of an ARI participant experience based on the model of appreciative inquiry. It reflects the home community of the participant, a “*peak life experience*”, learning at ARI, and a dream and/or plan for the future depending on when the individual attended ARI.

Reflexology is a system of massage used to relieve tension and treat illness, based on the theory that there are reflex points on the feet, hands, and head linked to every part of the body.

Resort pastor is a pastor serving a cluster of churches in Indonesia, most often rural.

Results-based Management (RBM) is a management strategy which uses feedback loops to achieve strategic goals. All people and organizations (actors) who contribute directly or indirectly to the result, map out their business processes, products and services, showing how they contribute to the outcome.

Retrogression is the process of returning to an earlier state, typically a worse one.

Rohingya are a Muslim minority population living mainly in the state of Rakhaing in Myanmar.

Savings and Credit Cooperative (SACCO) is a democratic, unique member driven self-help cooperative. It is owned, governed and managed by its members who have the same common bond and who agree to save their money, make loans to each other at reasonable rates of interest, and/or share profits at group determined intervals. A member is a person admitted after registration in accordance with the bylaws developed by the group. No benefit goes to anyone external to the group.

Sending body (SB) is an organization that has been approved and has sent one of its staff persons or committed volunteers as a participant to study at ARI.

Shea a small tropical African tree that bears oily nuts from which a butter is obtained and used in food, soap and candles.

Slash and burn agriculture (also known as jhum or shifting agriculture) is an agricultural technique that involves the cutting and burning of plants in forests or woodlands to create fields. It is subsistence agriculture that typically uses little technology.

Sloping Agricultural Land Technology (SALT) is a strategy of using tree legumes to improve the fertility and stability of agricultural soils by forming alleys in which field and perennial crops are grown in bands four to five meters wide between contoured rows of leguminous trees and shrubs. The latter are thickly planted in double rows to form hedgerows.

Small animals include poultry, rabbits, goats, and/or bees.

Teikei is the system in Japan where consumers purchase food directly from farmers. It is closely associated with small scale, local, organic farming and volunteer-based, non-profit partnerships. It is popular to many Japanese and cited by many as the origin of Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs) in other contexts.

Training Assistant (TA) is a graduate of ARI who returns to ARI no sooner than five years after graduation for a one year term to support staff, act as an intermediary between staff and participants, and to deepen learning.

Training of Trainers (ToT) model is one in which experienced personnel teach less experienced instructors how to deliver courses, workshops and seminars, in order to build a pool of competent instructors who can teach the material to others (Duggan, n.d.).

Vermiculture is the practice of raising annelid worms such as earthworms and their by-products for use in composting or as bait for fishing.

Village Development Committee (VDC) is a voluntary association of village people for village administration.

Water dowsing is the practice of using a forked stick, rod, pendulum, or similar device to locate underground water, minerals, or other hidden or lost substances; it has been a subject of discussion and controversy for hundreds, if not thousands, of years.

World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF) is an exchange whereby, in return for volunteer help, WWOOF hosts offer food, accommodation and opportunities to learn about organic lifestyles.

Youth definition depends on context. For example, in Sri Lanka you are considered to be a youth up to 50 years of age if you are unmarried; once married, however young, you are considered to be an adult.

Zai is a farming technique to dig pits 20-30cm long and deep and 90 cm apart in the soil during the preseason to catch water and collect compost.



Leading at the Grassroots: A Study of the Influence of Asian Rural Institute Graduates on Communities

1. Introduction and purpose

The Asian Rural Institute (ARI) is a registered vocational institute for agricultural training located in Nishinasuno, Tochigi Prefecture, Japan. It provides a nine month training program each year to 25-35 participants from 15-20 communities in Asia, islands in the Pacific, sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. Sent by organizations known as sending bodies (SBs)¹, participants come to discover the meaning of ARI's motto "*That we may live together*".



Figure 1. ARI sign. Photo courtesy of Fujishima Thomas.

1.1

1.1 Mission and vision

“The mission of the Asian Rural Institute is to build an environmentally healthy, just and peaceful world, in which each person can live to his or her fullest potential. This mission is rooted in the love of Jesus Christ. To carry out this mission, we nurture and train rural leaders for a life of sharing. Leaders, both women and men, who live and work in grassroots rural

¹ A sending body (SB) is an organization that recommends one of its staff persons or committed volunteers as a participant to study at ARI.

communities primarily in Asia, Africa and the Pacific, form a community of learning each year together with staff and other residents. Through community based learning we study the best ways for rural people to share and enhance local resources and abilities for the common good. We present a challenge to ourselves and to the whole world in our approach to food and life”.

Three conceptual pillars of “*Servant Leadership, Foodlife² and Community Building*” are lived out within three loves – love of “*God, Soil and Neighbor,*” where ARI leaders, participants and volunteers participate together in all of the daily and seasonal activities of this working farm. This approach seeks to eliminate distinctions based on gender, religion, ethnicity, education, caste, language, employment or community positions. Instead it promotes equality, personal growth and transformation in preparing graduates to be conduits for positive change in their own communities (Appendix A).

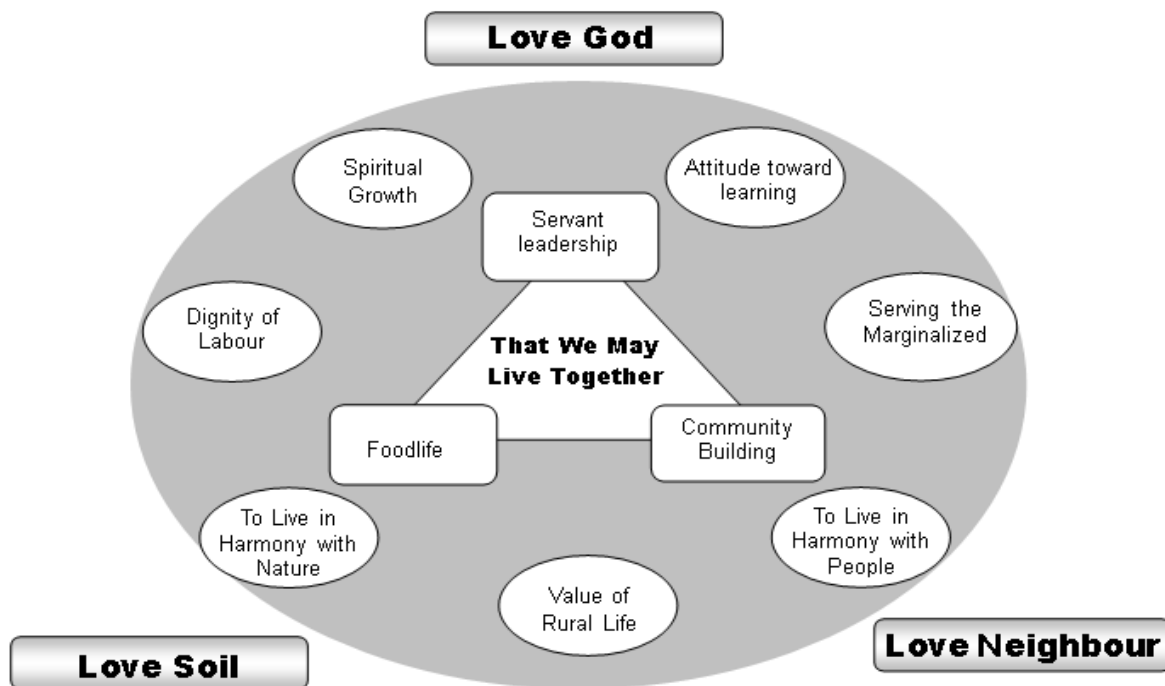


Figure 2. ARI philosophy prior to April, 2016.

ARI staff completed a revision of these concepts in preparation for participants arriving in April, 2016 (Appendix B).

1.2 History

ARI was founded in 1973 by a team headed by Rev. Dr. Toshihiro Takami, with a mission to train rural community leaders, both women and men, at the grassroots level. The intent was to facilitate and nurture the self-development of marginalized people in order to build a just and peaceful society. Dr. Takami was already aware of Japan’s advancements in agriculture and

² Foodlife is a word coined by ARI founder, Dr. Toshihiro Takami to represent the inseparable connection between food and life.

economics, and saw the need for agricultural development in Southeast Asia. He also saw the deep spirituality of volunteers from Japan and North America, responding to disasters in Asia without any apparent religious affiliation, but all “*deeply spiritual*” in relating to those of all faiths with dedication and hard work. These experiences motivated him to share his thought about founding ARI with others. His words “*I wanted to dedicate all the rest of my life as a Christian person to this task, God willing, as an act of repentance for sinful acts committed by the Japanese nation during World War II*” were quoted in the biography submitted for the Ramon Magsaysay Award which he received in 1996 (RMTLI, 2012)³.



Figure 3. Dr. Takami.
Photo courtesy of ARI.

Few other institutions use this approach. The most similar work is that of Abuna Elias Chacour (2016), a three time Nobel Peace Prize nominee and recipient of the Niwano Peace Prize (NPP, 2016). He brings together Jews, Palestinian Christians and Muslims in educational institutions to promote peace through education in Israel. His institute, however, does not have the agricultural component of ARI.

ARI’s approach of connecting food and agriculture systems, along with the benefits that come from them, has recently been affirmed by others as inherently ethical in nature. The Food and Agriculture Organization (2001) identifies their ethical values (without which they claim they would have no reason to exist), as value of food, enhanced well-being, human health, natural resources and nature. These ethical concerns are central to the kind of future that people want, especially in the context of an ever changing world where current demographic shifts include rural to urban migration, pressure on natural resources, industrialization of agriculture and concentration of economic power. These, along with a growing human population, are all happening in a context of globalization, human induced change to the environment, as well as new biotechnologies and informatics require ethical consideration.

So it was timely for ARI at its 40th anniversary symposium in September 2013 to have the theme *Transformation at the Grassroots: walking with grassroots leaders*. At that time it committed to two studies to move beyond its historical practices of internal review with those participants just completing their training.

1.3 ARI studies

The first study, *Bridging the Grassroots* was a study about the influence of ARI on rural leaders with support from the Fetzer Institute⁴ (Rositto, 2015) that specifically followed participants for one year during their time at ARI and interviewed 124 graduates.

³ The Ramon Magsaysay Award is an annual award established to perpetuate former Philippine President Ramon Magsaysay's example of integrity in governance, courageous service to the people, and pragmatic idealism within a democratic society.

⁴ The Fetzer Institute is a foundation based in Kalamazoo, Michigan, established by broadcast pioneer John E. Fetzer (1901-1991) that uses its philanthropic resources to help build the foundation for a loving world.

The second is this ARI graduate impact study⁵ (GIS) made possible with the generous support of the United Church of Christ and General Board for Global Ministries of the Methodist Church. The study was carried out from January 1, 2014 to April 30, 2016 (Appendix C) with four main objectives:

- To explore and document the impact of ARI on graduates from the last 40 years and the communities in which they serve.
- To examine ARI through the experiences and activities of its graduates and graduates' sending organizations.
- To share the story of ARI graduates with ARI supporters, fellow graduates, prospective applicants, other schools/training institutions, and interested global community through multimedia approaches.
- To develop a model for documentation and analysis of the impact of ARI on its graduates individually and the communities in which they serve.

The findings from this research are important for purposes of celebrating graduate successes, raising public awareness, modifying curriculum and providing a framework for future monitoring of ARI impact on graduates and communities.

The major emphasis of this study is to obtain a qualitative perspective on the ARI community (staff, graduates and communities) and the processes that connect them (Maxwell, 1996). Emphasis is on learning about contexts, meanings, and processes that will contribute to ARI's future planning. As such this study may also contribute to learning in wider contexts with similar values. As quantitative data is also of significance to ARI in determining effectiveness of various approaches over time and fulfilling expectations to stakeholders it is provided throughout the report.

The next section outlines the methods and procedures used for the study. The results of the interviews with graduates are presented in sections 3 to 8. Section 3 summarizes graduates' perspectives on many of the core concepts taught at ARI. Section 4 summarizes graduates' experiences at ARI. In section 5 the analysis of graduates' dreams or plans are presented. Section 6 describes what was learned about the role of sending bodies. Section 7 provides a contextual background for each location visited and is based on both graduates' descriptions of their context as well as complementary information from outside sources. In section 8, the factors contributing to graduate success are described. Together these results provide the basis for the recommendations and conclusions which are presented in section 9 and section 10, respectively.

This report summarizes the data collected from all sources and will be complemented by a published book of selected stories and individual profiles appearing on the ARI website.

⁵ The graduate impact study (GIS) is a study for ARI to give a picture in time of what ARI graduates are doing and how their organizations and communities experience them.

2. Methods and procedures

Steven Cutting, former ARI staff person and Internal Research Coordinator, and Bev Abma, Independent Consultant and External Research Coordinator, worked collaboratively. The Internal Research Coordinator arranged visits to graduates, provided organizational background and is completing the book of graduate stories and individual profiles for the ARI website. The External Research Coordinator coded the data and compiled this report with the assistance of Dr. Philip Grabowski, Academic Consultant from Michigan State University. Each Coordinator provided input and edited the other's work.

This study provides a picture in time of graduate activities and how their organizations and communities experience them. Of the 229 graduates visited, 202 interviews were recorded, nineteen of these with the assistance of fifteen translators, all ARI graduates. Visits also included graduates not able to be interviewed, but who hosted researchers with food and/or lodging. In addition, researchers visited organizations where 142 graduates work and 97 communities that graduates relate to. Details of those visits were recorded in field notes.

Individual interviews, a questionnaire and group meetings with ARI staff were held at various times throughout the study. Details of these were also recorded in field notes.

Table 1: Summary of visits to graduates

Country	Graduates	Visits	Visit % of total # graduates	Interviews	Translated Interviews	Community visits of # graduates	Organization visits of # of graduates
Cameroon	19	15	79%	15	0	13	13
DRC ¹	1	1	100%	1	0	0	0
Ghana	35	5	14%	3	0	1	1
India ²	216	37		33	1	12	21
Indonesia	80	35	44%	33	2	16	29
Japan ³	87	11		11	2	2	1
Kenya	26	15	58%	14	0	8	11
Malaysia	22	1	5%	1	0	1	1
Myanmar	77	36	47%	36	9	9	24
Nepal	35	13	37%	13	2	5	7
Philippines ¹	129	1		1	0	0	0
Sri Lanka	87	42	48%	31	3	19	24
Tanzania	20	8	40%	5	0	3	5
Uganda	16	9	56%	5	0	8	5
Total⁴	850	229		202	19	97	142

¹Visited in another country so not counted in % of graduates in countries visited.

²Visited only Northeast India.

³Visited only a sample, two in other countries.

⁴Numbers not adjusted for graduates who are deceased.

2.1 Respondent selection

ARI by the end of 2014 had graduated participants from sixty-six countries, mostly in Asia and Africa: twelve countries from these continents were selected for the study. Consideration was given to maximizing geographical and cultural variety within cost, safety and time constraints. As a result, visits to India included only the Northeast and Liberia was dropped from the study because of the presence of Ebola⁶ virus (CDC, 2014). Information on countries, gender and decades of graduation is shown in Appendix E.

The original intent was to interview a sample of graduates in each country; however, the sense of “being part of the ARI family” meant that everyone within any proximity to the researchers requested to be included. This required additional time for visiting, documentation and analysis. As a result, a visit to the Philippines was removed from the study because graduates there had already been visited by the Fetzer project researcher. The period for the project was also extended by twelve months as ARI staff was more interested in quality than speed of the report.

A small sample number of Japanese graduates was included part way into the study to compare their perspectives with those of other graduates. Active recruitment of Japanese participants began in 1995 and is further explained in section 7.9.

Visits were made to whichever graduates were available in each country: this included 18% of the total number of graduates or 32% of people who had graduated from the targeted countries as shown in Figure 4. This resulted in a vast amount of data to be analyzed; the benefit is that even with not every graduate speaking about every aspect of ARI there was sufficient data on any one topic to be credible. Of the 202 Interviewees, 40% were female (Figure 5).

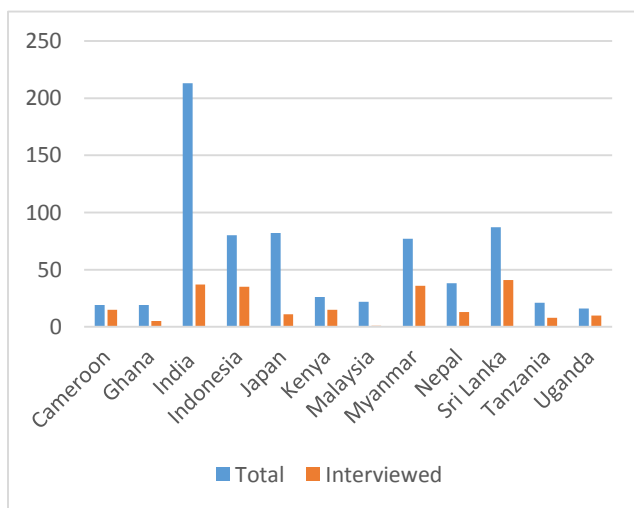


Figure 4. Numbers of graduates visited compared to total number of graduates.

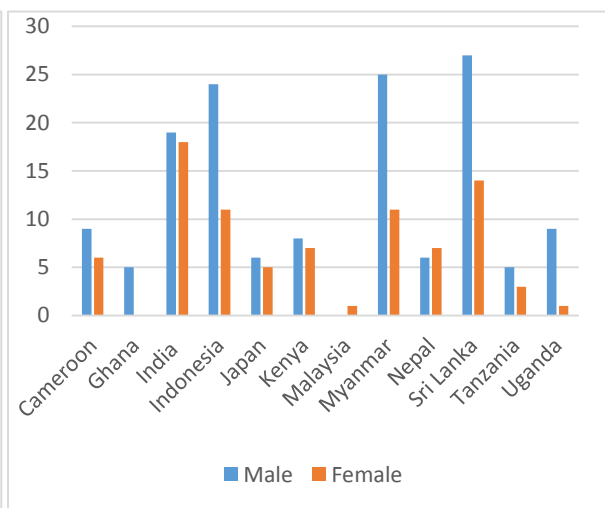


Figure 5. Gender of graduates visited shown by country.

⁶ Ebola virus (filovirus) is a virus that causes an infectious and generally fatal disease marked by fever and severe internal bleeding.

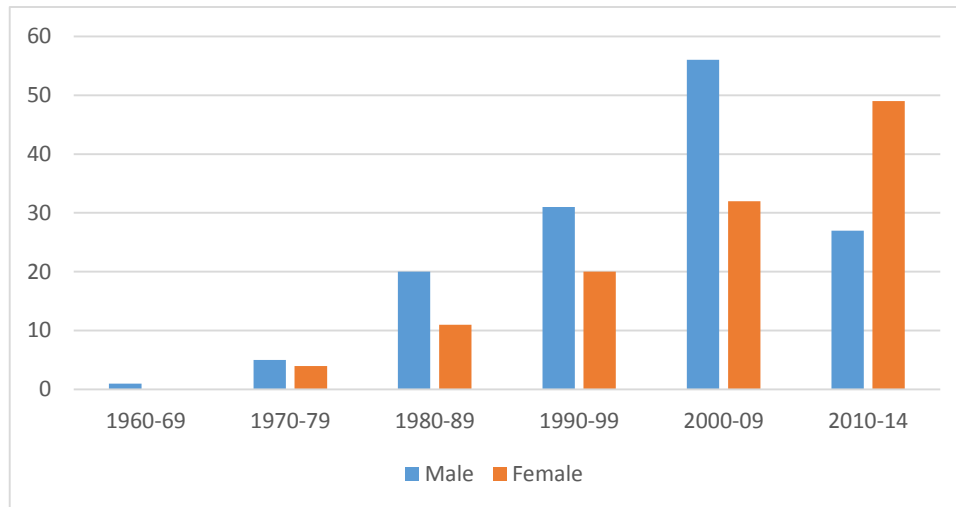


Figure 6. Decade of graduation of graduates visited.

The distribution of Interviewees by decade of graduation is shown in Figure 6. As anticipated, it was easier to contact more recent graduates. Although they have had fewer years to implement practices, their learning experience is more closely related to current ARI curriculum.

2.2 Data collection

The interview process was carefully designed to facilitate descriptions of graduates' experiences at ARI and how those influenced their community work. Questionnaires were not used because cultural tendencies and loyalty to ARI would have led many respondents to bias their responses toward what they thought would be expected. Instead, free flowing conversations were initiated with graduates sharing their histories prior to ARI, experiences at ARI, and activities until the present. They also discussed key ARI concepts and made recommendations for improving ARI as an institution. Researchers recorded and transcribed the interviews in addition to writing daily field notes.

Both researchers met with staff as a group on at least four occasions during the study. In addition, staff were requested to complete a questionnaire (Appendix D) and individual interviews with staff were conducted by the External Research Coordinator; unfortunately a number of these were lost when a tape recorder malfunctioned.

2.2.1 *Language*

Most interviews were carried out in English, except when graduates' ability to communicate in English was limited and a translator was available. Classes at ARI are offered in English; however, both teachers and participants speak heavily accented English often referred to as "*ARI English*". Although ARI focus is to have people communicate in English as much as possible, for purposes of this study it was more important for people to be able communicate their ideas. For this reason translators were utilized as often as they were available. In all cases these were ARI graduates in the country who offered their services as part of their

gracious hospitality. Nineteen per cent of recorded interviews were translated: nearly half of these were in Myanmar where one graduate translated four and another five interviews.

Several others, including most of the Japanese graduates interviewed, had challenges in expressing themselves in English so the depth of thinking in some interviews was less able to be expressed. This was mitigated by the large sampling in all of the countries with the exception of Japan.

2.2.2 Culture

The diversity of cultures represented in this study made it important for the researchers to be flexible in their data collection approaches. Even though the Research Coordinators had extensive cross-cultural experience, (one in the multicultural context of ARI and the other having lived and worked in multiple cultures), limitations existed in requesting and receiving information. Homestays⁷ provided excellent opportunities for participant observation in sharing daily life of food, work and rest; researchers occasionally would even be taught proper eating skills and other daily living customs in these situations. Myanmar government regulations banned homestays although hosting researchers was desired by graduates there.

One major concern was for the financial burden on graduate families in hosting the researchers, often including extravagant gifts in addition to special meals. Poignant examples include one organization (Org 104) borrowing money to host appropriately and a young wife of a graduate (Interviewee 1041), who hosted researchers for two days, being near tears several times as she spoke of the challenges of surviving on farming. Another wife of a graduate (Interviewee 1008) wept as researchers shared granola bars with her children in a context where piglets were silent after their mother had died “*because we had nothing to feed her*”.

Group interviews were of little value and discontinued early in the process as people were generally willing to share only positive aspects in group settings. This was openly expressed in one focus group where one graduate (Interviewee 943) encouraged his organization’s board members to be honest and one of them replied “*We do not share the bad with visitors. We can talk about the bad when we are alone.*” In another, an attempt at a focus group resulted in few people saying anything.

A driver for nearly 3000 kilometers of research travel in East Africa proved to be a most valuable member of the research team as he negotiated prices and border crossings in addition to recommending delicious economical food choices. He provided sound advice for cultural interactions and shared information that he gleaned during informal conversations with members of local communities. He reaffirmed that it indeed was not cultural for Africans to share in a group and/or with foreigners other than what they expected foreigners would want to hear.

⁷ A homestay is a visit whereby a guest is cared for in the home of a host. In the context of ARI it is intended as an opportunity for intercultural learning and sharing.

This was further complicated by the desire of graduates and organizations to present the best possible scenarios to the researchers. For graduates it was a sense of loyalty to the “*ARI family*”; for both sending bodies and employing organizations, although not verbally expressed, it was also likely because of not wanting to hinder future opportunities to recommend participants. The most revealing of these comments came from one graduate (Interviewee 1074) who requested a confidential time with the External Research Coordinator to share having been asked to lie during a group meeting to present a positive image to ARI representatives. This was in addition to other graduates eliminating villages this graduate works with from the schedule of visits.

In their desire to please, graduates occasionally would also ask whether or not they were responding correctly: they were assured there were no right or wrong answers. Researchers also reaffirmed that this study was requested by ARI administration in a desire to learn how to make the institution be even better.

2.3 Data analysis

The transcripts and field notes were coded using NVIV⁸O software, which facilitates the use of thematic analysis (Maxwell 1996) to systematically analyze the data with greater transparency and accountability than relying on hunches would be. Content from interviews, field notes, and ARI and graduate communications was sorted into topics as “*nodes*” in the software. These nodes were then analyzed to determine the research findings. The software allowed ease of referring back to sources and analyzing data by any number of variables.

An intern from Calvin College, Michigan, USA, compared graduate dreams in reflection papers and/or plans at the time of graduation from ARI with what graduates reported actually having done during the study visits. This provided an unbiased look at seventy-seven graduates in the same analytical manner because the intern had no personal contact with any of them.

In response to graduates who expressed concern that over the years they had provided suggestions to ARI that had not been responded to, a commitment was made to sharing all recommendations and reasons for those that could not be implemented. This will be evident in the recommendations section of the report.

2.3.1 *Themes*

In developing the themes for the analysis, the 40th Anniversary Resolutions (Appendix F), as well as group and individual meetings with current and previous staff members were considered. The desire by ARI staff to test out the following perceptions also helped frame the development of themes for analysis including:

- “*That We May Live Together*” ties all other relationships in an endeavor to love God, soil and neighbor in all interactions.

⁸ NVivo is a qualitative data analysis (QDA) computer software package produced by QSR International designed for qualitative researchers working with very rich text based and/or multimedia information, where deep levels of analysis on small or large volumes of data are required.

- Graduates carry out their pledge to implement what they have learned in their own contexts.
- The ARI approach of bringing grassroots leaders out of their contexts, training them in rural development and sending them back is effective (as compared to visiting and training people in their own contexts).
- Rural leaders with the strongest connections with marginalized people are going to be the most effective in working to develop the potential of that group.
- Government roles are not compatible with implementing ARI practices.

With a goal of making recommendations for ARI's future curriculum development the following themes emerged for analysis of their impact on graduate leadership and organic agriculture practices:

- Graduate experiences prior, during and after ARI.
- Context (geographic, climatic, cultural, social, political and family).
- Gender.
- Organizational relationships.
- Understanding of leadership: rural and servant.
- Understanding of specific concepts: foodlife, rural, marginalized, local resources.
- Spirituality and perceived source of energy.



Figure 8. Koinonia at ARI. Photo courtesy of Fujishima Thomas.

3. Core ARI concepts

This section summarizes graduates' understanding of the meaning of the core concepts that guide daily life and curriculum at ARI; how they have been able to apply them will be discussed in section 8.2 and 8.3. These concepts have remained relatively unchanged over the years, and were reaffirmed in resolutions following ARI's 40th celebration events in 2013 as "*We hold as important 'learning by doing' and 'learning by sharing,' in humility*" and ... "*all with the aim of forming servant leaders. That is, we recommit to our mission to nurture rural leaders to be servant leaders.... Seek to reclaim the word rural. Recognizing how the word rural has been stereotyped to be synonymous with 'backwards' or 'uneducated', we seek to promote the value of rural life and the dignity of labor*" (Appendix F).

Approaches, however have varied. In 2005, a change was made to place more emphasis on leadership and self-directed learning. Then in 2008, a change was made to use questions rather than definitions to teach key concepts (Appendix A). This made it challenging for researchers to determine what ARI staff wanted graduates to have learned and whether or not they had done so. Recognizing the challenges in this lack of clarity, staff have re-incorporated definitions of key concepts into the curriculum for participants arriving in 2016 (Appendix G).

Graduates, however, did share their perceptions and experiences with the following concepts that were chosen in response to ARI staff desire to learn how they are understood and implemented by graduates.

3.1 Serving the marginalized

The term "*servicing the marginalized*" is used often in ARI literature and conversations as the goal of ARI work; researcher conversations with staff in a March 2016 meeting clarified that the concept includes aspects of discrimination. This was in keeping with the majority of graduate conversations in describing marginalized groups as indigenous, minorities, farmers, or women at any time that one group were perceived to be of lesser value than others. Marginalized, when defined by respondents, referred to rural communities lacking infrastructure, children lacking education or families less able to provide food, hygiene or health care. Marginalized individuals were also said to include orphans⁹ and residents of urban slums where "*your door is another person's door*" and there is no "*walking space*", ventilation, light, or food and an increased prevalence of illnesses as a result (Interviewee 664).

3.2 Value of rural life

One goal of ARI is to reclaim the word "*rural*" as a positive concept. Only two graduates used the term "*backwards*" in reference to the word "*rural*" and many spoke of the changes in meaning that have occurred over time. One early graduate (Interviewee 200) spoke of the change from a time when he needed to walk six or more hours to reach communities having changed to those communities now being "*more advanced than a rural area*". This shows the potential for improving the quality of rural life through infrastructure developments like roads. Roads tend to be the first step of access to services, with markets, health care and education

⁹ An orphan is a person who has lost one or both parents. One who has lost both parents is often referred to as a "*double orphan*" and one having lost only one parent as a "*single orphan*".

following. One graduate (Interviewee 1067) reports more youth¹⁰ staying or returning to farming in the last seven years with improved roads and access to markets in his community; in a different context researchers witnessed excited crowds in a newly opened market. Another graduate (Interviewee 488) spoke of people saying rural life is good but his perspective being that it is “*both good and bad*”. Citing the example of the internet, he spoke of the innocence of people without it and the negative impacts available through it.

Generally, staff and the more than fifty graduates who spoke about the concept of “*rural*” were in agreement that it refers to communities disadvantaged because of lack of infrastructure: electricity, communication, roads and transportation, markets, education and sometimes basic needs such as food and shelter. One staff person saw these “*lacks*” as better describing “*remote*” than “*rural*”. Seven graduates articulated that there is no “*rural*” in Japan because these services were always present in their Japanese experience while missing in many of their home communities. One graduate (Interviewee 676) described “*ruralism*” as people dying of jiggers and it only being “*a privilege to be in a rural setting IF you can make that rural setting a happy place to live in.*” A contrasting perspective was shared by one Japanese graduate (Interviewee 1264) who saw potential of more resources and opportunities in rural than urban areas in Japan.

Some described “*rural*” as a mindset rather than location, with a simplicity of thinking impacted more by people and creation than money: people who live closer to nature with a dependence on it and each other for survival. One graduate (Interviewee 739), confronted with the realities of global influences reaching remote rural communities, spoke of the importance of teaching rural communities the care of nature, culture and rich traditions in order that these values not be lost. Rural community members often need help in discerning how to resolve their own problems and assessing the impact of farming inputs on the health of consumers (Interviewee 34). They also need to be supported to not be attracted by the lure of money from illicit crops (Interviewee 1060) as they become more connected with a wider world. Graduates identified agriculture as a key component of rural life; towns and villages were generally defined as rural although less so with the arrival of schools and markets.

Several contrasted rural and urban life, noting isolation, congestion, pollution, less conservative dress, and attitudes of purchasing, consuming and comfort in urban areas. Others spoke of there being little or no difference between rural and urban living for many, other than there being no space to produce food for consumption or sale in crowded cities. Several affirmed the 40th anniversary theme of “*Transformation at the Grassroots: walking with grassroots leaders*” as being more relevant in today’s world as the same leadership and food security interventions are needed in both urban and rural settings.

One graduate (Interviewee 574) spoke of the value of rural community being “*people who can meet their living standards and also, at the same time... be able to reach their potential... and live together as a community, be able to meet their goals and achieve their goals together*”.

¹⁰ Youth definition depends on context. For example, in Sri Lanka you are considered to be a youth up to 50 years of age if you are unmarried; once married, however young, you are considered to be an adult.

3.3 Foodlife

Although not found in the dictionary, the combination of the two words “*food*” and “*life*” has meaning for staff and graduates of ARI after being coined by Dr. Takami to express the reality that food and life cannot be separated as each depends on the other. Seeing nature as the gift God has given to sustain life, ARI staff value the soil and the farmers and communities who work it. ARI is intended as a place where people can find dignity and satisfaction in producing food with their own hands and striving towards a healthy relationship with nature, one that enriches the soil while producing food and deepening quality human relationships. Experiencing the joy of sharing food produced with the institution’s own labor also guides learning around this concept (Appendix A).



Figure 9. Foodlife work at ARI.
Photo courtesy of Fujishima Thomas.

Eight staff members reflected that foodlife includes the “*giving of life to make healthy food*” and “*receiving healthy food*” that are basic to all of existence. A lifestyle of working to produce one’s own food is “*a quiet practical thing*” where food is not merchandise and the labor to produce it is respected as having value. For some, it also implies a physical manifestation of a spiritual reality that Jesus is the bread of life and essential to it. Others felt it includes urban awareness of food sources and/or expressing gratitude for the plant or animal that sacrificed to give life.

A staff questionnaire included a question about whether or not staff are implementing ARI practices in their own homes and if so how (Appendix D). Five of the responses included comments about foodlife. Two expatriate staff desired to implement the principles back in their home countries, recognizing the need to adapt it to their specific contexts. Two others say the concept informs their conversations outside of ARI, one of these joining groups that advocate for these principles. These ideas were part of one staff member’s philosophy before ARI; it has been strengthened now with clear words to articulate the concept. No one living off campus shared about any practical aspects being done at home.

Eighty graduates from other countries either spontaneously mentioned foodlife or were asked if they remembered hearing the term. Of these, five, including one former Training Assistant (TA)¹¹, could either not recall the term or had vague recollections of what it meant. For two, the concept had already been part of their lives prior to coming to ARI, and for one it is a concept specific only to ARI. More than half of the remaining respondents alluded to the importance of safe and healthy food: for energy to work, sustainability of food sources, or sharing with the wider community. For them, foodlife emphasizes the importance of knowing the source of one’s food, growing healthy food and delinking food from money. Concern was expressed regarding

¹¹ A Training Assistant (TA) is a graduate of ARI who returns to ARI no sooner than five years after graduation for a one year term to support staff, act as an intermediary between staff and participants, and to deepen learning.

the accessibility to safe food in the future with decreasing food availability as a result of urban migration and inability of some countries already to feed their own populations.

Nearly 25% of respondents identified foodlife as the farm work, chores, or kitchen duties needed to manage animal and plant care, as well as food preparation and service, at ARI. Almost as many explained the concept as sharing – sharing work, excess food, meals, love, life and dignity as well as education about the concept. One added a Biblical perspective on environmental protection. Other less frequent responses related to the importance of soil protection (elimination of chemicals) and soil's nurturing role for seeds, as well as the joy of sharing cooking skills and the usefulness of food preparation in getting people's attention for other activities.

Three of the seven Japanese graduates speaking about foodlife saw it as work, chores and kitchen duties, with one experiencing cooking as "*a torment*". Two identified it as an emotional experience with such feelings as peace, safety, joy, and happiness in connecting rice cycles and nature. Another defined it as self-sustainability while yet another as an opportunity to educate people about vegetables.

3.4 Rural leadership

Since a rural community is vulnerable (in the sense that it is affected by global economy and climate change, in addition to being isolated from minimum services and accesses), "*a leader should be the one who can lead the people in a 'right' direction. A right direction is that every person 'can eat enough in every meal with a joy of sharing' or 'social justice'*" (Takami's words quoted by staff). One staff person described a rural leader as "*one who leads a rural community in which people make a living primarily by agriculture and (are) based on more traditional values*". Another staff person expressed it as seeking a sustainable way of life based on agriculture with love, creativity, insights and hope.

Graduates described specific leadership attributes of assessing (8), bringing together (11), listening (12), and sharing (25). For people to respect and follow a leader, eighteen graduates stressed the importance of being consistent between word and deed; fourteen spoke of needing to change themselves before being able to impact others. Of the 130 graduates who spoke about rural leadership more than thirty spoke of it needing qualities of servant leadership.

3.5 Servant Leadership

There is much historical evidence of the concept of servant leadership in a variety of cultures going back as far as 600 BC in Lao-Tzu's classic treatise on servant leadership (Townsend, 2009). The concept is further elaborated in the Bible with Christ's words in Mark 10:42-45, his example of foot washing in John 13:1-17, and the letter of Paul in I Corinthians 5:16-18.

The term "*servant leadership*" was coined by Robert Greenleaf (1977). Contrary to traditional leadership which generally involves the accumulation and exercise of power by one at the "*top of the pyramid*", he asserts that the servant leader shares power, puts the needs of others first and helps people develop and perform as highly as possible. Spears (2010), after considering Greenleaf's work, summarizes the components of Greenleaf's intent as empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community.

Yasmin Khalaf Sarayrah (2004) offers two examples of servant leadership in Bedouin-Arab cultures, one from the beginning of the Islamic period and another from the mid twentieth century.

The concept continues to be promoted in various disciplines such as business, philanthropy, and education. Datron CEO Art Barter (2011) models his work after Greenleaf's principles, Ken Blanchard adds Christian principles (2003) and Bill Gates asserts "*As we look ahead into the next century leaders will be those who empower others.*" Nelson Mandela (1995) has inspired many over the years with his deep insights such as "*A leader... is like a shepherd. He stays behind the flock, letting the nimble go out ahead, whereupon the others follow, not realizing that all along they are being directed from behind.*"

ARI asserts "*The life of a servant leader serves as an example and inspiration to empower people to reach their highest potential. A servant leader is a person who willingly takes up all tasks required to serve the people, beginning with those that are most needed or most hated, and who seeks to help by putting other people and the community first*" (ARI Handbook). Staff members identified all honest manual work as something precious because of what it produces, done in a way the worker can feel proud, happy, contented and respected by others. A former staff member voiced the importance of graduate credibility being the ability to do the "*dirtiest*" work back home.

Three graduates were familiar with the concept before coming to ARI because of strong servant leader role models in their family or community; another three could not remember hearing the concepts at ARI. One (Interviewee 1130) expressed appreciation for being exposed to the values of Gandhi, Aung Suu Kyi and Jesus. Several more referred to Christ's example as the basis for servant leadership and one aspires to being "*not a great missionary but live like people, not as if know everything. Christians should not be poor - be able to stand on (their) own but be humble*" (Interviewee 1156)".

Those graduates with a wider sustainable impact had captured a healthy sense of servitude as not being a low position but as nurturer of the capability and potential of people (Interviewees 911 and 1118), not only having a dream but also being able to sell that dream. Others described a servant leader as a "*teacher with ability to think ahead and be comfortable in the back row*" (Interviewee 510), having an awareness that "*people follow because you do, not because you say*" (Interviewee 1258) or "*a leader is like a mirror for people to learn from*" (Interviewee 1195).

3.6 Community building

With its motto "*That we may live together,*" ARI describes community building as "*ARI is a place where we can learn through sharing – sharing food and sharing life. We come as people of different cultures, ethnicities and faiths, choosing to live and grow together through our differences and difficulties.*" Staff members describe the gatherings in Koinonia¹² for meals of food produced with the labor of all, as a joyful experience of the blessings of God and being the heart of the community (Appendix A).

¹² Koinonia, the Greek word for communion or fellowship, is the name of the central gathering place at ARI for meals and fellowship.

Staff spoke about community at ARI being the process of living and learning together to produce food but not teaching, a place where diversity is accepted and celebrated, and challenges overcome. One described ARI as being at the center of concentric circles where lessons learned could be applied to wider circles of family and beyond. Another defined community as the place people live close together with both positive and negative consequences, and felt living in community is more necessary in rural contexts. One spoke of instilling love and peace, another identified “*That we may live together*” as the key challenge “*to maintain/bring peace to the world of all humans and nature*”. Another asked “*We always say ‘community,’ but who are the community members of the graduates that we always talk about?*”

Graduates spoke about community building being the process of enriching the spirit, or mutual caring of each other. Several spoke of it being inclusive of all people and involving them in planning and working together in ways of mutual caring.

3.7 Community development

There are many definitions of community development but the basic concept stated by the United Nations in 1948 states “*Community Development is a process designed to create conditions of economic and social progress for the whole community with its active participation and fullest possible reliance upon the community's initiative*”. (Head, 1979)

Dr. Takami (1976) defined development as “*the integrated process of human growth – socially, politically, economically and culturally – for each and for all people. All people should be positively involved in the entire process of development efforts from the beginning to the end --- that is from its conception stage, its planning, its execution, and tasting of its results. There must not be those who develop and those who are developed*”.

ARI in its curriculum presents questions on “*conventional approaches to ‘development’*” regarding the role of economics, NGO¹³s, government and private industry. These are presented as a contrast to the “*alternative goal set*” of the ARI Mission statement “*The mission of the Asian Rural institute is to build an environmentally healthy, just, and peaceful world, in which each person can live to his or her fullest potential. This mission is rooted in the love of Jesus Christ. To carry out this mission, we nurture and train rural leaders for a life of sharing. Leaders, both women and men, who live and work in grassroots rural communities primarily in Asia, Africa and the Pacific form a community of learning each year together with staff and other residents. Through community based learning we study the best ways for rural people to share and enhance local resources and abilities for the common good. We present a challenge to ourselves and the whole world in our approach to food and life*” (Hoover communication, 2015).

Of the more than sixty graduates who commented on what development meant to them in their communities, key elements included participation (12)¹⁴, spirituality (10) and livelihoods (8), described more in depth by some to include health (7) and family well-being (4). Change or “*moving forward*” was important to graduates (14) for sustainability, leadership, listening, teaching, monitoring and evaluating. Networking (6) was seen as important for effective use of resources, environmental stewardship and advocacy, especially in managing difficult political

¹³ A non-government Organization (NGO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level.

¹⁴ Numbers in brackets indicate number of graduates giving this response.

situations of forced change in people's lives. Development was seen to go beyond physical infrastructures and learning *"to value whatever place you are at"* (Interviewee 1212).

One graduate (Interviewee 1012) described the reality of development in a remote mountain community *"A sick person used to need to be carried on the head for five to six kilometers to a hospital. When we solved that, that is development, so now we want the school. We don't want to live the way we used to we want to change"*. When these steps involve community care of the environment while at the same time loving neighbors and using economics as a means to an end, rather than the end in itself, with all people having access to their rights, then that is sustainable development (Interviewee 614). Others summed this up as *"A step from where you are to one forward is development"* (Trip notes April 4, 2014) and as having the goal of restoring Eden¹⁵ (Interviewee 871).

3.8 Spiritual growth

At ARI discussions center around the meaning of spirituality, prayer and how spiritual growth can be impacted by other cultures and faiths. During the study, a total of 164 graduates responded to a question regarding the source of energy to do their work. Of these, seventy-seven (73 Christians) identified their strength as coming from their faith: eight of these spoke of the value (7) or challenges (1) of inter-religious relationships. Some developed a spiritual conviction at ARI and most found their faith to be enriched by the differing perspectives they encountered to have a deeper appreciation of God's image so richly displayed in diversity.

Others, rather than speaking of spirituality, spoke of sources of inner strength coming from reciprocal caring relationships with communities (31) and families (20). Inspiration from ARI (25), personal physical or emotional strengths (20), and support of colleagues (8) were also mentioned. Of those mentioning family, one (Interviewee 1193) spoke of never thinking of family in a desire to sacrifice and serve; another (Interviewee 486) spoke of being reminded of Takami's words that *"even family and children could be a stumbling block"* as motivation when things seem difficult.



Figure 9. Morning gathering at ARI. Photo courtesy of Fujishima Thomas.

¹⁵ Eden is the garden where, according to the account in Genesis, Adam and Eve first lived, or a place of pristine or abundant natural beauty.

4. ARI experience

4.1 Participant referrals

Understanding how graduates have been referred to ARI is important to planning for future recruitment strategies. Graduates have learned about the possibility of studying at ARI in various ways over the years (Figure 10). No participant from Nepal was referred from a faith-based organization while almost all from Myanmar were, in spite of a totalitarian government. All those interviewed who had been recommended by faith-based organizations were from Christian churches or organizations with the exception of one who represented a Buddhist organization. Family members and friends are among those indicated as “Other”.

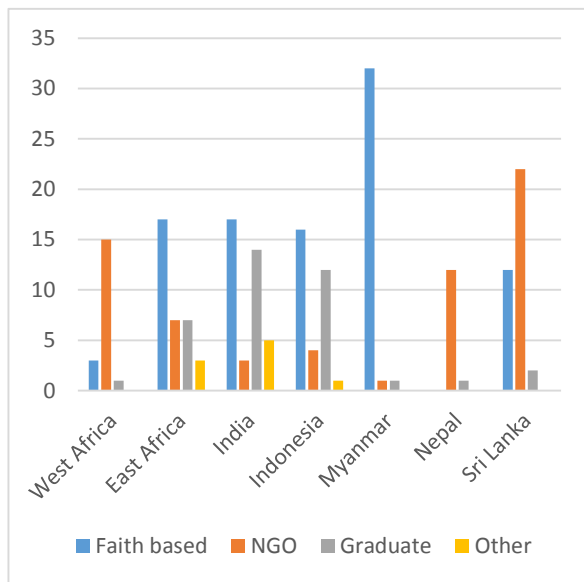


Figure 10. Participant recommendations by location.

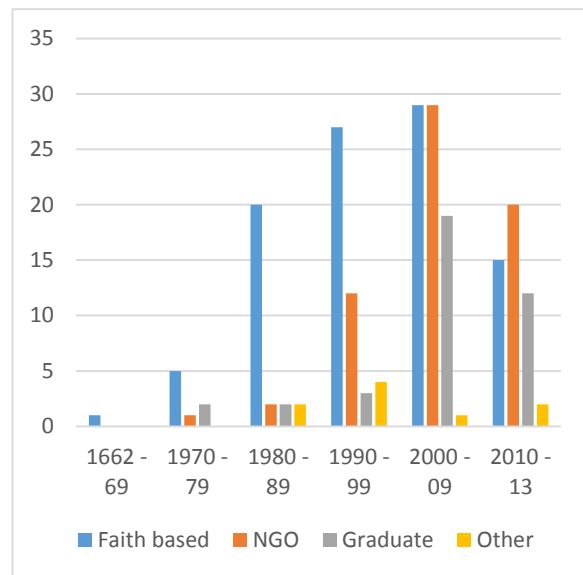


Figure 11. Participant recommendations by decade.

Figure 11 shows the trends of recommendations by SBs over time. Most participants were referred from faith-based entities (churches and organizations) prior to 2000; since then numbers being referred from NGOs and graduates is increasing. This is particularly true for East Africa, India and Indonesia.

As per the ARI Admissions Brochure (Appendix H), requirements for applicants indicate that they must have at least three years of experience as leaders in a rural community and be nominated by a SB. Preference is given to field staff of an organization; directors or administrative staff are not accepted. Applicants between the ages of twenty and fifty years of age, with or without any faith path, are accepted if considered able to live a simple and demanding life. Adequate oral and written proficiency in English is needed for the curriculum which is taught in English. Priority is given to training women: student ratios of women are increasing as seen in the increase from 10% in the 1960s to 47% since 2010 (Appendix E).

4.2 ARI learning

How graduates experienced living in community and rotating group leadership with staff and volunteers in the daily and seasonal activities at ARI is key to planning the integration of those aspects for future participants. About half of the graduates interviewed spoke about their experience at ARI, identifying aspects learned, impact of learning on return home, success and challenges, as well as random memories.

4.2.1 *Community life*

The lessons learned by living in community (32) included recognizing that all people are equal, and being better able to understand and deal with other cultures. This, combined with values (5) such as honesty, cleanliness and “*never giving up*” contributed to abilities to work with human rights and peace issues (Interviewee 1060). Christians also deepened their understanding that spreading the gospel is difficult if one does not have concern for people’s physical well-being (Interviewee 1109).

4.2.2 *Learning by doing*

Leading by example, also referred to as “*seeing and doing*” or “*learning by doing*”, was cited by twenty-seven graduates as a key lesson. Most described this in terms of chores and kitchen duties being done by staff and participants alike: many expressed their initial surprise at seeing the director clean toilets or do chores. Six grasped the concept more deeply as involving equality in discussions and participation, as well as the value of “*doing*” in deepening skills.

Participants learned about Japanese culture both on and off campus. Japanese “*weekenders*” on campus provided opportunities to learn about urban Japanese culture and were seen as people “*who run from their homes to come to this foreign, and international place – they feel better, they gained a good gain*” (Interviewee 934). An ethic of hard work was evident both on campus and in homestays: most appreciated the experience and felt nurtured by their hosts while some felt challenged by language and culture. A few questioned the value of the number of homestays and/or whether the motives of hosts accepting ARI participants were for financial gains. Others noted differences between ARI and its context, such as expressed by one graduate (Interviewee 629) speaking about organic practices “*Even in Japan, nobody follows it*”.

4.2.3 *Agriculture*

Learning about agricultural systems (10), livestock care (8), crops and vegetables (3) and compost making (8) was valued by graduates, although ARI did not always have the focus on organic production that it has presently. One earlier graduate (Interviewee 770) spoke of “*one professor against chemicals*” and another (Interviewee 449) noted the subject of organics was better covered during a TA experience in the ‘90s than during his time as a participant in the ‘70s. Those who came from farming backgrounds found adjusting to ARI routines easy, but all spoke of the learning, although challenging, having been beneficial to them.

4.2.4 *Resource management*

Recognizing the available resources at their disposal, three women spoke of their allowances at ARI, one sending hers home to pay school fees and two others to buy land that has helped each

of them establish ministries for children. Another (Interviewee 234) shared of the pain of being “*here in Japan with milk with piglet but my family – my home without - without milk enough*”.

Waste management was learned by observing, rather than as a formal component of the ARI curriculum. Several shared that no food is ever wasted at ARI: one graduate (Interviewee 275) recalled the days when participants collected and weighed garden produce but were not allowed to eat any of it. However, some graduates identified areas where lesser stewardship is evident. Body parts of animals commonly used for food by graduates at home is discarded at ARI and machinery declared unfit for use that has potential in other contexts; discarded grass cutting machines were taken home by one graduate (Interviewee 891). These different perspectives are understandable according to one graduate (Interviewee 558), who noted that historical Japanese life is equivalent to life today in some graduate home contexts where even the basic machines of ARI are not available.

4.2.5 Time management

Time is seen as valuable. Staff say it is a precious resource to be used in productive ways to harmonize the work so that individuals and communities may have healthy bodies and relationships with a balance of work and rest. At ARI, time management of daily schedules is rigidly followed, including on weekends; two staff spoke of having little life beyond ARI because of work schedules. ARI’s timely response to financial payments to researchers were commendable and time was generously given to them when physically present. Response to other communications and requests for information frequently went unanswered unless initiated by the Internal Research Coordinator; this changed after the March, 2016 meetings between staff and researchers. After that questions were responded to in a timely manner.

4.3 Challenges

Fewer than thirty graduates spoke of challenges at ARI, some of these only when specifically asked. The main challenges identified, especially during the first three months, included language, adjusting to different cultures, homesickness, food, slippers, climate, caring for animals and trying to implement practices back home. Several identified that they had not recognized the value of ARI until after returning home and one (Interviewee 1217) spoke of “*discovering things you thought were new at ARI are actually in your community and you left the ideas at ARI*”. Some spoke of the temptation to stay in Japan illegally, one even being offered a handbook on how to do that (Interviewee 889).

Many spoke of participants who had “*escaped*” from ARI: no statistics are kept but anecdotal evidence was provided that there had been no participants leaving the institute illegally after 2008 until 2015, when two participants from Nepal left the institute to remain in Japan several months after a devastating earthquake in their home country. Researchers met only one person from several years ago (Interviewee 550) whose desire to help a remote community led to his being sent by a fake organization, staying in Japan to pay off debts, and being helped by authorities while in detention to arrange educational opportunities because of his interpersonal skills.

4.4 Benefits

Graduates described how benefits at ARI far surpassed the challenges. The benefit of having left their home countries to study at ARI in Japan was that they gained a perspective of the wider world in terms of economics, culture, religion and cross-cultural relationships. This was significant in reducing fear of others, appreciating other faith paths and forming relationships, many of which have lasted years after graduation. At ARI, they also learned the value of safe food, organic agriculture practices, stewardship of resources and a sense of responsibility for the environment. For many, credibility in their own communities and countries increased because of having studied outside the country.

4.5 Training Assistant (TA) and Graduate Intern (GI)¹⁶ experiences

Seven graduates spoke of having been invited to the TA opportunity and another four indicated an interest in coming in the future; perceptions of past TAs and GIs is important for planning future experiences mutually beneficial to TAs, GIs, and ARI. Of those who were invited as TAs, three refused because of uncertainty about the role or family and work concerns. One had refused at the last minute after all arrangements had been made because of an ill family member who died shortly after; that person said no future correspondence to ARI has been responded to (Interviewee 558).

The reasons for seeking a TA position included wanting to learn more about a specific topic or refresh learning after five years. Also, graduates wanted the increased credibility at home by studying in a foreign country. Some would like to give input to ARI because of their own valuable work experience. Although they have valuable insights to share, two people acknowledged they are too old to be accepted.

Most described their TA experiences as involving three roles: dormitory and community life combined with crops and vegetables, poultry, or kitchen duties. This left little or no time for learning or sharing on or off campus other than in food-life activities and morning gathering. In these roles, opportunities for learning did include learning how ARI manages the farm, cooking foods from different countries, constructing a tunnel greenhouse, and/or writing a paper on a topic of interest. One TA spoke of not having the opportunity to learn about a technique that was failing in a SB project, and another spoke of leaving with far more ideas and capabilities than as a participant but having no resources to implement them. Another has left a SB to establish an independent farm with support of the network developed during the extended time in Japan; this person was one of three interviewed whose terms were lengthened to meet ARI needs.

One graduate reported that prior to 1986 TAs were assigned to a specific project: three spoke of having had a specific project, one of them also doing some lecturing. Although the latter individual was one of those having the greatest satisfaction in the TA experience, his words "*I also giving idea to ARI staff, but mostly staff give order to us*" voiced the sentiments of several. These TAs felt they were treated as volunteers and not much different or even "*less precious than participants*" with double the work and their main role being to help staff and mediate as

¹⁶ A graduate intern (GI) is a Japanese ARI graduate who stays on for an additional year at the institute to deepen learning in a specific area.

role models or “*middlemen*” between staff and participants. One, still on campus, acknowledged having challenges but was unwilling to verbalize them at this point. Another summed up the challenges of the TA role as the “*goals and roles are not the same*”.

Of the eighty graduates who had served as TAs in ARI’s history, interviews for this study included sixteen. ARI, on learning that three years of TAs had returned home without really accomplishing what was needed to meet their needs, began assigning a consultant to each TA in 2015 with the intention of discussing goals, allowing TAs to select some classes and attempting to have them visit farmers.

Researchers also interviewed four Graduate Internes (GIs) from between 1991 and 2015. The Graduate Interne (GI) is a program designed specifically for Japanese graduates and differs from the TA program in that it follows immediately after the participant experience. All GIs interviewed were pleased with the opportunity it provided them to deepen their agricultural learning. One missed having as much time to talk with participants and another was happy to having been part of forming a FAMSIG (Farm, Meal Service and Income Generation)¹⁷ group and inviting a donor to be thanked in a special event.



Figure 12. ARI greenhouse. Photo courtesy of Fujishima Thomas.

¹⁷ Farm, Meal Service and Income Generation (FAMSIG) is a monthly meeting of representatives from farm, meal service, and income generation sectors at ARI to discuss needed outputs and use of farm produce.

5. Dream/plan*

Since its inception, ARI has encouraged participants to think about their futures. This section outlines the learning regarding the best ways to formulate the reflection papers¹⁸ that are a major assignment near the end of the training. ARI provided researchers with records of participants’ plans and/or dreams for their lives on return home between the years of 2001 and 2014. Of these, seventy-seven papers had been written by graduates interviewed as part of this study.

5.1 Demographics of graduates with dreams/plans

The demographics of this graduate sample of graduates are show Figures 13 and 14.

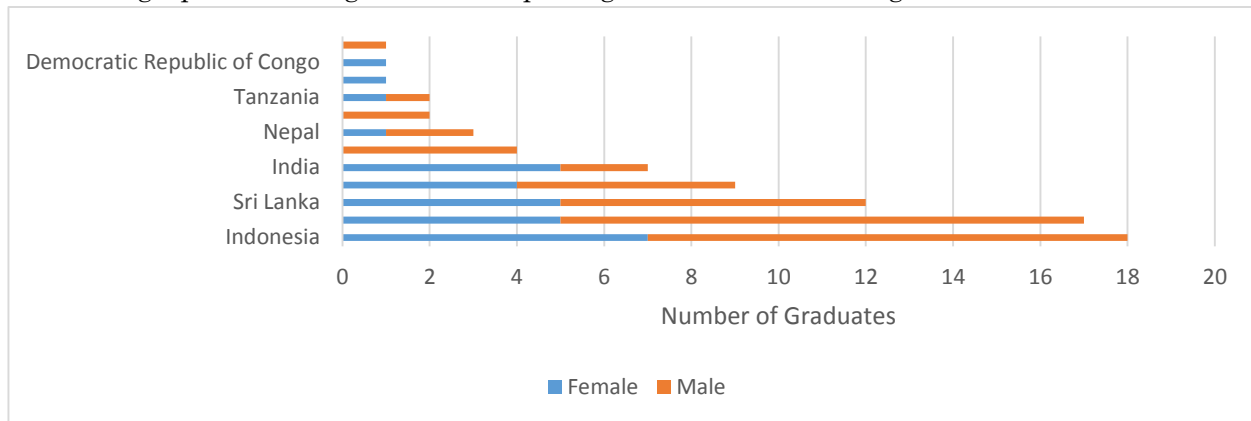


Figure 13. Demographics of graduates with dreams/plans visited by country.

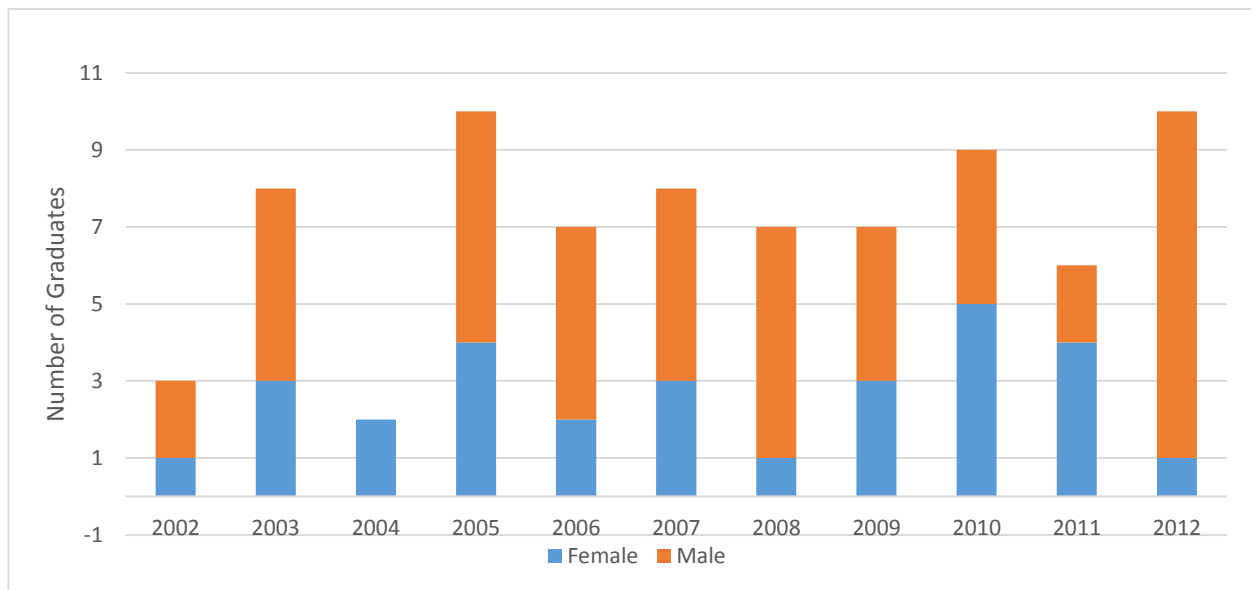


Figure 14. Demographics of graduates with dreams/plans visited by year.

¹⁸ A reflection paper is a paper written during the course of an ARI participant experience based on the model of appreciative inquiry. It reflects the home community of the participant, a “*peak life experience*”, learning at ARI, and a dream and/or plan for the future depending on when they attended ARI.

* Analysis and writing by Hannah Borst with editing by Bev Abma.

To eliminate any bias of either of the researchers based on visits and/or long-term relationships at ARI, an intern unknown to any of the graduates, was contracted to compare these dreams/plans with current realities documented in recorded interviews or field notes.

5.2 Achievement of dream/plan

The data in Figure 15 suggests that 53% of graduates interviewed have achieved or partially achieved their dream/plan as stated in their ARI reflection paper; 47% of graduates interviewed have not yet been able to do so.

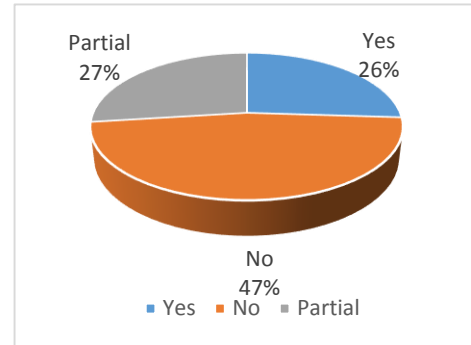


Figure 15. Graduate achievement of dream/plan.

Papers prior to 2004 had a general format that included country and organizational context, problem identification, ARI learning, resources and clear action the graduate planned on making after reaching home. Beginning in 2004, the focus changed to developing a “*dream*” in keeping with appreciative inquiry approaches that focus on innovation rather than fixing the old (Cooperrider, 2010). From this point on, papers tended to mention more general vague dreams with fewer plausible steps to making the dream a reality. In 2008, writers began including a first step towards their dream. The differences in approaches is evident in two random samples of content from 2002 and 2012 (Appendix I).

5.2.1 Reasons for not completing plan

When considering the data in Figure 16 it should be noted that the more recent the graduate, the less time they have had in which to complete their dream or plan.

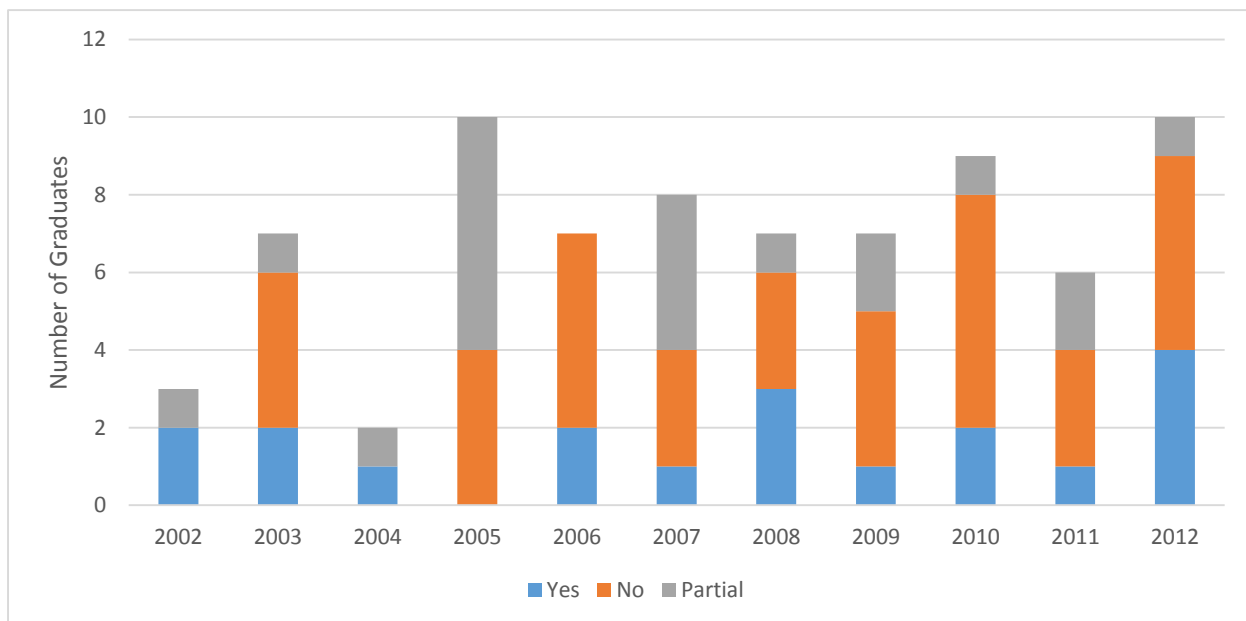


Figure 16. Graduate achievement of dream/plan by year of graduation.

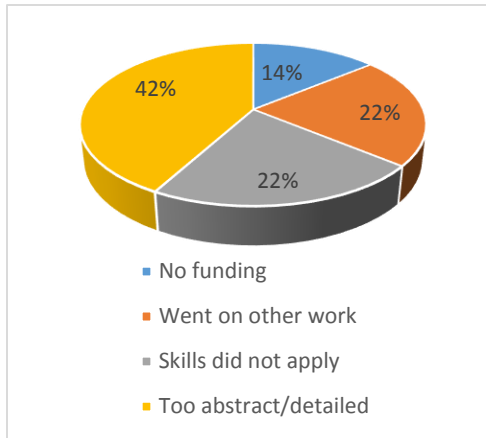


Figure 17. Reasons for incompleteness.

However, a few significant correlations stood out for why a graduate had not completed his/her dream as seen in Figure 17. The first, there was no funding for the graduate upon return. Of the graduates who were not able to accomplish their goal, 14% spoke of writing a dream/plan that they anticipated could be accomplished through their SB, but upon returning home the SB either had no money for the dream/plan or wanted the graduate to work on another project (section 8.3.2). With no money or support the graduate was unable to achieve his/her dream/plan and continued to work or, in the case of 22% of the graduates who had not completed their dream/plan, changed to new emphases that were achievable in their specific contexts. Examples of this

included seeking employment elsewhere, starting new organizations and/or demonstration farms and garbage sorting.

For another 22% of the graduates, the skills learned at ARI could not be applied to the graduate's home setting because of geographical differences. It could be seen that the graduates who realized the agricultural skills they had learned in Japan could not be utilized where they lived either dismissed their dream/plan or changed it to apply to their setting. Graduates also mentioned how trying different methods took time, and it was not abnormal for the SB to stop funding after a few trials. Reasons for this included not being able to find appropriate materials for bokashi¹⁹, poultry dying of disease in the face of no available vaccine, or the time frame for profit from the endeavor being longer than anticipated by the organization (section 8.3.1).

About 42% of the dreams/plans were too abstract to fully achieve because graduates talked about entire communities, populations, or countries changing. Some mentioned desiring people's attitudes or feelings to change. If the dream/plan was abstract, the graduate usually wrote lengthy paragraphs about what their dream community would look like or would be doing. There was no obvious dream/plan laid out but rather ideas within the paragraphs. These sorts of plans/dreams were difficult to measure because they related to characteristics of people and not specific projects. On the contrary, other graduates included details in their dream/plan that were too specific for them to achieve. They had a goal of a certain percentage of their population doing something, a number of people, or targeting a group they had not been part of before coming to ARI. The more radical the dream/plan the less achievable it was for the graduate.

The 27% of the total graduates who have partially completed their dream/plan usually included lists of small dreams/plans in their reflection paper. The lists were not specific to one area of

¹⁹ Bokashi is the Japanese word for fermented organic matter and is one of the fermented fertilizers made at ARI by mixing organic materials such as rice bran and chicken manure with soil (clay soil or sub soil from the forest) and other materials including rice husks and wood charcoal.

their life but included multiple areas like community, faith, work, and self. A couple of the ideas on the list had been completed, but others had not because of reasons mentioned above.

The 26% of the total graduates who have completed their dream/plan were more likely to include one or two short ideas in their reflection paper. They stated their dream/plan clearly in the reflection paper and then expanded on their action steps in the following paragraphs.

Another significant correlation that contributed to a graduate achieving his/her dream/plan was SB support upon return from ARI: 63% of graduates who were able to fully pursue their dream/plan had the support of their SB as reflected in Figure 18.

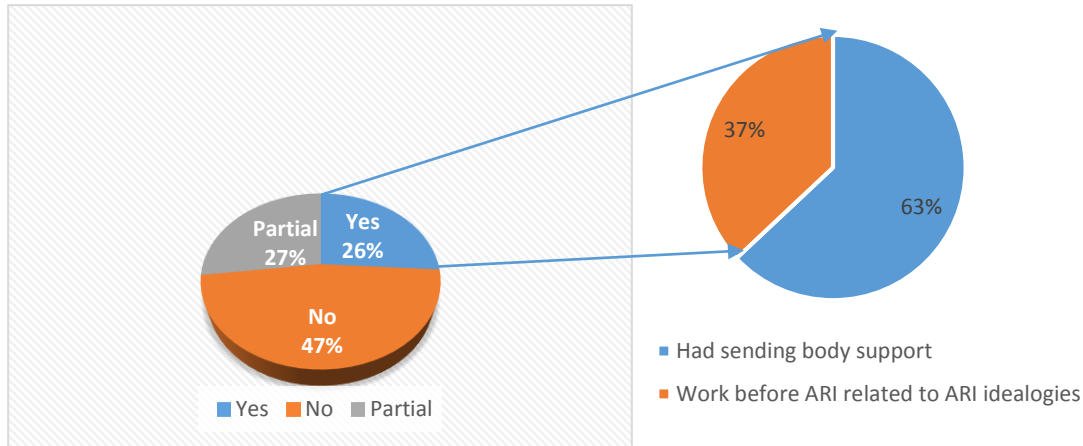


Figure 18. Factors impacting achievement of dream/plan.

By contrast, of graduates who were not able to fully pursue their dream/plan, 74% did not have the support from their SBs. For the graduates that achieved their dream/plan, it was clear from the interviews that the graduates had a close connection with the SB and that the SB was aware ahead of time of what the graduate would learn at ARI. The SB appeared to be prepared for the graduates return and had the available resources for the graduate to begin working with communities for change.

Of those graduates who have completed their dream/plan, 37% had held a position related to ARI values in their community before going to Japan. These included farmers, development workers, and human rights activists who had already dealt with issues related to agriculture and human development. When comparing their reflection papers and interviews these graduates showed that they knew how their community would respond to their new skills, what resources they had or could obtain, and what challenges they would need to overcome to make their dream/plan a reality. Graduates that are well established and plan on staying in their community seem more likely to know how to achieve their dream/plan.

Organic agriculture is a key feature of the community life of ARI with thirty five of the seventy-seven graduates (45%) having wanted to implement organic agricultural practices on return home. How much they were able to

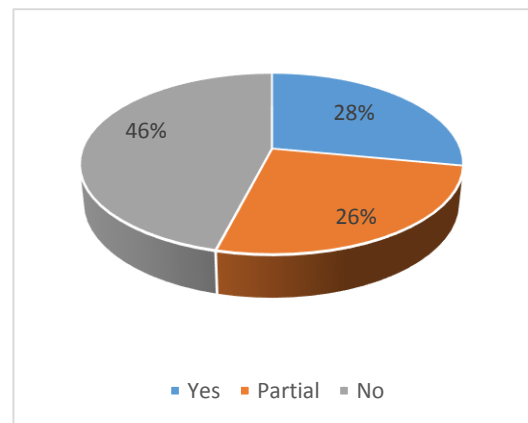


Figure 19. Organic practice implementation.

do this, is shown in Figure 19. Factors hindering full use of organic ways included lack of available resources, loss of profit, and inability to keep up with competition. Several of those who had not implemented the organic methods they had mentioned in their dream/plan were very apologetic about not being able to do so and seemed to feel they had somehow failed ARI because of that.

As indicated earlier, not all graduates interviewed had an available reflection paper or plan available for comparison; this section of the report applies only to those who did.



Figure 20. Community meeting in East Africa. Photo courtesy of Steven Cutting.

6. Sending bodies

A sending body (SB) is an organization that recommends one of its staff persons or committed long-term volunteers as a potential participant for study at ARI with the expectation that the individual will be reintegrated into the organization upon graduation from ARI (Appendix H). A SB “*may be an international, national, national or local NGO, religious organization, or other organization based in a rural area, with a clear history of working for at least three years with marginalized people in the local community, and a commitment toward self-sustainability*” (ARI, 2016). In its 40th anniversary community statement, ARI affirmed both its belief that SBs are the organizations working for local transformation, and a desire to find the best ways to partner with them (Appendix F). For this reason relationships with these organizations were included as part of the study.

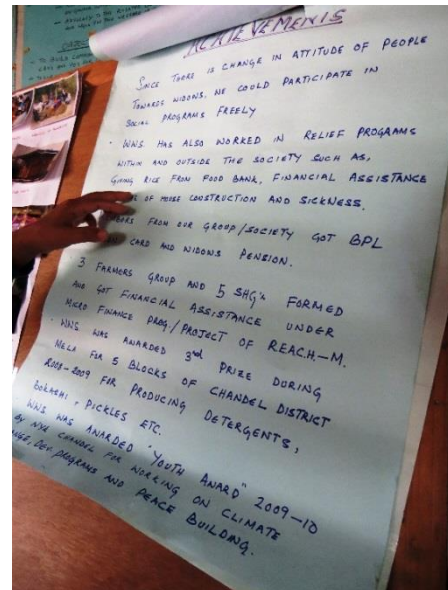


Figure 23. Organizational achievements. Photo courtesy of Steven Cutting.

There is a formal process for an organization to become a SB. The organization completes an application form that is reviewed by ARI staff to determine if the organization is “*like minded*”, working towards similar goals as ARI. Once the organization is approved it is sent an individual application form for the recommended candidate. Only if the individual is accepted does the organization become a SB (Personal communication, Froede K, April 6, 2016).

Aware of the financial limitations of SBs to cover participant expenses, ARI establishes connections with potential supporters to subsidize these costs. Staff raised questions as to whether or not SBs were sending the most qualified people in light of this subsidized tuition. They especially questioned this in regards to whether or not SBs were utilizing graduate skills on return, particularly those of volunteers. In addition some questioned the role of SBs, especially for those participants whose SBs provide no financial support for their attendance (Recruitment brainstorming notes, Feb. 4, 2015).

Generally, staff had little knowledge of SBs that graduates were returning to and more than one verbalized that these relationships are the responsibility of the Admissions and Graduate Outreach Coordinator.

Researchers had the opportunity to visit staff at various levels in fifty-five organizations (either SBs or current employers). Visits were also made to twenty-three communities of the thirty

faith-based organizations visited (one Buddhist and the rest Christian) as well as seventeen of the twenty-four secular development organizations (Figures 21 & 22).

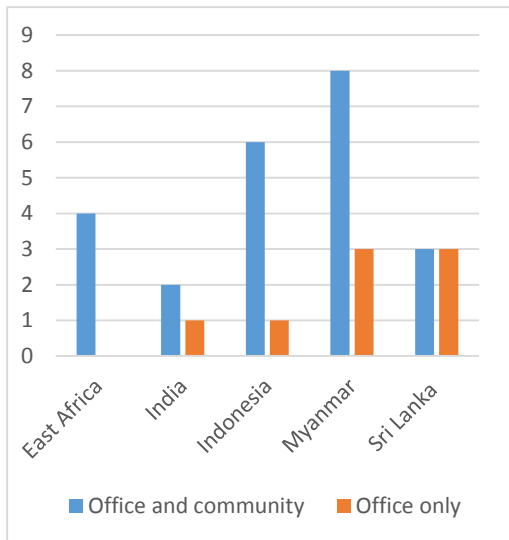


Figure 21. Faith-based organization visits.

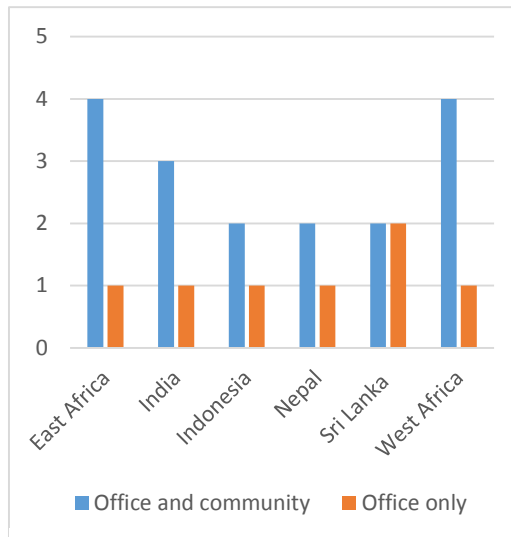


Figure 22. Secular development organization visits.

Most organizations used a variety of participative development²⁰ methodologies to mobilize community groups to work towards more sustainable livelihoods through agriculture, livestock and microfinance activities²¹. Generally, agricultural efforts included integrated approaches for fertility and pest management that were most appropriate to specific contexts. Diversity of food crops combined with longer term fruit and wood trees contributed more towards family well-being and natural resource conservation. Introduction of small animals²² allowed people to learn skills with less risk, with those successful buying bigger animals as they could afford. Chickens and pigs tended to be prone to disease in areas where immunization was not available. Microfinance activities were most effective when they included an internal savings component and were not dependent on any external funding.

Most Christian based organizations included a component of church mobilization and some found credit unions a positive way to enter communities and gather people for other initiatives such as health training. These organizations also spoke more about transformation of families

²⁰ Participative development is a process through which stakeholders can influence and share control over development initiatives, and over the decisions and resources that affect themselves.

²¹ Microfinance or microcredit is the lending of small amounts of money at low interest to new businesses in the developing world.

²² Small animals include poultry, rabbits, goats, and/or bees.

and communities to having dignity such as being “*able to feed my children, to take my children to school simply because of the training I went through*” in the words of one organizational director (Org 6).

Lesser numbers of organizations are addressing climate change, conserving the environment, or mitigating effects of natural and human disasters. In situations of conflict, advocacy efforts are carried out regarding human rights for women and children, refugee or displaced population resettlements, land tenure and infrastructure services. The factors that contribute to successes and challenges of individual graduates as discussed in section 8 apply equally to organizations.

Organizational staff were very mindful of the big investment put into ARI training and felt that follow-up is important to verify how graduates are applying their training beyond sharing stories or saying the training was good.

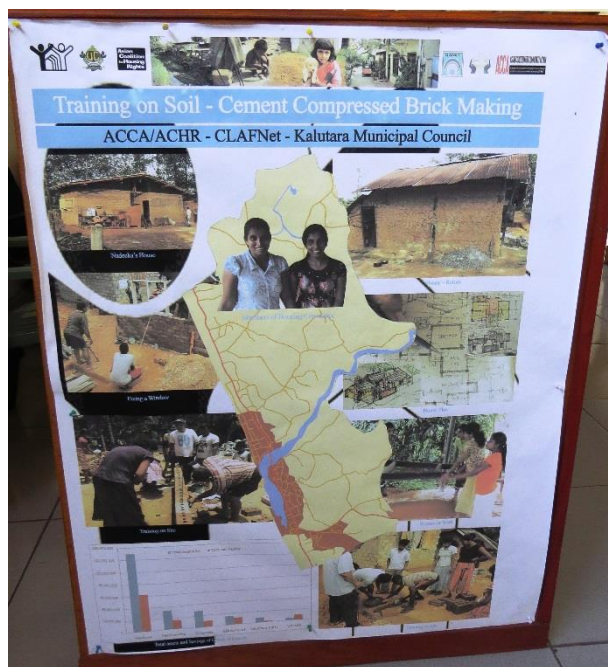


Figure 24. Organizational plan.
Photo courtesy of Steven Cutting.

On the part of SBs, there is a desire to have ARI know their organizations better and have closer collaboration for a more flexible application process, deeper understanding of participant learning needs and supportive realistic plans for graduates on their return. Organizations are treading a difficult balance of keeping their organizations active and relevant in a donor trend of decreasing and/or short term funding.

Several organizations verbalized a willingness to collaborate for alumnae meetings and internships after the ARI experience to deepen graduate learning more specific to their own contexts. A list of such potential organizations is included in Appendix J.

7. Context

Participants at ARI come from a wide variety of contexts and are impacted by many factors that include geography, culture and religion. When they return home their ability to impact what they have learned at ARI, especially as it relates to sustainable livelihoods and health, is impacted by changing world realities around them: aspects such as agricultural practices, conflict, globalization, politics, infrastructure, migration, and weather patterns.

Graduate roles as community change agents occurred most often as part of faith-based or secular development organizations as reflected in Figure 25.

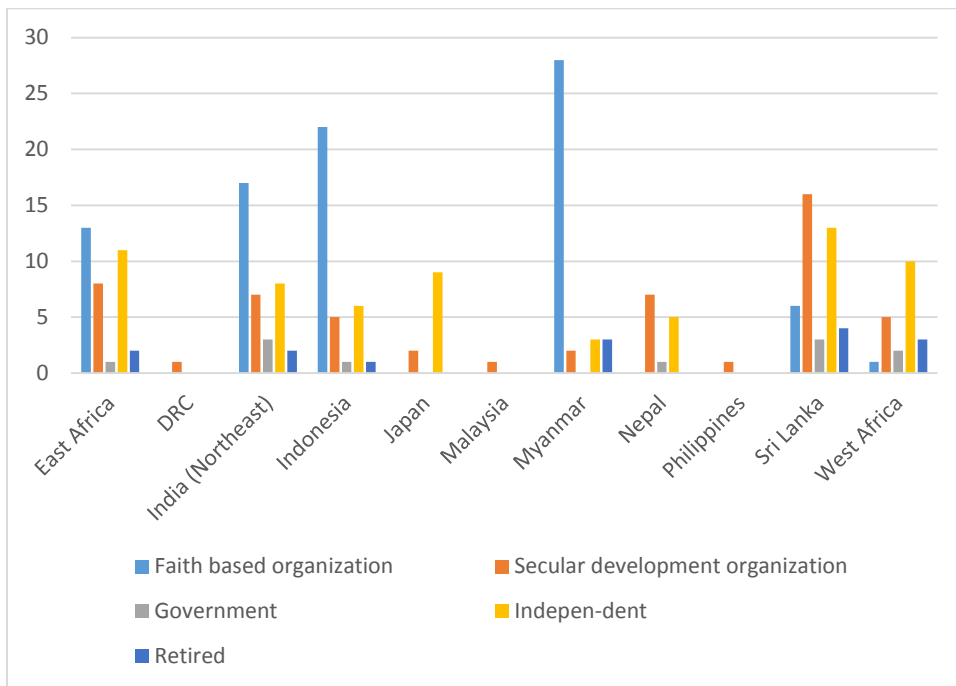


Figure 25. Graduate employment.

As each context is unique, the activities, successes and challenges of graduates are discussed in their geographic and social contexts in order to better understand their opportunities and challenges.

7.1 East Africa

East Africa is the portion of sub-Saharan Africa made up of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda and consisting largely of plateaus and two parallel rift valleys. All three countries adjoin Lake Victoria; Mt. Kilimanjaro in the East of Tanzania is the highest mountain in Africa (Britannica, 2016).

The climate is generally tropical except in high elevations. Vegetation ranges from woodlands to grasslands, famous for the diverse wildlife so attractive to tourists.

The East African Community (EAC) is the regional intergovernmental organization of these three republics along with the Republics of Burundi and Rwanda. All have had diverse political histories but are making remarkable progress in the areas of institution building, integration and infrastructure with Kenya having the largest economy (Kimenyi & Kibe, 2014)



Figure 26. Map of Africa. Copied from www.theodora.com/images.

7.1.1 *Kenya context*

Kenya is a multi-ethnic state of the Great Lakes region of East Africa with a population of over forty-four million people, predominantly of Bantu and Nilotic origins. The country has a population density of seventy-nine people per square kilometer, which is only 23% of that of Japan (World Bank, 2014).

Independence from Britain came in 1964, after which the country was ruled as a de facto single-party state²³ until 1991. It has had its share of politically instigated violence along ethnic and tribal lines (Kimenyi & Kibe, 2014). Graduates share that blurred boundaries currently exist between “terrorists” with labels such as Al-Qaeda²⁴, Al-Shabaab²⁵ and even Islam given with no real clarity and police often looting, rather than bringing law and order, after events such as the widely publicized Westlands mall bombing in Nairobi in 2013.

Environmental issues are a key concern in Kenya as the forests on mountains are needed to provide a steady flow of water for much of the population. Two graduates (Interviewee 49 & 51)

²³ A de facto single-party state is a dominant party state that, unlike the single party state, allows (at least nominally) democratic multiparty elections, but the existing practices or balance of political power effectively prevent the opposition from winning the elections.

²⁴ Al-Qaeda is a radical Islamic group organized by Osama bin Laden in the 1990s to engage in terrorist activities.

²⁵ Al-Shabaab is an Arabic phrase meaning “the Youth”, often used to refer to a Somalia-based militant Islamist group aligned with Al-Qaeda.

described their distress at finding “*the Japanese clearing our (Kenyan) forests*” when they were in Japan. Most graduates describe major challenges of deforestation and climate change in the country in spite of efforts such as those of Nobel Prize winner Wangari Maathai’s Green Belt Movement (2003) which focused on planting trees. Eucalyptus²⁶ is a significant challenge as explained in section 8.1.8.

Resolving land issues has become even more complicated with government decentralization. A new constitution adopted in 2010 increased the number of members of parliament from 200 to 700; many question whether or not this number will be sustainable, especially financially. One graduate (Interviewee 921) has been involved in these decentralization efforts in advocating for, and educating oral societies regarding their land rights, government accountability and aspects as simple as signing a check before it expires. Even though geographically near larger centers, these communities are isolated by poor roads and seasonal flooding.

Cell phones have made a major contribution to communication and even offer banking services, decreasing the need for travel to deliver money to family members. The road between Nairobi and Mombasa is congested and notoriously dangerous, causing many people to avoid it. It is the route for transporting all goods from the Mombasa port inland and on to neighboring land-locked Uganda. The congested border crossing between Kenya and Uganda can take several days: as a result, both legal and illicit commerce are rampant there. Governments are attempting to work with these challenges and recently have introduced a first step toward easing the situation, at least for tourists, with a multiple entry tourist visa that includes Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda (Lonely Planet, 2016).

7.1.2 Uganda context

On the west side of Kenya, Uganda also bridges the equator. One graduate (Interviewee 1143) identified this country as the “*land of milk and honey*” with a tropical climate and two growing seasons a year. Others agreed about the potential of the country for agriculture but spoke of its changing face with large entities buying out small farmers; more land is being taken for residential areas as the wealthy seek to live away from congested cities. Legislation has been passed to avoid tenants being left homeless in land transactions, requiring that they be advised of upcoming sales and be given first opportunity to purchase. Tenants, however, have little opportunity to benefit from this ruling because of escalating land prices.

Graduates also share that Ugandan education has historically been an inefficient system with high student to teacher ratios. A curriculum geared for white collar jobs often uses digging²⁷ as punishment for students. This has left young people seeking urban opportunities where they have few marketable skills. The adult literacy rate in the country is 73%. Almost 50% of the population of 37,500,000 people is under 14 years of age and almost half of those, mostly girls, drop out by fifth grade (Bread for the World 2015 Hunger Report). Churches and private schools work to fill this gap with more schools but attendance in those is more costly.

²⁶ Eucalyptus is a fast-growing evergreen tree native to Australia that has been widely introduced elsewhere. It is valued for its timber, oil, gum, resin and as an ornamental tree.

²⁷ Digging is a term used for manual farm work such as hoeing.

With a largely rural population dependent on subsistence farming, the Human Development Index²⁸ of the country is fifteenth from the bottom (HDR 2015). Graduates say that opportunities for export of agricultural products are increasing, however benefit mostly large landholders, who may even try to eke out a third crop in a year. Day laborers in these settings try to emulate the large farm practices by using chemical inputs on their small holdings. They are not only resistant to organic methodologies, but lack access to the animals and weed-free compost materials needed for organic methods. Near urban areas, massive amounts of garbage also contaminate soil and ground water, contributing to human and animal disease (Interviewee 1143).

Although Christianity is predominant, animistic beliefs are strong, and distrust of the West has been prevalent over the years. Many perceive birth control, HIV²⁹/AIDS³⁰ prevention and, more recently the spread of the Ebola virus as Western attempts to decrease African populations. A Google search reveals multiple websites such as The Talking Drum (2003) with this message. The impact of the disease has been no small thing, as HIV-1 was first described in the Rakai area of the country in 1981 (Mugerwa, 1996) and resulted in many child-headed households. Animism also contributes to the impact of Joseph Kony's personality cult in the Lord's Resistance Army, accused of widespread human rights violations in Uganda and adjacent countries (Craine, n.d.).

The traditional hospitality and asylum policies of the government have resulted in refugees streaming into the country since the 1960s, with more than 385,000 present currently, mostly from the Democratic Republic of Congo. This follows the years of the Idi Amin dictatorship from 1971-79, notorious for human rights abuses and between 100,000 and 500,000 deaths (Bread for the World 2015 Hunger Report). Residents speak of how during this, and the Rwanda genocide eras, bodies could be seen floating in Lake Victoria as far as Tanzania.

7.1.3 Tanzania context

Political unrest in surrounding countries has left its mark on Tanzania. Travel at night in western areas is dangerous although buses are no longer provided with the armed security necessary a few years ago. There is also marked depletion of forests and wild animals near refugee settlements located in the rural western areas.

The country's population of 49 million is unevenly dispersed. Population density in the far west is as little as one person per square kilometer in arid regions and up to 134 people per square kilometer in the capital of Zanzibar (WPR, 2016). Inland, Dodoma is being promoted as the political capital but this has been a slow transition because of its remoteness. Dar es Salam on

²⁸ The Human Development Index (HDI) is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and having a decent standard of living. This is assessed by life expectancy at birth, mean of years of schooling for adults aged twenty-five years and more, and expected years of schooling for children ready to enter school.

²⁹ Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is a virus that interferes with the body's ability to fight organisms that cause disease.

³⁰ Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is a chronic life-threatening condition caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)

the coast remains as the de facto capital³¹ and Mwanza, on the southern edge of Lake Victoria, is the second largest city.

With more than 100 ethnic groups and languages, Tanzania has two national languages, Swahili and English, after a history of colonialization by the Germans, and later the British, before independence in 1961. Elections in 2015 were completed with a relatively peaceful change in government with the exception of Zanzibar, an island community where the elections were annulled because of fraud and the situation is still in limbo (Gakuba, 2016).

Bicycles more often replace motorcycles here than in Uganda on poor roads passing through eucalyptus and pine forests in the west. Sporadic fields of rice, maize, cotton, sunflowers, and sugar cane are evident in central and eastern regions where pastoralists tend their herds and river bed gardens are often farmed with oxen. All are impacted by El Niño cycles.

7.1.4 Findings

Thirty four graduates were interviewed and all have benefited at one time or another with the support of external funding. Contexts vary greatly from one region to another, even within a country, and explain the differing practices. One graduate (Interviewee 1215) reports the presence of very little chemical fertilizer and a prevalence of natural versus organic farming. Others in less remote areas speak of the power of chemical advertisements in a consumeristic culture that demands instant cash. As a result, one graduate (Interviewee 1056) distributes manure free from his parish pig farm in order to educate people and promote organic farming. Another (Interviewee 770) is in a context where people have more concern for health issues so are willing to pay more for organic foods.

7.1.4.1 Faith-based organizations³²

Fourteen graduates are employed in church-based organizations, all with some aspect of agriculture and community development in their roles.

One married couple attended ARI and visited the US together, returning with savings that they used to purchase twelve acres of land. Here, they developed a farm and model servant leadership in teaching agricultural practices. They also provide educational opportunities for underprivileged children in a school complex with boarding facilities for seventy students. The grounds on their complex are popular for social events such as weddings. They tried growing rice but it was not viable; however, they do raise a wide variety of crops and train community members on water harvesting in increasingly arid conditions. They have established twenty-four community schools and a teachers' college and are developing an important link to a university for accreditation which graduates say is crucial to anyone seeking employment. To keep their operations functioning, the couple have sold portions of their land which has significantly increased in value over the years. They also host mission teams from North

³¹ A de facto capital is a capital existing in actuality, especially when contrary to, or not established by law.

³² Faith-based organizations are of three types: congregations; national networks, which include national denominations, their social service arms and networks of related organizations; and freestanding religious organizations, which are incorporated separately from congregations and national networks (Vidal, 2001).

America for both material and financial support. The husband (Interviewee 51) is one of nine ARI graduates employed in church-based organizations who also have pastoral responsibilities.

Promoted to director of five departments in a SB on return, and later serving as a missionary to the US, one clergy (Interviewee 1056) led an initiative to get 1500 children off tobacco farms by educating them. Only half stayed in the educational program because their parents wanted them to work for money. Now a parish priest, this graduate works with effective community savings and loans programs as well as a pig raising operation with more than 100 pigs. In addition to the manure given to farmers (section 7.1.4), proceeds from the pig sales are used to promote poultry raising in the community. A savings and loan program has helped more than 145 group members save over 120 million TZS³³ (almost \$55,000) in three years. This has provided previously non-existent services such as photocopy and stationery shops in this rural area.

One clergy graduate (Interviewee 676) is a manager of a refugee resettlement camp, established in 1998 after the Rwanda genocide, but now accommodating almost exclusively Congolese refugees. He still liaises on refugee issues with the government, where he formerly worked. Day to day management of the camp is carried out by a more recent ARI graduate (Interviewee 1198) who initiated the building of a mudbrick school building on the organization's compound. Care of a wide variety of fowl and crop production (organic and inorganic) provide learning opportunities for a fourteen member women's group and refugees attempting to resettle on government allocated land. Housing and some planting materials are provided by international NGOs for these resettlement efforts.

Church and NGO sectors combine efforts in another border area, affected by conflict and influxes of refugees, where a graduate (Interviewee 645) trains communities on agriculture, organic methodologies and reforestation. Some youth remain in these communities, motivated by the low cost of organic inputs although there is no marketing advantage for organically produced food.

One SB (Org 6) is one of three organizations using participative development methodologies in developing written organizational targets. It uses a holistic approach encompassing social, economic, environmental, technological and spiritual issues. Its integrated participative approaches with 9000 farmers have improved their food security, health, environmental stewardship, and economic empowerment. The organization's approach also includes microfinance in the form of savings and credit groups. One (Interviewee 677) of three graduates in the organization visited who have attended ARI, has successfully implemented poultry raising. This required overcoming skepticism of staff and communities in introducing poultry because of their vulnerability to diseases – diseases that have resulted in graduates in many other places failing and not always starting again. Continuing to be a dynamic influence in spite of a mid-thigh leg amputation, this graduate has been allowed to remain working in one area rather than experience the usual transfer every few years. With more time in one place, she asserts that chickens and rabbits are good ways to begin animal rearing. They provide basic skills in animal care and *“(when) you take two cocks to the market they almost bring you*

³³ TZS: Tanzanian Shilling.

the cash flow equal then to selling one goat”, with the goat taking more resources and time to raise. Another graduate in this organization (Interviewee 574) models practices extensively at home, including vaccinating chicks before delivery to those of the 157 members of eight Savings and Credit Cooperative³⁴ (SACCO) groups she works with interested in poultry raising. She is one of two graduates in the organization who described efforts to decrease “*retrogressive values*”³⁵ such as the chewing of khat³⁶ (mira) leaves, which are addictive stimulants. She notes progress as some farmers are uprooting the addictive plant and growing a diversity of food crops instead.

Another organization (Org 53) using participative methodologies was founded in 1991 as part of a Catholic diocese with an emphasis on sustainable agricultural and natural resource management. Activities such as integrated pest and production methods³⁷ (IPPM) are combined with microfinance activities to help farmers increase yields. Learning is shared with outside groups with similar values – key concepts such as recognizing that group sizes lose their effectiveness with more than thirty members, or that organizations are more sustainable if they stagger project terms of multiple donors and manage a few well at any one time. This organization hosts interns, mostly from Europe, with specific assignments and recently had its first ARI graduate (Interviewee 1215) return.

7.1.4.2 Secular development organizations

Ten graduates are employed in secular development organizations, some intermittently volunteering during project funding gaps, and all having some component of agriculture and/or community building in their roles. An additional four graduates are volunteering in organizations in addition to having full time jobs, three of them with government positions unrelated to ARI training.

One graduate (Interviewee 770) in thirty five years with his organization began a “*Training of Trainers*”³⁸ (ToT) program with fifteen women in 1993. That has expanded to 120 women who sell milk, vegetables and cereals; these women now have their own group bank account to access loans and have installed milk storage and collection centers in two villages. The organization

³⁴ A Savings and Credit Cooperative (SACCO) is a democratic, unique member driven, self-help cooperative. It is owned, governed and managed by its member who have the same common bond and who agree to save their money, make loans to each other at reasonable rates of interest, and/or share out profits at group determined intervals. A member is a person admitted after registration in accordance with the bylaws developed by the group. No benefit goes to anyone external to the group.

³⁵ Retrogression is the process of returning to an earlier state, typically a worse one.

³⁶ Khat (mira) is a flowering plant native to the Horn of Africa; chewing the leaves has a long history and are said to cause excitement, loss of appetite and euphoria but is not seriously addictive.

³⁷ Integrated Pest Management (IPM) or Integrated Pest Prevention Management (IPPM) is an ecosystem based strategy that focuses on long-term prevention of pests or their damage through a combination of techniques such as biological control, habitat manipulation, modification of cultural practices, and use of resistant varieties. It also many include limited use of pesticides.

³⁸ A Training of Trainers (ToT) model is one in which experienced personnel teach less experienced instructors how to deliver courses, workshops and seminars, in order to build a pool of competent instructors who can teach the material to others (Duggan, n.d.).

acts as middleman for them, as well as for a group of twenty-five youth who for the past ten years have grown vegetables for market and created small off-farm businesses to supplement incomes. In addition to responding to refugee situations, this graduate has participated in a variety of international conferences as both presenter and learner.

Organization (Org 104), using participative methodologies, is one of three organizations established by ARI graduates in the region. This one was established in 1994 by a graduate (Interviewee 922) after helping establish a successful church-based development organization. He has nominated two people to ARI and is spoken of highly by several because target communities take ownership of community work even when project funds end. He also participated in the rewriting of Kenya's constitution which was adopted in 2010. He leads the organization in its focus on helping low literacy, marginalized communities with a rights-based approach to addressing HIV/AIDS, disasters, and advocating with government. Individuals and communities are supported in approaching government for benefits they are legally entitled to; advocacy has also assisted communities confronting government on corruption and land grabbing issues. The predominantly volunteer staff have helped communities with a variety of activities, including two school constructions and a booster water pump for a municipality.

Another graduate (Interviewee 851) was one of a group of fifteen who established an organization (Org 61) in 1999 that has been instrumental in 500 farmers in seven districts improving their livelihoods by combining appropriate technologies, integrated agriculture and animal husbandry. In addition, school dropouts and orphans find employment after learning in a landscape design training center that incorporates urban organic gardening and sustainable agriculture.

An early graduate (Interviewee 728) was part of forming an organization (Org 195) in 1980, several years prior to being at ARI. Now, employed as an accountant in a hospital, she continues to provide volunteer support to the organization's work in promoting early childhood education and agriculture that includes a focus on health and nutrition. The promotion of orange fleshed sweet potatoes to prevent blindness led to the introduction of savings and loans activities to support the purchase of planting materials from a research institution. A separate business entity was created to add value by processing the sweet potatoes and creating a market. A significant challenge to marketing has been consumer distrust because of other unscrupulous marketers adding orange dye to ordinary sweet potatoes.

An organization (Org 193) with a school on five acres has a two year educational program (80% practical) for more than eighty school dropouts and a school for younger children with nearly fifty residential and twenty day students. It accommodates Japanese International Cooperation Agency ³⁹(JICA) volunteers and is seeking funding to incorporate new ideas from a recent ARI graduate (Interviewee 1226). Staff spoke of needing to remind the graduate to focus on cost effective initiatives.

Two graduates shared about achievements in previous or part-time work opportunities that depended on external funding. One of these (Interviewee 664) shared that children trained

³⁹ The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is a governmental agency that coordinates official development assistance (ODA) for the government of Japan.

several years ago are still using the agricultural skills they learned. After, working for two years in the Middle East, develops various small projects as funding is available; he has introduced chemical-free bag gardens and day lighting to decrease illnesses in eighty-eight households in a cramped urban slum. The other graduate (Interviewee 1008) had previously worked with a cattle redistribution program; one recipient shared with researchers that the cow she had been given had died but that she had passed on two offspring. The graduate's own family is suffering because of personal misfortune.

7.1.4.3 Government employees

One government employee (Interviewee 857) was part of introducing disease resistant cassava and hand push machines for paddy weeding in addition to forming community groups: four rice, twenty-five local chicken, two pigs and ten cassava groups. Group members are able to pay school fees, build good houses and provide good food and clothes.

Another (Interviewee 575), in addition to having served in a government educational institution prior to retirement, now is on the board of a tele-center that integrates social media and rural radio. The radio outreach is to five million people in multiple languages with opportunities for questions on specific issues such as HIV/AIDS and water conservation. Information is also provided on day to day issues such as weather, planting conditions and current market prices. Portions of the building are leased, providing income and space for community services including post office, internet café and computer classes.

Another (Interviewee 829) worked for more than twenty years in a government agricultural educational institution and, after retirement, continues to help develop questions for government certificate and diploma examinations. With the 100 Euros he had when he returned from ARI he was able to buy a cow and chickens for sales of milk and eggs; part-time farming continued to supplement his government income. In terms of organic practices he says “*We use practical agriculture – trying to decrease chemicals and use local pesticides. We need to use together, not all natural because of the need for pesticides.*”

7.1.4.4. Independent graduate activities

One person (Interviewee 1118) was promoted from volunteer to staff in his SB (Org 104) after his return from ARI, but left to follow his personal dream of a farm and school for orphans. He carries out this dream with his wife, who is also an ARI graduate. Neighbors come to learn and copy their use of zai⁴⁰ pits on their farm. Home accommodations for the students, orphaned and underprivileged children, provide them with a more normal family life experience and better opportunity to adjust to living in wider society on graduation than would occur in an institutional living experience (Hartman, 2014). One of the few who spoke of farming being more profitable than salaried work, in his case hotel employment, also desired to have a wider impact by entering politics. He was unsuccessful in this context where candidates may solicit votes from other areas of the country. His wife, also an ARI graduate (Interviewee 1216), not only supports the work in the school on eight acres, managed by a board and with 162 children;

⁴⁰ Zai is a farming technique to dig pits 20-30cm long and deep and 90 cm apart in the soil during the pre-season to catch water and collect compost.

but also is revitalizing the community women's group farm she has been part of since 2003 and which stopped its activities while she was away at ARI.

Others working independently include those who left their SBs when external funding ended and/or had a need to support their families. One (Interviewee 1008) is farming, teaching savings and loans practices to forty-two people in two groups, and raising chickens with another family member. One (Interviewee 724) lost her employment shortly after the researchers' visit; that work had been in school administration with responsibilities for an agricultural club. Another (Interviewee 919) established his own organic product business and provides consultation to government employees and others wanting to learn more about the use of beneficial microbes for health and agriculture.

Five graduates are doing their own personal farming activities in addition to their formal or volunteer work. One graduate (Interviewee 1152) has struggled with implementing the agricultural components of his ARI experience, but has been very successful in using skills learned in a reflexology⁴¹ class to bring healing to an average of thirty people per day. He has also trained thirty people in the same skill.

One graduate is currently managing a hostel (Interviewee 607), another did so in the past (Interviewee 664). One (Interviewee 1217) is struggling to find a niche in a community that had unrealistic expectations that skills learned at ARI would include coffee production; however, she is applying agricultural and livestock skills on family land.

7.1.4.5 *Other*

One (Interviewee 893), after several years of work with an international non-government organization⁴² (INGO), works for a microfinance organization founded by a politician's wife.



Figure 27. East Africa roadside scene. Photo courtesy of Steven Cutting.

⁴¹ Reflexology is a system of massage used to relieve tension and treat illness, based on the theory that there are reflex points on the feet, hands, and head linked to every part of the body.

⁴² An international nongovernment organization (INGO) is an organization that has the same mission as a nongovernmental organization (NGO), but is international in scope and has outposts around the world to deal with specific issues in many countries.

7.2 Indonesia

7.2.1 Context

The Republic of Indonesia, formerly known as the Dutch East Indies, is an archipelago comprised of more than 18,000 islands, of which about 6000 are inhabited (Worldmark, 2007). Graduates on three of those, Java, Sumatra and Nias were visited as a part of this study.

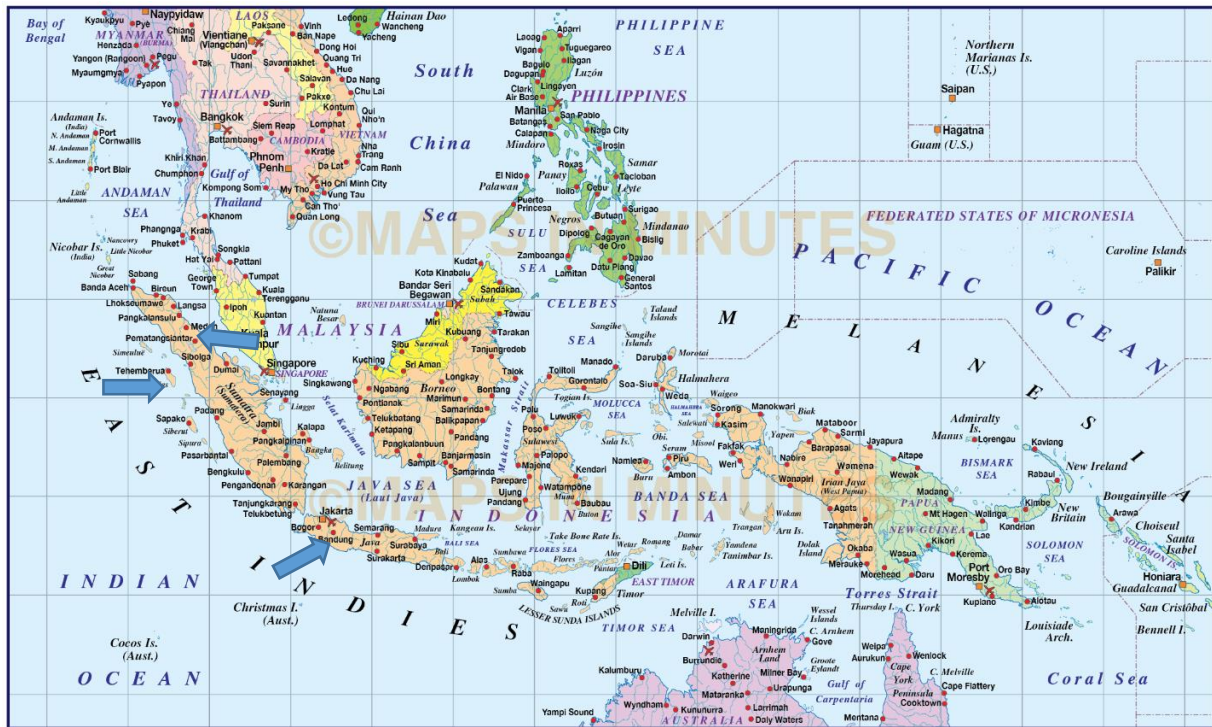


Figure 28. Map of Indonesia. Copied from www.atlasdigitalmaps.com

Hundreds of distinct ethnicities and language groups comprise the population of nearly 250 million (Bread for the World 2015 Hunger Report), divided almost equally between densely populated urban areas and sparsely populated rural areas. With only 1% of the earth's land area, Indonesia contains the world's third largest area of rain forest with 10% of known plants, many existing nowhere else on earth. It is also home to 12% of known animals and 17% of all known bird species with some still to be discovered (Indonesia's Rainforests, 2016). Samosir, a volcanic island in Lake Toba, is the largest island within an island in the world. With the majority of islands mostly composed of forested volcanic mountains, the country experiences almost daily seismic activity; a volcano erupted and dusted one city with ash during the researchers' visit.

Nias Island, with less than two thousand square miles, is the main island of an archipelago with the same name. It was largely isolated until a major earthquake and tsunami in 2004. Since then, with foreign assistance, infrastructure has developed in the capital. Increasing tourism is attracted by perfect waters for skiing and Bawomataluo, a traditional Batak tribal village and site of stone jumping rituals, the rite of passage for boys (Atlas Obscura, 2016).

Japanese occupation of the country during the Second World War ended Dutch rule; however, an estimated four million people died in Indonesia during that occupation (Chen, 2016). Following independence in 1949, the country has had various eras of unrest and coups. In 2014 Joko Widodo became the seventh president of the country. Several graduates expressed optimism, in the words of one (Interviewee 1258) “*Everyone here feels he is a good model of a servant leader*”. They have hopes for positive change in this country where external companies and government collaborate for business interests and forests are fast being depleted to make way for palm oil production (Oakford, 2014).

Japanese government relationships with one graduate (Interviewee 250) promote Japanese interest in opportunities to introduce sorghum for animal feed and elderly Japanese to teach the use of bamboo pumps for water. Another graduate (Interviewee 1097) questioned this practice because the inferior Indonesian bamboo is less appropriate for this purpose than Japanese bamboo. Another graduate (Interviewee 708) relationship with a Japanese diplomat and international company resulted in 5000 coffee and 30,000 rubber seedlings being distributed to farmers; no rubber sales have yet been made pending ability to grow a quality product.

Graduates spoke of the differences between Indonesia and Japan. The most productive land in Indonesia is owned by companies and forests buried by volcanic ash produce peat that stains the water and makes fires hard to stop. In addition, the government does not support individual agriculture with the same level of capital and tools available to Japanese farmers. Corruption occurs at all levels of business and government, and a group of graduates are now being asked by local government how to effectively mobilize local communities to respond to political issues.

In an effort to ease overcrowding in Jakarta, “*transmigration*” was introduced in 1987 to move people from Java’s “*core*” area to less populated areas known as the “*periphery*” (Jackson, n.d.). Graduates, one (Interviewee 629) whose family was impacted, report people being given two hectares of land, a house and government support for five years, after which they were expected to be independent. Some of these people succeeded and others ended up becoming laborers for others. Some farmers were moved to the edge of forests where they are able to collect the more profitable Kopi luwak⁴³ coffee being promoted by a graduate (Interviewee 1097) in this, one of the largest coffee producing countries of the world (Indonesia Investments, 2015). Graduates say that coffee and tobacco are generally grown as cash crops by small scale farmers who dry it in their homes, a practice that contributes significantly to respiratory illnesses.

One graduate (Interviewee 614) shared that the Green Revolution⁴⁴, combined with the Klompencapir Act⁴⁵, Suharto’s method of speaking directly to farmers, resulted in a change from natural farming to chemical mono-cropping. Several graduates identified this practice as

⁴³ Kopi luwak is the world's most expensive coffee, produced from coffee beans which have been digested by a civet cat in Indonesia.

⁴⁴ The Green Revolution was a large increase in crop production in developing countries achieved by the use of fertilizers, pesticides, and high-yield crop varieties beginning in the 1960s.

⁴⁵ The Klompencapir Act was Suharto’s plan for rural development by touching the lives of villagers and broadcasting with media coverage of those visits (Detik News, 2008).

deeply entrenched and hard to change because of people's need for immediate cash. Government subsidies for inputs are now decreasing and middlemen control prices because of the country's transportation and communication challenges. Transportation of goods is a significant challenge as road construction has not kept up with the heavy demand of transport vehicles. Driving in the congested traffic is further challenged by needy people begging or aimlessly roaming the streets because of unmet mental health needs. With few traffic signals, young men support their livelihoods by directing traffic across lanes where drivers happily tip for the service.

Graduates shared that, with no knowledge on how to harness nearby rivers for irrigation and the drought cycles of climate change and deforestation, farmers are challenged in being able to support their families. They have little access to capital with no collateral for bank loans, so those who overcome their fear of being unable to repay, borrow from money lenders with interest rates around 30%. Many have become laborers as family plots now average about half a hectare each because of generational subdividing. Production is also impacted by planting too densely and lack of regulations on animal roaming. One graduate (Interviewee 1174) volunteers with an organization that helps small farmers participate in the redistribution of land when land grants expire; individual land grants are for forty years and company grants for seventy years. Many sell their land because of the perception of farming as a "*last resort*" for low status individuals; others simply leave in search of a better life.

The economic crisis of the late 1990s further exacerbated this migration with families encouraging their youth to take government jobs; work on plantations (rubber and oil palm) or factories; or migrate to other countries. One graduate (Interviewee 1184) spoke of the unrest of this time and fleeing while fellow university students were killed; another (Interviewee 651) shared how the impact of missionaries on values of health, education and the Bible contribute to people leaving to further their education.

Indonesia is the world's largest Muslim country with 86% of the population professing Islam; 2% are Hindu and 3% Buddhist or animist as the result of being impacted by traders in the country's long history as a trading hub. Christians, including the majority of ARI graduates in the country, make up almost 9% of the population with the Portuguese having introduced Catholicism and the Dutch Protestantism (Szczepanski, 2014).

Graduates work in a rich tribal context where most names and greetings carry great cultural significance: some have lengthy names while others have no surnames. The Batak subtribes maintain unique welcome customs of providing guests with ceremonial presentations of goldfish, pork (in its entirety) or chicken. All pride themselves on their love of spicy hot food which is often served in restaurants where multiple dishes are set out and charges made only on what is eaten. Intestinal health issues, especially to visitors, result from the food being repeatedly served until it is gone, and practices such as that in one graduate (Interviewee 1257) home of washing dishes on the raised toilet squatting platform. Graduates shared that nutritional needs often go unmet when vegetables are sold for cash; then families often survive on fish, rice and salt.

7.2.2 Findings

There are more extensive relationships among graduates here than in any other region visited with one SB (Org 98) having sent twelve participants to ARI over the years (nine were interviewed as part of this study). Several other SBs having sent more than two participants. There are also two second generation family members (Interviewees 720 & 1164) who have attended ARI and one group of graduates is organizing independently of any church-based structure. Other graduates are joining forces around coffee marketing.

Half of those interviewed spoke of efforts in integrating chemical and organic agriculture in ways appropriate to their particular situations. Some who have tried organic production include a graduate (Interviewee 614) who has a complex integrated agricultural system and training center integrating fish, chickens, cattle and crops on a sizeable piece of inherited property. Another (Interviewee 911) runs a training center and works with local government to encourage organic production. The latter has been successful to the extent that people now sell, rather than freely give, their manure and even Muslims use the valued pig manure for soil fertility.

Yet another (Interviewee 649) asserts that “*the bull is the organic factory*” and promotes group farming in a Japanese/Indonesian government project providing infrastructure and some cattle. One graduate (Interviewee 629), with more international experience than most, asserted that manure is fine for home gardens but not plantations and paddies. While monkeys are harder to control, tiger manure spread around field perimeters helps keep out wild boars (Interviewees 651 & 1174).

Some organizational situations include more than one graduate and in some areas local government, NGOs, churches and schools work together with common goals. Three graduates, upon being asked, said that any follow-up to their teaching was only random and not their responsibility; three others by contrast saw follow-up as an important part of their roles.

7.2.2.1 Faith-based organizations

Christian denominations developed in the colonial era along cultural lines and have established urban and rural churches, often served by a “*resort pastor*”⁴⁶. One graduate (Interviewee 1114) reports being responsible for twelve churches and another (Interviewee 708) is superintendent of eleven parishes, fifteen pastors and fifty-nine churches. One graduate (Interviewee 935) spoke of people now being more charismatic but returning to their traditions in times of weddings or loss. Methodist church representatives spoke of having involved more women in leadership, being more open to multiple tribes and working together with those of other faiths more than do other denominations. One graduate (Interviewee 629), who heads a seminary and has served on international discipline committees, attributes this denominational openness to the fact that the first Methodist missionary to the country was a woman.

⁴⁶ A resort pastor is a pastor serving a cluster of churches, most often rural.

Twenty graduates are employed in church-based organizations: nineteen have some aspect of agriculture or community development in their role and thirteen serve as pastors in rural and/or urban contexts.

Seven graduates identified credit unions as the most useful aspect of ARI learning. Some say that church credit unions are more effective than those of government because they are more honest. One graduate (Interviewee 1258) spoke of how credit unions are the platform for building values of honesty and respect that are even more valuable than the money. Success in gaining rights and growing spiritually happened for ninety-two women in six credit groups that are successful now with internal funds. In another, 6000 members learn the importance of eating, not just selling produce. Older people in communities are able to do critical thinking and are more independent of sponsoring organizations' credit unions. Success is also identified as people providing church leaders with gifts of organic products or "*people happily engaged in church and trying to improve their financial status*". Success in promoting credit unions has been easier in some cases because of respect granted to pastors. Church-based credit unions are also a tool for entry into communities for learning on holistic aspects including health and education. Eight hundred (800) farmers in twenty-one farmers' groups benefit from higher prices when their products are sold to urban congregations of twenty-seven pastors.

Organic practices have taken hold in rural places: among 100 people trained, five are producing biogas and others mix charcoal with manure for fertilizer. Members of a village of 300 people are learning together how to make compost, as well as how to raise pigs, flowers, and vegetables. Eighty of 100 women in one community have kitchen gardens: some have also engaged in a "*pass on the gift*" pig project. Farmers use mixtures of chemical and organic fertilizers, paying back organic material kilo for kilo. In remote locations, community members express success in rice processing, ginger growing with slash and burn⁴⁷ methodologies and use of Korean natural flooring⁴⁸ for chickens. Several say organic fertilizer has been effective on kitchen gardens but not on larger plots. A visit to one of 100 families receiving monitoring included a family enthusiastically explaining the progress on their integrated farm; they attributed their success to the regular encouragement and technical support they received from graduates (Interviewees 255 & 1164).

Other church led activities include a graduate (Interviewee 1051) leading work with ninety-one disabled people: they have meaningful work on a five hectare farm caring for vegetables and animals. Both the food support and psychological benefits of having work are said to have contributed to fewer hospitalizations. Fourteen new churches have been formed (Interviewee 651), a church sponsors twenty-one orphans (Interviewees 1077 and 1149) and children in another location are hosted and sponsored for school attendance (Interviewee 708).

Generally good relationships exist in two communities between Christians and Muslims; in one case workers from both faiths are paid equally in a Christian led project (Interviewee 708). One

⁴⁷ Slash and burn agriculture (also known as jhum or shifting agriculture) is an agricultural technique that involves the cutting and burning of plants in forests or woodlands to create fields. It is subsistence agriculture that typically uses little technology.

⁴⁸ Korean natural farming (KNF) is a methodology that takes advantage of indigenous microorganisms (IMO) to produce fertile soils that yield high output without the use of herbicides or pesticides. It also enables odor-free hog and poultry without the need to dispose of effluent (wastes).

organization (Org 188) received an award from the government for fifteen turbines for electricity developed by two graduates (Interviewee 255 and another); the latter was killed in a work site accident shortly before the researchers' visit. Another (Org 194) with the leadership of a graduate (Interviewee 1089) organized 200 people and successfully lobbied another organization (Org 98) to remove a plaque. The demonstration had expressed justice concerns because the plaque recognized financial contributions from a pulp and paper mill that had disrupted the lives of many farmers.

Urban-focused efforts of one graduate (Interviewee 1077) have resulted in prostitutes being able to choose more dignified lives with income sources such as bread making, and street children being able to support family incomes with pig raising. The graduate is studying law in order to be able to intensify lobbying efforts for these groups. Another urban graduate (Interviewee 833) is a dorm parent in a school.

7.2.2.2 *Secular development organizations*

Four graduates work in secular development organizations: all have community building and/or agriculture components in their work. One (Interviewee 1174) combines his half time work with an organization working for land rights in government redistribution schemes with an integrated community farm of livestock, chickens, spices and vegetables for market. Hosting WWOOFers⁴⁹ in an attempt to expose remote people to a wider world has proved to work best with domestic groups. Domestic groups are larger, stay for a shorter period of time, are more cost effective and relate better culturally than do international volunteers.

A coffee marketing plan, with international connections in anticipation of better markets, has been approved through 2019. It is linked with other graduates by one (Interviewee 720) who left a SB, created an independent NGO (Org 147) and then handed over responsibility for that to another graduate (Interviewee 1258). Another graduate in another part of the country (Interviewee 1097) works with a forty member cooperative (half of the members young) processes coffee, including some valuable Kopi luwak coffee, adding 80 to 150% value for limited international markets.

Integrated farming methodologies include group compost making with the support of animals provided by an organization (Org 39) that supplies fertilizer for tree seedlings and a place to "*share, forget and solve problems*" (Interviewee 649). In addition, fifteen youth are learning values and farming in a three year program that ended because of lack of funding; ten of those still continue in farming (Interviewee 1258).

7.2.2.3 *Government employees*

An organization (Org 39) was founded by a graduate (Interviewee 250), who now is a politician in partnership with a Japanese consulate and bank for a plan for a farm training center. The infrastructure has been completed but the bank and NGO plans for funding cattle and a revolving fund still need to be developed. In another area, farmers partially adopt organic practices and money management taught by district government in cooperation with churches.

⁴⁹ World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF) is an exchange whereby, in return for volunteer help, WWOOF hosts offer food, accommodation and opportunities to learn about organic lifestyles.

7.2.2.4 Independent graduate activities

Six graduates work independently, one (Interviewee 1089) did extensive agricultural training and developed a model farm in a SB before leaving because profit making and organic agriculture were not able to be combined successfully. Two (Interviewees 720 & 1097) work with coffee cooperatives and one (Interviewee 911) established a training center.

One graduate (Interviewee 1183), on return from ARI, was not allowed to be a pastor in the same organization (Org 98) as her husband. She collects biodegradable waste from home market vegetable stands to support her organic home agriculture, including the introduction of sweet potatoes. The family has also raised a flock of chickens to supply her restaurant famous for its noodles, authentic cultural chicken takeout, and hygiene skills learned at ARI. Organic agriculture is carried out on family farms and in groups in two other communities: families save money and produce healthier food. Another four villages have become self-sufficient in farming a 125 hectare plot (Interviewee 1174).

Four people have employment on a prosperous family farm sustained with fish, chickens and vegetables. The one hectare farm is also a model with an associated training center for transformational leadership (Interviewee 614). Another integrated farm serves as a model that supports widespread consulting opportunities made possible through the internet (Interviewee 651).

Another graduate (Interviewee 1097) has helped more than 1000 people in three years to improve their Japanese skills to make them eligible for employment in Japan.

Three graduates are retired. Two (Interviewees 234 and 255) continue to consult with organizations headed by younger family members. One of these previously ran an orphanage with 100 children as well as worked in a cucumber and tomato business with four Japanese businessmen prior to his retirement.



Figure 29. Graduate models. Photo courtesy of Steven Cutting.

7.3 Northeast India

7.3.1 *Context*

This study included visits to Manipur and Nagaland, two of the contiguous Seven Sister States that make up Northeast India. They have been located at the crossroads of Asian economic and cultural exchange for more than 2500 years. Manipur, the “*land of gems*” is comprised of the Manipur River valley surrounded by mountains with an economy that focuses on agriculture and forestry (bamboo and teak). It has abundant rainfall and climate that is temperate in the valley and cold in the mountains. Nagaland is mostly mountainous with a monsoonal (wet-dry) climate. Areas of valuable forests cleared for jhum⁵⁰ (shifting cultivation) now have secondary growth of grass, reeds, and secondary jungle (Britannica 2016). Both areas came under British rule in the eighteenth century.



Figure 30. Map of Northeast India. Copied from www.wikipedia.org

Graduates took researchers to visit WW II memorials in Kohima, the capital of Nagaland, and the scene of many fierce battles between the Japanese and the British. ARI graduates have been involved in sharing with Japanese veterans while at ARI and hosting Japanese WWII veterans and families of the Japanese fallen who come to claim remains in India.

Following disputes, the Treaty of Accession placed Manipur into India without its consensus after World War II. Although Nagaland was not brought into India as the 16th state until 1963 (UCA 2016), both states have been embroiled in a fifty year insurgency for independence. This has been accompanied by violence between ethnic groups. Some of the worst conflict, generally between Naga and Kuki groups, has been decreasing in intensity in recent years resulting in the area being opened to some extent to foreigners (Times, 2011). Graduates were very vigilant about travel arrangements and often appeared uneasy as researchers passed the many checkpoints on trips to rural communities. They shared that nearly every community has its own underground armed group, often supported by a government official it is aligned with who supplies guns. Several spoke of the personal impact of this on their lives with many having had to flee and several having had their homes burned, some on several occasions.

⁵⁰ Jhum or “*shifting agriculture*” is the word used in the hilly areas of Southeast Asia for the process of growing crops by first clearing the land of trees and vegetation and then burning them. The land is cultivated for several years and then abandoned in favor of another site as the soil productivity declines. Practiced by between 200 million and 500 million people worldwide, it is not sustainable in large populations because the soil becomes too poor to support crops without the trees.

A number of graduates spoke of there not being schools in their communities when they were children and that it was Christianity that brought a marked change to the hill people with establishment of schools and western style education. Hattaway also describes this transition in his book “*From Head Hunters to Church Planters*”; the book was a gift to researchers from the graduate (Interviewee 491) who wrote the forward for the book. Head hunting was not simply about waging war but a belief that human skulls possessed a life force that could ensure prosperity of crops, animals and tribal clans (Larner, 2015). The practice still possibly exists in remote jungle villages (Vallangi, 2014). Festivals, however, do continue to be an important part of societal life in the tribes and are celebrated on the basis of the lunar calendar and agricultural cycles (Maps of India, 2013). In some groups, such as the Kuki, there are no customary laws to deal with social problems and culture dictates that women cannot own land although there is no written law to that effect (Interviewee 1135).

Education has resulted in many educated unemployed and it seemed a different migration pattern was present here as compared to other countries visited, as more people spoke of the educated leaving for better opportunities. Meanwhile “*westernization*” has brought with it the desire for luxuries such as mobile phones, clothes, televisions, as well as junk or packaged food. While Christians may continue to be involved in clan and subtribe clashes for leadership, there are less divorce and homosexuality than in western cultures (Interviewee 491).

The Meitei ethnic group in the valley area of Manipur represents the majority there and is largely Hindu (Britannica, 2016). Graduates share that while the majority in hill districts in both states are Christian, all religions continue to be marked by traditional practices such as dowry, baby blessing and death rituals. Nagaland is the only predominantly Baptist state in the world although these have divided into many splinter groups along ethnic lines. Graduates spoke of the individualistic nature of the culture and fewer numbers of “*real Christians*” as contributing to the failure of businesses such as a shiitake mushroom project (Org 103).

Development projects often exist only on road signs and benefits are often diverted away from communities with corruption at local levels a major issue and bureaucrats often supporting illicit trafficking (Interviewee 1135). The Golden Triangle⁵¹ is expanding to the “*Golden Square*” (Interviewee 558) with the cheap price of cocaine and heroin in the area. The Assam border is a gateway for trafficking drugs, arms, liquor (Sinha, 2014) and more recently women and children (Santoshini, 2015). However, with Nagaland having been open to foreigners for the last three to four years, one graduate (Interviewee 739) as Department Director of Tourism promotes eco-tourism⁵² with benefits to “*green villages*”⁵³ (Borah, 2014) who host guests in the dearth of tourist accommodations.

⁵¹ The Golden Triangle is one of Asia’s two main opium-producing areas, an area of around 950,000 sq. km. (367,000 sq. mi) that overlaps the mountains of Laos, Myanmar and Thailand. The other is the Golden Crescent encompassing Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan.

⁵² Eco-tourism is tourism that is directed toward exotic, often threatened, natural environments, especially to support conservation efforts and observe wildlife.

⁵³ Green village is a designation given by the Indian government to a community that preserves its ecosystem while sharing it with tourists.

Policies of the Indira Gandhi era focused on feeding the masses with crop production that required high yielding seeds and the chemical inputs to support them. This has resulted in extensive soil destruction in the country such that current government perspectives are more open to organic methodologies better suited to the steep mountainous slopes. In these locations, where mechanization is inaccessible and most often inappropriate on the plots of less than two hectares, the majority of the population makes its living with jhum cultivation. Several graduates identified recent central government programs as being more supportive of organic agriculture: programs such as the 1997 Public Distribution System (Balani, 2013) and 2013 Right to Food Act (Kishore, 2014). The Phek district received affirmation from graduates for its positive stance for its citizens by banning pork imports into this pork loving culture; the increase in the local market has resulted in improved family incomes and children's education.

These mountains are home to rich flora and fauna: a feature bringing striking beauty but challenges to infrastructure. One graduate (Interviewee 488) spoke of one time walking seventy kilometers with his luggage to serve his mission communities. The more remote and mountainous the area, the less the infrastructure although even cities experience regular electrical load shedding⁵⁴. These poor systems of communication and roads challenge marketing but mean that chemical agricultural inputs in some remote areas have not been used long enough to cause significant environmental damage (Interviewee 1191).

7.3.2 Findings

Some organizations include more than one graduate, and a number of graduates are employed in more than one institution. Examples include graduates with financial and administrative responsibilities in both government and church-based organizations. Four graduates were part of operations that are now defunct: church farms, a mushroom project and canning operation. One (Interviewee 1109) is active in church leadership, pig and chicken raising, and waste management in a home community in addition to being a training consultant to local government. Another (Interviewee 491) is the country representative for an international organization that has three plots of land including one with a school under construction and another five acre plot of mostly paddy land. One graduate (Interviewee 790) has retired from formal church responsibilities but continues as an elder in addition to supporting local organizations and a school run by his daughter.

7.3.2.1 *Faith-based organizations*

Twelve graduates work in church-based organizations; an additional five have both church and government responsibilities. All have/had some sort of educational role in their communities.

Exposure to the outside world through graduates has resulted in communities being less fearful of external cultures and practices. This has resulted in increased crop yields where SALT⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Load shedding is the deliberate shutdown of electric power in one or more parts of a power-distribution system, generally to prevent failure of the entire system when demand exceeds its capacity.

⁵⁵ Sloping Agricultural Land Technology (SALT) is a strategy of using tree legumes to improve the fertility and stability of agricultural soils by forming alleys in which field and perennial crops are grown in bands 4-5 meters wide between contoured rows of leguminous trees and shrubs. The latter are thickly planted in double rows to form hedgerows.

technologies have been adopted (Interviewee 488). Fermented (Korean) flooring, adapted to local conditions, is practiced in several locations as much as fifteen years after being introduced (Interviewee 490). Another community has installed trash cans and youth clear playing fields before sports events (Interviewee 1109).

Hundreds of self-help groups, with national government support, have been trained in compost making, recycling and herbal medicine over a period of more than twenty years (Interviewee 165). In other areas, thirteen churches were organized to do diversified garden cropping for home consumption and sales (Interviewee 1156). One hospital has fishery, poultry and composting activities (Interviewee 830). In another area, roadside sales of papaya, guava and banana provided community income during a graduate's presence (Interviewee 200); it is uncertain whether or not this continued after the graduate left.

Improved livelihoods have resulted in areas such as one where hybrid pigs are accessed through middleman services provided by a graduate's organization (Interviewee 488), or another where twenty women are successfully rearing pigs (one woman with more than fifty) and are able to repay loans or incur less debt (Interviewee 1109). In that same community one or two youth have adopted pig raising to be independent of their parents (Interviewee 1228). Those with gardens who are unable to afford pesticide make charcoal from bamboo rather than using valuable timber (Interviewee 904). Many families have pigs, chickens and gardens but often keep them in poor environments (Interviewee 830).

Under the direction of a graduate in the only known school in the area to have a kitchen garden, two meals per day are supplied to boarding students. Twenty to thirty students have graduated and gone on to further study in the past seventeen years (Interviewee 486). In other areas, graduates have been part of schools with all levels and size, ranging in size up to 1400 students. One with 209 students distributes piglets to teach students pig raising and help families pay school fees (Interviewee 731). Sunday school teachers taught by ARI graduates in other places are now raising two to three pigs on kitchen scraps (Interviewee 904).

External funding has made a number of initiatives possible. A three year research farm project focused on organic production, animals, and fruits. People were paid wages and taught selection of the best products. The area has become an environmental forest after the project ended (Interviewee 897). The adjoining village shows signs of increased affluence with improved infrastructure and vehicles, as well as housing improvements made with the sale of fruits. In another area, timber trees planted in 1994 with Canadian government support are ready for harvest (Interviewee 830). With external support of an INGO, other communities receive food supplements, medications, checkups, and clothes; local councils are assisted with recommendations for teachers willing to serve in remote areas (Interviewee 488).

7.3.2.2 *Secular development organizations*

Ten graduates work for secular organizations, all with some aspect of community empowerment as a part of their responsibilities. Several women are human rights activists in this complex caste-class-gender nexus where women hold only 11% of representation in parliament. This is in spite of various government assertions over the years that one third of seats at all three levels of government are reserved for women and other marginalized sectors of society (Kably, 2016). These women's efforts focus on the psychological trauma to the huge numbers of widows

resulting from the armed conflict in Manipur (Morung, 2011). Known as “*gun widows*”⁵⁶, they are caught “*between two big stones and you don’t have nothing – both of them have guns.*” Two female graduates work in one organization (Org 187), one involved in educational services for underprivileged children and the other as the financial officer for the organization (Interviewees 682 & 1136).

Mary Anderson’s “*Do No Harm*” principles⁵⁷ (Wallace, 2015) are used, not only in relief and development, but also in peace and reconciliation efforts in seven districts (Interviewee 682). Radio messages include aspects of human rights, safe food handling and preservation of local culture. A defunct training center is being reconstructed in traditional style to concretize the message of valuing tradition. In another area, thirteen HIV-affected women have the dignity of making baskets as part of an approach to “*provide mass product rather than product by the masses.*” An additional five groups (70 of 120 women in a development program) receive psychosocial support in the absence of psychiatric services in the country (Interviewee 1135). Another graduate (Interviewee 1074) established a used clothes depot that serves people across ethnic lines. She also lobbied successfully for thirteen chiefs to help re-settlers with rice paddy farming and provide free and compulsory education for children. She has also received a Progressive Farmer Award for work with four Farmer Field Schools⁵⁸ (FFSs) whose practices changed from chemical to organic in the past seven years. In addition, her water dowsing⁵⁹ skills have made water sources available to seventy-five households in thirteen communities.

Twelve farmers’ clubs, a village food bank and an indigenous seed bank have been established with a number of participant farmers receiving awards (Interviewee 682); self-help groups in eleven villages have some success with pigs, dried fish and crops (Interviewee 1191). One training center in a remote area is partially developed and two in other areas are in the process of being rehabilitated. Farmers receive bokashi in exchange for dung in another effort to promote organic production (Interviewee 1060).

One graduate (Interviewee 735) had been sent to ARI from a food canning organization but shortly after return, left that to provide volunteer services and grounds management in a school where his children’s education is subsidized. He initiated a coffee shop, photo kiosk and public call office that provide services to the more than 1000 students living on campus. He was also one of a thirteen member mediation team that led successful demonstrations for tribal peace in the area.

⁵⁶ A gun widow is a woman widowed because of the armed conflict in Manipur, Northeast India.

⁵⁷ The “Do No Harm” principle is combined with values of humanitarian imperative, neutrality and impartiality to guide the Sphere Project code of conduct adopted by UNICEF and international NGOs for their humanitarian work.

⁵⁸ A Farmer Field School (FFS) is a group-based learning process that has been used by a number of governments, NGOs and international agencies. A “*school without walls*”, it was originally developed to promote IPM but is now used to aid in solving a variety of agricultural problems.

⁵⁹ Water dowsing is the practice of using a forked stick, rod, pendulum, or similar device to locate underground water, minerals, or other hidden or lost substances: it has been a subject of discussion and controversy for hundreds, if not thousands, of years.

7.3.2.3 *Government employees*

Nine graduates have roles with government, six of those in positions as auditors or election officers in addition to roles in churches or organizations. One (Interviewee 510), nearing retirement, helped form more than 2000 self-help groups to integrate into larger development processes until funding was withdrawn. Graduates affirmed another, who researchers did not meet, for his part in the Phek district ban on pork mentioned in section 7.3.1.

Although not formally government employees, some have found government connections helpful. Multiple graduates have appreciated the kindness shown them by a graduate (Interviewee 821) and her politician husband. One graduate (Interviewee 1060) is sought out for advice and as a speaker on human rights issues, including on television. One trained twelve facilitators of a ToT women empowerment program (Interviewee 1109). Another provides training as part of a network of twenty-four NGOs advocating a state food security policy and subsidies for people below the poverty line. In addition, she serves on a government steering committee to provide awareness of the impact of conflict on women (Interviewee 682).

In a remote mountain context, a graduate (Interviewee 889) inherited the role of traditional leader in his community that has had to flee in the face of tribal clashes and then return to rebuild on more than one occasion. Resettling since 2000, the community now has an access road and partially completed system of mini dams and irrigation canals as well as a tree plantation that will take ten to fifteen years to produce lumber. The community now has electricity, a school up to class five, and a church slowly being constructed with only local resources. Almost half of the community families rear cattle.

7.3.2.4 *Independent graduate activities*

Six graduates are engaged in independent activities. Five additional graduates have their own farms in addition to being employed: integrated farming, fruit trees and pig raising. At least two were assisted with funding from abroad: one of these (Interviewee 491) supplemented pig rearing with a three tier system of ginger, bananas, and betel nut but is changing to bamboo because it grows quickly, requires little maintenance and has good market value.

Researchers visited a large farm of another graduate in his absence. He employs nine permanent and four occasional workers; in addition, two eight month trainees are learning integrated approaches. Diversity of activities includes 300 Hampshire pigs being raised in Denmark style⁶⁰ (Estabrook, 2015) with their manure being used for fertilizer. The farm also has chickens for meat and eggs, greenhouses for vegetables and flowers, as well as crops such as sugar cane, peas, yams, berries, fiddleheads, and tree beans (Trip note February 12, 2015).

In a context that is already food secure, a group of ten women is registered as a savings and loan group. They sell 80% of their ginger production and process wild fruits and king chilis⁶¹ to increase revenue. This has enabled them to respond financially to domestic and international calamities including the Japan 2011 earthquake (Interviewee 510).

⁶⁰ Denmark style pig-raising is an intensive form of raising pigs where grower pigs are housed indoors in group housing and pregnant sows are housed in gestation pens and give birth in farrowing crates.

⁶¹ King chili (Bhut Jolokia) is often ranked the hottest chili in the world and a favorite of Naga tribes in Northeast India (Roach, 2013).

People benefit from acupuncture in one graduate's home (Interviewee 830) and the semi-medical practice of another (Interviewee 897) who incidentally holds four Ph. D. degrees and has aspirations for a role in politics. One (Interviewee 199) who ran a hostel is now in a family business to establish a monocrop market for ginger, one (Interviewee 1005) is trying to reestablish an NGO, and one (Interviewee 558) is working with multiple organizations as a freelance consultant for corporate social responsibility in addition to writing a book on marriage.



Figure 31. Urban scene in Northeast India. Photo courtesy of Steven Cutting.

7.4 Malaysia

7.4.1 Context

The Federation of Malaysia consists of two similarly sized regions, the long narrow Malay Peninsula and East Malaysia (Malaysian Borneo) on an island surrounded by Borneo.

With two thirds of the country originally covered in forest, flora and fauna are diverse with about 20% of the world's animal species present. Logging and agriculture have devastated forests with recent estimates predicting

Malaysian forests to be extinct by 2020 (Lim, 2008). Although Malaysians complain about the prevalent smoke from fires in Indonesia, several people cited Malaysian companies as part of the problem. The smoke is largely due to forests being burned in preparation for oil palm plantations (Oakford, 2014).

Malaysia has had one of the best economic records in Asia, with average growth in Gross Domestic Product⁶² (GDP) averaging more than 7% per year for twenty-five years or more (World Bank, 2015). However, future economics with falling world prices for rubber may be tenuous.

After researchers experienced multiple public transportation transfers, staff in one organization (potential SB) shared how the system works. A national car policy, conceived in the late 1970s to bring a higher level of industrialization to Malaysia (Rosli, 2006), combined with a recent acquisition of all airlines (Hamzah & Ngui, 2014), puts the government in charge of all transportation. As a result, fuel is subsidized and single apartments in high rises may have up to three stall garages. Staff of organizations that researchers visited share a general sense that only the poor utilize public transportation and railways are a challenge as they consist of multiple gauges with little connection between them. They also shared concern that budget hotels are cropping up on unclaimed land, increasing vagrancy and decreasing land values. This is compounded by urban infrastructure not keeping up with construction and resulting in flooding and spread of disease.

Malaysia's foreign policy, meanwhile, is officially based on the principle of neutrality and maintaining peaceful relationships with all countries, regardless of their political system, with a high priority on stability in the region (Lopez, 2009). The government spearheaded a more than twenty-five year old "*Malaysia My Second Home*" (MM2H) program that allows foreigners who



Figure 32. Map of Malaysia. Copied from www.geology.com

⁶² Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is one of the primary indicators used to gauge the health of a country's economy. It represents the total dollar value of all goods and services produced over a specific time period and can be thought of as the size of the economy.

fulfill certain criteria to stay in Malaysia on multiple entry social visit passes. Multiple websites promote this opportunity along with opportunities for migration beyond Malaysia to other countries. Recently Syrian refugees were granted special temporary residence passes and allowed to work. They join more than 158,000 refugees already there, mostly from Myanmar. The country makes no distinction between refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented workers so all are at risk of arrest as “*illegal immigrants*” (Mayberry, 2015). Several graduates from other countries have taken advantage (and risk) of joining the undocumented labor force and some have joined those able to relocate from Malaysia to other countries.

Bumiputera is a status generally applied to certain Malay indigenous peoples but authors disagree about whether or not the majority are Muslim and whether or not it is a political status. Most, however, agree that minorities of Chinese and Indian descent, with the Chinese historically dominant, have major roles business and commerce.

Although freedom of religion is a right granted in the constitution (Article 11), the Islamic majority is becoming increasingly conservative (Su-lyn, 2015 & Lim, 2016). Staff of one organization expressed concern regarding notice of a specific date targeted for “*Islamacizing Sarawak*”, something resisted for generations and being pushed by external Islamic entities. In this instance, researchers were told, a financial gift was being given to anyone converting to Islam on that day.

7.4.2 *Impact on graduates from other countries*

Researchers visited the only available graduate in the capital city of Kuala Lumpur; however, this visit was important in understanding a context where several graduates from ARI and/or their family members have gone in various capacities, three as pastors. One graduate (Interviewee 652) was sent by his church for three years to minister to refugees and illegal migrants. He felt he was unable to use his ARI skills there but did learn natural farming and has published materials on the topic for distribution back in his own country. He has one son still in Malaysia completing his education with hopes to work in the same school for a couple of years following.

One graduate (Interviewee 1014) spent three years as a community development worker with some frustration because of working with laborers rather than farmers; this was followed by two years of theological education in English.

Two graduates are/were working in Malaysia and four graduates visited for short periods. Graduates in Indonesia, Myanmar and Nepal spoke of large numbers of people in their contexts, including some in their own families, leaving for studies or work, either legally or illegally in plantations or factories. One organizational leader shared that “*Malaysia has continued to keep unions at bay; there is a minimum wage structure but, as it is not subscribed to by manufacturers for foreign labor, has become a new form of slavery*”. Anyone who complains can be sent back to their home country: women are especially vulnerable to being trafficked for sex.

There were some benefits reported by having spent time in Malaysia. Two graduates spoke of their organizations back home having receiving financial assistance for their ministries. A family member of one graduate returned after several years with knowledge to begin an

agarwood⁶³ plantation. Another spoke of nearly all of the students his organization supported returning and contributing to their communities. Others have family members presently working in Malaysia.

Meanwhile, the only ARI graduate (Interviewee 145) researchers were able to contact spoke of changing organizations on return from ARI because of changes in personnel and perspectives in the organization where she had served as a volunteer. With another organization, she ran a half acre demonstration farm for ten years. When it closed because of lack of external support, she focused on promoting urban gardening, compost waste production and non-energy forms of transportation by teaching groups and hosting displays at community fairs. Approaching retirement age presents a new challenge in finding someone with the same passion and commitment to carry on her work.



Figure 33. Organic and recycling shop. Photo courtesy of Steven Cutting.

⁶³ Agarwood is the soft dark resinous heartwood produced by various Southeast Asian evergreen trees when they become infected with a fungus or mold develops and bores in the tree. This fragrant resin is used to produce incense, perfumes and traditional medicines.

7.5 Myanmar

7.5.1 *Context*

Myanmar is the northernmost country of Southeast Asia, shaped like a kite with a long tail that runs south along the Malay Peninsula. It slopes from an altitude of 5881 meters in the north to sea level in river deltas (Britannica, 2016).

With a history of multiple kingdoms rising and falling, Burma became a British colony after three Anglo-Burmese wars and then an independent democratic nation in 1948. A military dictatorship took over in 1962 that ended in 2011, although after that most party leaders continued to be military officers (CFOB, n.d.). Htin Kyaw, who became president in 2016 is the first elected civilian to hold the office since 1962. He is part of the National League for Democracy (NLD) led by Aung San Suu Kyi who is constitutionally forbidden to serve because of being married to a foreigner and having children of foreign citizenship (BBC and Japan Times, 2016).

The name Myanmar, given by the military government in 1989, remains a contested issue as many do not recognize the legitimacy of this regime, generally agreed to be one of the most repressive and abusive in the world. Refugee camps in nearby Thailand, where there are an estimated 32,600 refugees (UNHCR 2015) and internally displaced people⁶⁴ (IDP) camps in Myanmar, continue to be safer options for many than trying to re-establish life in destroyed communities.

Only Buddhists, comprising at least 80% of the population, were allowed government and military posts under the military regime.



Figure 34. Map of Myanmar. Copied from [www. http://myanmarmap.facts.co](http://myanmarmap.facts.co)

⁶⁴ Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are people who have not crossed an international border to find sanctuary but have remained inside their home countries. Even if they have fled for similar reasons as refugees, they legally remain under the protection of their own government, even though that government might be the cause of their flight.

Recently publicized repression of Muslim Rohingyas⁶⁵ (Hamling, 2015), refused Burmese citizenship since 1982, has marred the peaceful image of Buddhism generally held by the rest of the world. In the predominantly Christian Chin state, Buddhists are now proselytizing, building schools and have replaced a prominent mountain Christian cross with a pagoda.

Civil wars have been part of the landscape since independence and are predominantly struggles for ethnic and sub-national autonomy by the many minority hill tribes. These tribes are comprised of many clans, dialects and generally have low levels of education. One graduate's hill tribe still has no written language (Interviewee 1130). Graduates shared that missionaries were key in providing written language and materials for others, provided the impetus for many to prefer English to Burmese. Although most hill tribes have converted to Christianity (initially mostly Baptist, but also Catholic and more recently Methodist), animism and traditional customs in marriages, dowry and burial rites continue. Most ARI graduates come from these groups and shared some of the unique characteristics of each. The Padaung brass coils on the necks of women (Mansfield, 2012), although becoming less common, are characteristic of the unique dress of that tribe. The Kay Htoe Boe of the Karenni (Yu, 2008) and Balloon Festival in Taunggyi (McDonald, 2013) are significant among the many seasonal festivals.

Tribal traditional livelihoods by hunting, gathering, slash and burn agriculture, supplemented by ruby mining and processing, have been threatened by conflict and government restrictions on mining. Ceasefire agreements in 2012 and 2015 brought calm to some areas but agreements are still outstanding with some of the most powerful rebel groups. (Wilson, 2015).

Graduate hosts had deep concern for researcher safety, sometimes changing an itinerary without notice and obviously anxious at the many checkpoints. Homestays are not allowed in the country and one SB staff warned "*You don't see them but they know about you. Nearly all taxi drivers are ex-soldiers*". Censorship was evident as one organization's website had been removed and researchers were given a cell phone to borrow as "*It is safer than having your own.*"

International relationships have thawed after reforms following the 2010 elections; however, just days after President Obama's visit in 2012 when he commended the country on its democratic progress, an army attack on an independence army training camp killed more than twenty trainees. Meanwhile, foreign NGOs are limited to working only with government, most often in policy coordination rather than direct assistance to communities. However, one isolated state now has increased communication with the outside world: one graduate (Interviewee 718) proudly explained that his cell phone, acquired six months earlier meant "*We're at the world level now.*"

As a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations⁶⁶ (ASEAN) since 1997, Myanmar is part of a free trade agreement taking effect in 2015. Graduates expressed concern about how

⁶⁵ The Rohingya are a Muslim minority population living mainly in the state of Rakhaing in Myanmar.

⁶⁶ The Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) is a political and economic organization of fifteen Southeast Asia countries with a goal of accelerating economic growth, social progress and sociocultural evolution among its members, alongside of protecting regional stability and opportunities for member countries to resolve differences peacefully.

this will impact subsistence farmers in a context already hampered by companies taking over confiscated land and government mining restrictions. Myanmar supplies 90% of the world's rubies and the restrictions limit individual ruby mining. As a result, many tribal people are becoming day laborers for companies or plantations. One graduate (Interviewee 358) also noted the expansion of rubber plantations with little concern for rubber prices as their owners' main purpose is money laundering of drug sale proceeds.

Part of the Golden Triangle, Myanmar is a distant second to Afghanistan as the second largest producer in the world of illicit opium. Growing has resurged since 2006 in the desperately poor areas of Shan State (Fuller, 2015). Raw materials are exported, mostly to China, and brokers bring back refined product and amphetamines. One graduate (Interviewee 1171) estimates that 80% of young men between eighteen and thirty-five years of age in his community are addicted to opium.

Trafficking extends beyond substances into humans, with Myanmar a source country for men, women and children trafficked for sexual and labor exploitation in other countries (Burma, n.d.). Many are driven by images of easier work than farming in the harsh mountainous environments of their homes; a very few leave for educational opportunities. Once out of their home areas, women and children are particularly vulnerable. This is especially true near borders with China where Chinese men desiring offspring, in the context of China's one child rule (McKenzie, 2015), traffic women for that purpose. The law was changed in 2015 to "*One couple, two children*" (Jlang, 2015) but it will take years for gender ratios to be impacted. One graduate (Interviewee 37) spoke of trafficking being so rampant that even church members are involved. Another (Interviewee 685) works in a remote northern area to help women return and establish lives of dignity in a context where people are reluctant to accept them back.

The impact of this policy is also felt as Chinese migrate to Myanmar in a fairly simple process. Birke (2010) speaks of most Chinese immigrants being business people who have little attachment to the country and keep their language and customs intact. One longtime resident claims it is those Chinese couples who want large families who come, having up to ten children and building compounds (Trip notes Nov. 29, 2014). Forest acreage and wildlife habitats have also decreased because of heavy logging; a ban on exports of raw lumber in 2014 are seen by some as coming too late (Erickson-Davis, 2014). One graduate (Interview 1046) shared that efforts to reforest with pine have generally failed because of the need for firewood.

Goods are primarily transported on rivers and Inle Lake, notable for its extensive floating tomato gardens (Misra, 2015). Water hyacinth has proliferated in the lake with the increasing use of chemical fertilizer to the extent of sometimes clogging transportation waterways. Shores of the lake are increasingly being developed as tourist areas, with government cronies⁶⁷ the major stakeholders, while subsistence farmers are displaced and in danger of imprisonment if they protest (Interviewee 1171).

The country lacks adequate infrastructure: many communities, especially in the mountains, have few or no health or education facilities beyond primary level. There is a shortage of teachers, intermittent or no electricity, and only a few paved roads that have appeared in recent

⁶⁷ Cronyism is the appointment of friends and associates to positions of authority, without proper regard to their qualifications.

times. Road construction in challenging mountain contexts is carried out with hand tools even for crushing the needed rock. The remoteness does, however, means air and water are cleaner because chemicals have not yet arrived.

7.5.2 Findings

Most graduates, 26 of the 37 interviewed, still work with their SBs, and most have relationships with other graduates.

7.5.2.1 *Faith-based organizations*

Twenty-six graduates are employees of faith-based organizations and combine roles as pastors with other leadership roles, one of them (Interviewee 587) being the first woman to be ordained in her denomination. In a remote community, both male and female pastors address HIV/AIDs issues (Interviewee 685). Eleven specifically work in aspects of development, capacity building, community-organizing, participative methodologies or organic agricultural practices. Several are advisors to graduates and organizations in other departments of the country.

Several have focused on needs for education. One orphanage was started with money collected while at ARI (Interviewee 1206) and another educational center with space for 100 hostel students provides space for those unable to afford formal education (Interviewee 1172). Another graduate hosts fifteen to twenty-five children attending public schools (Interviewee 705). Children graduating from seventy-nine kindergartens established with ToT methodologies are more advanced socially and educationally than their peers, with some later going on to university. Presence in other kindergartens frees up mothers to do kitchen gardens, pig raising and income generation projects that have resulted in improved housing, education and clothing for family members (Interviewees 587 & 1129). Waste water management and composting are modeled in an educational institution for 100 students from ten ethnic groups. Here organic shampoo is sold in recycled plastic containers, for one year vegetable seeds were sold, and pineapple production supports a portion of the institution's expenses (Interviewees 1023 & 1179).

Most activities have come in response to challenges specific to this context. As an example, in spite of being unable to find materials recommended by ARI locally, and a Japanese funded clinic closing as no Christian doctor was willing to serve, two graduates (Interviewee 588 and 969) were instrumental in constructing village wells. They worked with the government for an irrigation system, teak afforestation, and creating a closed system rice hulling mill that creates its own energy for operation. In retirement, one (Interviewee 969) enthusiastically serves a remote mountain community with God's word, reforestation with 1000 teak trees, and SALT, a skill learned in the Philippines. An invitation to dedicate churches in the US in late 2014 provided an opportunity to learn more about apple grafting there, a practice he would like to use to enhance production in the only apple growing area of the country. Retirement of this widely respected individual has also provided him the opportunity to spend more time in his own fifteen acre farm purchased when he sold a car which he had been helped to purchase by "ARI missionaries." His passion and ongoing work with communities has resulted in his turning down requests by ARI to return as a TA.

Efforts of one graduate (Interviewee 1017) with participative development methodologies over seventeen years with 2278 households in twenty-nine communities (nineteen Buddhist and ten Christian) have resulted in an eighteen member self-reliant rice bank, 127 people in four local

money banks, and small group funds being available for needs such as funerals. In addition, an electrical group successfully negotiated with the government for electricity to their village and the installation of 400 toilets improved community sanitation. Water tanks have been installed in at least two communities with the fee for water used for a monastery, community health and educational scholarships (Interviewee 1017).

A wide range of agricultural endeavors have been made. A church project development department provides people with new skills in livestock care and organic methods of animal feeding (Interviewee 1207). A local mission was formed and introduced contour planting of cedars, fish breeding, and corn for a good export market (Interviewee 288). Four of thirty church families in another parish have kitchen gardens (Interviewee 1083). Another graduate (Interviewee 706) works with thirty churches in five villages with livestock and income generation without chemical usage. In a remote village, two or three families are using organic methodologies and growing pepper or cardamom as longer term income sources and 120 families constructed a small hydro-electric dam providing an economical source of electricity (Interviewee 1111). Half of the tribal farmers in one group are decreasing chemical usage and effective committees are introducing income generation activities in contexts where people have no land (Interviewee 1023).

More formalized efforts include a variety of activities. A nine month FFS training center for 13,800 people provided skills that allowed participants a chance to study abroad and NGOs established by graduates (2) that resulted in greener mountainsides (Interviewee 1024). One graduate (Interviewee 1044) combines a slow transition from shifting to permanent organic farming combined with a revitalized credit system: the other (Interviewee 1130) brings together Community Supported Agriculture⁶⁸ (CSA), a mini market and library so that people are now growing their own vegetables for consumption in remote areas.

Innovation is shown as in the example of one graduate (Interviewee 1102) who works on a 1000 acre plantation for his church, having found that long-term plantations work only when linked with shorter term crops for income. He combines tea, pine, cardamom and jackal bean successfully, having substituted tea for oranges which were too easy to steal. Communities are also connected to external technical resources, market research and traditional resources such as mython⁶⁹ cattle in farmer-to-farmer models; they also are able to buy seedlings for new marketable crops and process crops for added value. Another graduate (Interviewee 588) was the creative inventor of a machine fueled by rice husks and used to hull rice or press sunflowers for community members: forty baskets of husks fuel the engine for four hours.

Communities are being connected to the wider world with road construction that will serve 25,000 people in fifty villages; it is led by a graduate (Interviewee 1046) and is recognized but not supported by the government. One graduate (Interviewee 509), in addition to organizing people in four communities for the past four years, manages a twenty-four acre church-owned organic farm and is involved in the country's peace and democracy process.

⁶⁸ Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a concept describing a community-based organization of producers and consumers. The consumers agree to provide direct, up-front support for local growers who will produce their food; growers in turn agree to do their best to provide a sufficient quantity and quality of food to meet the needs and expectations of the consumers.

⁶⁹ Mython is an animal distinctive in general hill regions of Myanmar and reported to be a cross between a *tsine* (wild cow) and Asiatic buffalo, a striking contrast to water buffalo. They will breed true and are a significant part of history in Chin State.

7.5.2.2 *Secular development organizations*

One graduate (Interviewee 1172) interviewed works for an indigenous organization (Org 112), promoting farming and vegetables with local products for sale in suffering communities caught in the brown zone⁷⁰ of the conflict between the government and insurgents. The organization also manages a hostel for fifty-eight children from rural areas and IDP camps and is able to process and sell some of its local production.

7.5.2.3 *Government relationship*

One long-term graduate (Interviewee 567) leads an international government project with seventy self-help groups. In one UNDP⁷¹ funded phase of three to four year programs, community self-help clusters of ten to twenty members save successfully with a common fund for loans: repayment is around 90%. Community members are copying in some areas, orphans are able to attend school, and women are given more leadership opportunities (Interviewee 568).

7.5.2.4 *Independent graduate activities*

In addition to activities in their faith-based institutions, graduates (6) spoke of additional agricultural projects on their own including cardamom (1), kitchen gardening (1), pig raising (1), chicken raising (4: one of whom uses ready-made concentrate because of lack of resources to produce feed), and developing a tree farm in year twenty of a thirty year lease.

Four (4) graduates engage in independent activities since leaving their SBs and four others are retired after long-term church leadership roles. One (Interview 1024) is a freelance consultant, including to his SB, and was instrumental in providing ten biosand⁷² filters to purify water in villages and is engaged with another interreligious endeavor on a monks' 1900 acres reforestation project (Interviewee 1024). One (Interviewee 1171), after working in a SB where he communicated in twelve languages in thirty-nine villages, leads a sixty member interreligious group for peace, harmony and nature as a volunteer.

Three retirees actively participate in church leadership as well as peace making and reconciliation with government at local and national levels. One (Interviewee 37) serves on multiple boards for disability concerns and interfaith contexts as well as with the Karen⁷³ in collaborating on peace and ceasefire efforts. Two also have their own farming activities and one (Interviewee 688) is ill after having served churches and establishing water projects in thirty-nine villages.

⁷⁰ The brown zone is one of three zones designated by the Burmese government: white are those areas under total government control, brown are contested areas, and black are areas over which the government has no control (Eubank, n.d.).

⁷¹ United Nations Development Programme.

⁷² The biosand filter (BSF) is a simple household water treatment device, which is an innovation of traditional slow sand filters specifically designed for intermittent use. A BSF consists of a concrete or plastic container filled with specially selected and prepared sand and gravel.

⁷³ The Karen people are an ethnic group living in Southeast Asia with their own distinct language and customs. They are one of the groups only recently signing a peace accord with the government.

One graduate (Interviewee 482), after returning from a TA experience, left his SB to develop his own diverse integrated farm and provide informal training for farmers who come to ask questions (He was unable to provide data on numbers). He spoke of a lack of affordable labor and the Korean method of pig rearing not having worked here because sawdust is not available and rice creating dust and skin disease. However, he has been successful with a cement biogas tank, built after ants ate through the plastic one from Japan. He has good income from fifteen acres of paddy rice alternating with other crops and selling fingerlings in addition to harvesting 3000 kg of fish annually. He has trained others about his vermiculture⁷⁴ tank but not used it himself yet. He anticipates providing more formal training once his education center, currently being constructed with foreign funds, is completed. He is one of eleven graduates interviewed in the country whose work is, or has been supported with external funding.



Figure 35. Roadside scene in Chin State, Myanmar. Photo courtesy of Steven Cutting.



Figure 36. Inle Lake, Myanmar. Photo courtesy of Steven Cutting.

⁷⁴Vermiculture is the practice of raising annelid worms such as earthworms and their by-products for use in composting or as bait for fishing.

7.6 Nepal



Figure 37. Map of Nepal. Copied from <http://www.ezilon.com/>

7.6.1 Context

Nepal is a landlocked country famous for having eight of the world's ten tallest mountains, including the highest point on earth on Mt. Everest; it is also ranked as one of the most risk prone countries in the world with frequent floods, earthquakes and landslides (Practical Action, n.d.). In addition to the mountains, it also includes a fertile humid plain in the south known as the Terai (also spelled Tarai) and one of the sites claiming to be Buddha's birthplace.

The Terai was long considered uninhabitable because of the prevalence of malaria and was the dwelling place of the Tharu who had an innate resistance to the disease (Terrenato, 1988). With successful control of the disease, others who previously only visited seasonally, settled permanently. The director of one organization (Org 35) explained that because of the higher caste of the newcomers, the illiteracy of the Tharu made them vulnerable to unscrupulous agreements; Brahmans became the land owners and the system of Kamaiya⁷⁵ became prevalent. It was legally abolished in 2002 when some people were given one third of a hectare to farm. This was an amount too small to survive on with paddy cultivation alternating with wheat and/or mustard. In addition, the land of those who could not afford the taxes was repossessed and children often became servants to pay off the debt.

⁷⁵ Kamaiya is a traditional system of bonded labor in southern Nepal in which a person pledges their labor or services as security for repayment of a debt of obligation, which may be undefined. The duration of the debt may also be undefined and the debt bondage passed from one generation to the next.

The Maoist movement from 1996 to 2006 (Sunam, 2013 & Military, 2016) began with the intention of redistributing assets of the wealthy to the poor. It was soon fraught with its own corruption with villagers and social organizations often caught between the movement and government. Following the conflict, the country was without a constitution until Sept. 2015 (Kumar, 2015), when a new constitution came into effect, the first written by a constituent assembly rather than a monarch. Graduates shared that the Tharu have little opportunity in government because of their low literacy.

Hinduism, historically linked to Buddhism, is practiced by about 81% of Nepalis (NHPC, 2011) so there are many temples and cremation sites around Kathmandu. The features of diverse, exotic cultures and spectacular landscape present potential for tourism. However growth is stifled by political instability and poor infrastructure. There is daily electrical load shedding, a single reliable road from India to the Kathmandu valley, and only one airport runway for international flights. Most recently the country was affected by severe earthquakes (BBC, 2015).

ARI graduates were safe in those quakes. However, the Magar village, visited during this study and one of the villages of origin of the Gurkhas⁷⁶, suffered significant damage. One graduate (Interviewee 1012) is responding to needs of those whose homes and livelihoods were damaged. Just a few years ago, a ten day walk was decreased to a half day vehicle trip with the advent of roads to villages in this mountainous area near the base of famous trekking trails. On the day of the researchers' visit, however, villagers transported an ill person in a tarp hammock slung from their shoulders to a hospital, as the ambulance was not able to pass on the treacherous wet road. The impact of the earthquake on that road is not known to the researchers.

7.6.2 Findings

Tharu cultural traditions particularly limited education for girls. Two graduates (Interviewees 533 & 595), who also participated as TAs at ARI, have powerful stories of defying their traditional tribal system by becoming educated. Both are strong advocates for education and empowerment of women. One (Interviewee 595) who has led women's forums in twenty-four districts, formed an independent school (with no drop outs in its six year history), empowered community women's groups, and personally supports vulnerable youth. This is crucial in a context where nearly 10% of the population are working abroad because of feeling they have not future in the country (Kaphle, 2014).

A government report (2014) shows a steady increase in the number of migrant labor permits being issued. Shopkeepers lamented to one of the researchers, not only about the universal labor shortage, but also the numbers of migrants returning to Nepal in coffins. Women have both new challenges and opportunities in filling the work gaps left by migrants and human trafficking. Some migrants do return with new skills and education; they are able to introduce new businesses and/or group farming into their communities (Interview 1204).

⁷⁶ Gurkhas are Nepalese soldiers from various hill areas who served in the British and Indian armies, closely associated with a forward-curving Nepalese knife and reputation for fearless prowess.

Rural Terai villages are turning to chemical market vegetable production. With the increasing presence of hybrid seeds, graduates say it is not possible to do pure organic agriculture because of the shortage of composting materials. Although people have had access to animal dung for years, it is a key source of cooking fuel.

A number of ARI alumnae are working with younger ARI graduates and speak of them as having increased leadership and interpersonal communication skills, as well as being more knowledgeable and willing to do the practical work of agriculture.

7.6.2.1 *Secular development organizations*

At the age of fourteen, one graduate (Interviewee 1012) began doing accounting for an NGO (Org 158) and was one of three participants it sent to ARI. He is the only one of the three remaining in the country and has been promoted to president of the organization which works in nineteen districts. With a values based approach⁷⁷, staff mobilizes communities in integrated activities. These include among others, income generation, tree nurseries and planting technologies, in addition to empowerment of women. Early warning systems complement a livelihood support approach to disaster preparedness. Ongoing savings cooperatives involving 100% of community members help people have money in the bank to recover from disaster losses. Irrigation makes it possible for people in five cluster groups to have two to three vegetable harvests per year; the vegetables are stored in zero energy cold storage facilities for preservation to plan sales for better market prices. (Nepalese Farming Institute, 2016).

Although challenged by unstable politics and shortage of honest managers in the area, the organization has successfully transitioned elementary schools to the government. This graduate has also had to make personal sacrifices to fulfil his work obligations; he reduced the number of animals he owns and leaves his farm in the care of a very supportive wife.

Another organization (Org 34) sent five candidates to ARI: all returned to work with the organization. Two (Interviewees 533 & 1225) continue to do that: one (Interviewee 1145) in a very remote area is implementing health, sanitation and biogas activities for the organization. The other (Interviewee 533) is happy to have been promoted from community worker to professional status. Now 99% literate, people in twenty villages are producing enough vegetables (not totally organic) with four seasons per year for regular truck pick up for marketing. One of the other three has returned to Japan for further studies, one is on maternity leave (Interviewee 1205), and one (Interviewee 595) is working independently following differences in ideologies with the director.

Another graduate (Interviewee 1201), who grew up in a bondservant family, values most being respected by others. He shares technical information in his community-based organization⁷⁸ (CBO) and works to link outside resources with community institutions such as his local

⁷⁷ Values based leadership is based on the belief that the welfare of people is the end of leadership and not that people are the means to the leader's goals (Leadership for Life, 2015).

⁷⁸ A community based organization (CBO) is a public or private non-profit (including a church or religious) entity that is representative of a community or a significant segment of a community, and is engaged in meeting human, educational, environmental, or public safety community needs.

hospital. Two individuals have joined him in a recent fish pond venture with a ten year lease on the land. The debt incurred for this was double their anticipated budget so it will take some time to realize a profit. To manage his workload he has sold fifty animals, partially because of a labor shortage in the community to help care for them.

One graduate (Interviewee 1162) has leadership responsibilities for one of the biggest World Bank funding initiatives in the country: 1000 groups in three municipalities participate through five village development committees⁷⁹ (VDCs) in income generation activities for vegetables, pigs, chickens and small cottage industries. In his role as convener between donor and community groups, he has observed very good loan repayment in mountain groups. The less cohesive communities near the Indian border struggle in spite of exchange visits to see successes of the mountain groups. He previously has worked with another graduate (Interviewee 1201) when both were funded by a mutual donor but their work differs in that the other graduate (Interviewee 1204) forms new community groups while he works with existing structures. He feels existing community groups deal better with disputes because they generally are comprised of extended families.

One Ph. D. graduate (Interviewee 485) manages funds from three donors in forestry management, sustainable livelihoods and policy sectors with responsibility for seven of the forty-three districts the organization is involved in (there are seventy-five regions in the country). Another graduate (Interviewee 1119) helps a local VDC by making indigenous microorganisms⁸⁰ (IMOs) and negotiating financial assistance from government and donors.

7.6.2.2 *Government employee*

The other graduate (Interviewee 730) with a Ph. D. has extensive work experience with INGOs and government. He heads a task force for the Labor Migration Commission in developing policy for benefits to families of migrants who die overseas. He spoke of the significant impact of migration on Nepal's economy with remittances making up 40% of the country's revenue and surpassing agriculture at 33%. He explained government efforts to support farmers: 300 local radios provide current news on weather, prices and other aspects pertinent to farming. He has macadamia nuts on his farm to trial less labor intensive alternatives, something suggested in a national policy he helped write. By participating in writing policies he feels he impacts more people than he could have as a lone ARI graduate returning to a single village. He not only speaks his values but also lives them out: he drives an electric car, does not eat meat, and challenged an high official in the Coca Cola company to promote buttermilk as a healthier beverage option.

7.6.2.3 *Independent graduate activities*

One graduate (Interviewee 535) came back to an organization that was effectively establishing a mini ARI. However, the project was handed over to the local community when Japanese funding ended at the time of Maoist challenges. An earlier graduate (Interviewee 915) and

⁷⁹ A village development committee (VDC) is a voluntary association of village people for village administration.

⁸⁰ Indigenous Microorganisms (IMOs) are beneficial microbes that inhabit soil and all living things and are involved in indifferent processes such as fermentation, decomposition, as well as nitrogen and nutrient fixation.

founder of the organization was granted asylum in the U.S. (one of six ARI graduates known to have moved to other countries). It is believed that the community is still carrying on activities. When travel to the area became unsafe, the remaining graduate (Interviewee 535) sought day time work and volunteers with an ARI graduate from another country in an international dialog with a vision for innovative society with harmony. High caste family attitudes also became much broader as a result of this graduate's life journey following ARI.

Two graduates (Interviewees 981 and 1125) had unhappy experiences with organizations in which they were volunteers and found leadership, especially in a context of a desire for chemical fertilizers, difficult. They are presently involved in small scale farming, trying to share the organic message.

Another graduate (Interviewee 595) parted ways with a SB to begin a school, training center for women and a hostel for girls, building on personal experience that educated women encounter less discrimination in the country. For more than ten years, 150 children from poor communities are educated up to standard five. School schedules are adjusted so that teachers can continue their studies. A recent ARI graduate (Interviewee 1221) has joined the teaching force and notes families are making more of their own decisions. Some family sizes have decreased from three or four to one or two children.

Four graduates have their own farms in addition to employment.



Figure 38. Roadside scene in the Terai, Nepal. Photo courtesy of Steven Cutting.



Figure 39. Gathering animal feed. Photo courtesy of Steven Cutting.

7.7 Sri Lanka

7.7.1 Context

Also known as Ceylon over the years, this tropical island is just twenty-eight kilometers off the southeastern coast of India. A central mountain area is surrounded by a diverse plain accounts for about five-sixths of the total area. Both rainfall and temperatures vary in different areas of the country. Rice production is the most important farming activity with the plantation tea sector having developed under British rule. (Britannica, 2016). The humid, cool hills around Hatton favor the tea production that makes the country one of the larger exporters in the world.

Forests that once covered nearly the entire island have been significantly depleted. The potential of minerals was evident as researchers were encouraged to purchase gemstones from shops with backyard mines.

The population of over twenty million (WPR, 2016) is comprised almost entirely of three ethnic groups. Sinhalese are the majority in the southern and western lowlands; Sri Lankan Tamils are mostly in the Jaffna Peninsula and adjacent lowland districts. Muslims, who trace their origins to Arab traders are mostly concentrated in some urban areas and the eastern lowlands. Indian Tamils were brought as migrant workers during British rule; most are plantation workers living in high numbers in the Central Highlands (Britannica, 2016). Although allowed to remain in Sri Lanka, this group has challenges regarding citizenship (Wolozin, 2014). The major religions are Buddhism (69%), Hinduism (15%), Christianity (8%) and Islam (7%) (DFAT, 2016).



Figure 40. Map of Sri Lanka. Copied from <http://geology.com>

The Sri Lankan Civil War was an armed conflict from 1983 to 2009 with intermittent insurgency against the government by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam⁸¹ (LTTE). An estimated 80,000 to 100,000 people were killed and both sides allegedly abused human rights (Bajoria, 2009). Simultaneously there was internal strife among the Sinhalese with the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna⁸² (JVP) initiating unsuccessful revolts against the government on two occasions (Fernando, 2013).

The impact of the war on infrastructure was evident as researchers traveled the night bus to reach the north of the country, an improvement from war time when land travel was impossible and even escape by sea dangerous (Interviewee 1052). Checkpoints are fewer now but graduates spoke of “*everything*” in the north having been destroyed, including many rare historical books and manuscripts. During the conflict there had been no electricity, an oil embargo and even fertilizer banned because of its potential in making explosives. The territory opened to foreigners only a few months before the researchers’ visit: bunkers were still evident along the partially rehabilitated railway and buildings were under construction on confiscated lands.

In December 2004, a tsunami in the southwest of the country, triggered by a 9.0 magnitude earthquake, produced ninety-foot waves that killed more 230,000 people (Constable, 2015). Several ARI graduates were involved in various aspects of response to the disaster.

7.7.2 Findings

Since 1972, eighty-seven ARI graduates have returned to work throughout the country. Of these, researchers interviewed thirty-one of the forty-two visited. Four of those visited graduated in 1977, with numbers of graduates in other years ranging between zero and three. There are numerous relationships between graduates as several organizations have sent multiple participants over the years (Org 167 sent eight) and several have family connections. Most relationships have been positive while a few have been sources of conflict, one so severe that court action is pending. All who have worked with faith-based or secular development organizations have been supported with varying degrees of external funding at some time in their career.

While various graduates have been involved in road construction throughout the country, one graduate (Interviewee 1193) pointed out that post war road rehabilitation in the north and east is happening on main roads but not reaching villages. Several graduates noted that numbers of military in the north and east are under-reported and military presence is required at any public event.

Graduates are much more concerned about the impact of the war on the thousands of individuals and families who were displaced because of fear for personal safety and/or

⁸¹ The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) also known as the Tamil Tigers, is the independent militant organization seeing an independent Tamil state in the north and east of the island of Sri Lanka that was defeated in 2009.

⁸² The Janatha Vimukthi Peramunu is a communist and Marxist-Leninist party in Sri Lanka that was involved in two armed uprisings against the ruling governments in 1971 and from 1987-89, then entered in democratic politics in 1994.

inaccessibility to goods and livelihoods. Some ARI graduates were among those temporarily displaced or granted asylum in more affluent countries. The diaspora⁸³ numbers about three million, many working two jobs to support their families in Sri Lanka, and often encouraging their Tamil relatives there to continue the conflict. Remaining families, however, just want the war to be over. Many also “*have become lazy, just making a phone call and asking for money*” (Interviewee 1193).

There were still 30,000 IDPs in 2015 (UNHCR). One graduate described “*the plight of the 59,000 widows as difficult: during the war women could safely be out at midnight; now it is not even safe during the day*”. Everyone must carry an ID card and children’s lives are often threatened if their mothers do not offer sexual favors (Interviewee 1052).

Conservative cultural norms meant few people were unwilling to talk about the increase of HIV/AIDS beyond saying that it is increasing in militarized areas. However, they were more vocal about the government having banned the term “*psychological trauma*” and not allowing non-government entities to provide psychological care. One community member said this is a part of government efforts at “*structural genocide*” that also includes putting Sinhala people in charge of businesses and educational institutions in the north.

Several in the north indicated “*the war is over but the conflict continues.*” One graduate shared that substance abuse and cell phone technology increase the tendency for youth to be drawn into promiscuous relationships with the military. She describes the situation as the absence of physical bombs but being a social time bomb ready to explode if another unhappy group of youth organize (Interviewee 78). However, graduates in the south were more apt to speak of the war being over and people of different religions working together. Some infrastructures such as four Christian centers that were destroyed or immobilized during conflicts are being rebuilt through collaborative efforts.

A literacy rate of about 90% does not guarantee security as several graduates reported employment being secure only until the age of thirty-five, making self-employment crucial in this context where migration continues as a coping mechanism. Migration from rural to urban means more prime agricultural land is now residential; external migration consists of mostly women going to Gulf countries as domestic workers (Gambour, 2010).

Seven graduates spoke of problems created or exacerbated by migration, including antisocial behaviors such as trafficking, substance abuse and crime. In addition, unprotected children are vulnerable to abuse by male family members, marginalization in schools and wild animal attacks. One graduate (Interviewee 27) who migrated to a developed country spoke of “*wasted years*” in starting over in that country where Sri Lankan education was not recognized.

Six graduates spoke of savings and credit activities being successful: one graduate (Interviewee 78) consults with a number of small organizations and is one of several who link the practical teachings of ARI with PRA methodologies for effective savings and loans that decrease substance abuse and domestic violence.

⁸³ Diaspora includes people who are living outside the area where they or their ancestors have lived for a long time.

Three individuals sent by a volunteer organization (Org 190) became involved in multiple organizations with international connections.

7.7.2.1 *Faith-based organizations*

A mission (Org 110) was founded by a European missionary more than forty years ago to relocate families from impoverished dwellings to improved housing. Two early graduates (Interviewees 452 and 454) married each other while they worked for seven to eight years for this mission during its prime, prior to working internationally. The mission relocated 190 families from a slum area, providing housing and skills. The complex included a dairy: making cheese from the milk and using the manure as compost. Carpentry, leather working, candle making, along with a bakery, dispensary, and social services rounded out the activities. More than seventy families repaid their housing loans and now own vehicles. Some run buses and have children attending university. Some neighbors followed the example of building houses.

International sales of cards flourished and the center produced their own pots for their orchid growing until the missionaries left and external funding ended. Many initial inhabitants also left and new residents had little interest in the activities at the time that the thirty-five year lease on the land ended. The government then took over seven acres of the land: remaining programs on the one acre include some education, computer training, social services, kindergarten and a cafe. Two former ARI graduate employees have deceased. A third (Interviewee 93) remains: he has moved from management to caretaker and uses his leadership role in a local church to attempt to garner funds to support the mission.

A farm in another area began as a church project (Org 66) more than forty years ago to build inter-religious harmony through a communal family lifestyle. It was challenged by the JVP uprisings in the '70s and '80s when residents intermittently had to flee for their safety. Thirteen staff now train sustainable agriculture to displaced families resettling after the conflict. There are no records but staff share that thousands over the years were trained in an approach of including 240 families at a time in a three year curriculum on women's activities as well as women's and children's rights. The training facility is rented out to provide a community service and provide needed revenue. All graduates from this organization had returned to work for it after their ARI experience: two later left to get married and a third (Interviewee 449) retired after eighteen years of service.

Another entity (Org 57) of this church denomination focused on the lives of women in a diocese. One of the graduates (Interviewee 400), a lay worker for many years, was engaged in a variety of non-formal social service activities. She provided disabled children with education and school supplies in addition to preparing young people for job interviews. The other (Interviewee 451) left the organization to take on extended family care responsibilities and hosts a full board tourist accommodation home while caring for ill elderly relatives.

Four graduates returned to their supporting church entities: one (Interviewee 594) continues as a priest, another (Interviewee 1068) is farming and teaching in his local community. One (Interviewee 1193) is rebuilding an agricultural training center destroyed during the war, and another (Interviewee 582) is struggling with his role on a church farm damaged during JVP conflicts. He provided supervision of alcoholics on the farm in an agreement with the court

system to keep people out of prison. His SB (Org 56) has terminated his services and is trying to evict him from the farm.

A Buddhist monk (Interviewee 536) returned to the organization he participated in founding prior to ARI and continues training young monks and working for peace in the country. Three hundred (300) registered credit cooperatives provide savings and loans for business and agricultural activities. He shared an example of one where thirty-nine members from an 800 family community are members and 50% of those are involved in farm work. He also rescues cattle from slaughter houses for distribution to poor families to assist with their livelihoods.

7.7.2.2 *Secular development organizations*

The researchers visited seven of eight ARI graduates sent from one large development organization (Org 167) that enhances the capacity of disadvantaged rural communities to address their own development needs. Two daughter organizations have been developed to respond to business aspects of microfinance and social enterprise needs. Six of the graduates interviewed either returned to their former positions or were promoted after returning from ARI. One of these (Interviewee 1100) left to start his own successful mushroom farming operation when project funding for his aspect of a farm center ended; its struggling efforts are currently managed by another graduate (Interviewee 1053) who joined when his work in post-tsunami rehabilitation response ended.

The organization also employs two women in a tea growing area where plantation residents were supplied with 150 cows and have established a dairy cooperative and milk collection center. They have also participated in a “*pay it forward*” chicken distribution. Advocacy efforts with plantation management resulted in improved child health care, including immunization, and a new school.

One female employee (Interviewee 1013) combines part-time work with her duties as a politician’s wife. She and another ARI graduate colleague (Interviewee 667) were part of the organization (Org 162) that earlier birthed this new organization (Org 167) when leadership parted ways. One graduate (Interviewee 667) reports that the third children in families are attending school because family income generation as the result of loans to fifteen to twenty groups; repayment of 100% was attributed to group formation.

Staff implemented relief responses to fifteen to twenty thousand people displaced by war, and then accompanied them in the difficult transition to resettlement. Three hundred and fifty (350) transitional shelters, that included sanitation, were built. Traditional fish tanks are being rehabilitated and restocked with several varieties from a fresh water hatchery. Families who had access to land were assisted with kitchen gardens for organically grown cash crops. In other areas of the country, the organization has assisted farmers in establishing marketing routes; participants are now able to give instead of receive as the result of kitchen garden produce sales (Interviewee 634).

With government regulations changing around foreign NGO’s, one INGO (Org 78), after more than thirty years in the country, transitioned its work to local NGOs it created. These are headed by ARI graduate employees, of whom the director proudly says “*Those are my boys - from the villages.*” Three head local NGOs, with the INGO providing some international

support that comes with strict requirements for long-term plans that include baseline and monitoring measurements. Five year plans are encouraged with the option to make annual changes.

One of these local NGOs (Org 152) has organized animal distribution (50% grant and 50% repayment) to local CBOs. In addition, twenty-five houses were renovated and provided with toilets. Savings and credit models for income generation are taught and help people establish animal husbandry, agriculture, boutiques and sewing activities. Fifty selected farmers are trying to reduce chemical usage after receiving free supplies of organic fertilizer.

A second NGO's work (Org 185) with community groups has resulted in fewer children dropping out of school. Eighteen businesses have stopped selling cigarettes to minors, and 553 families were trained on substance abuse, gender and HIV aspects. Community groups are now able to do advocacy and manage an emergency hotline (Interviewee 618).

A third NGO's work (Org 96) has fourteen social coordinators supporting a network of twenty-six organizations and working with fifty "*societies*" (groups) of 150 to 200 members each. The goal of the work is child development and drug prevention. Much of it is done in collaboration with a Buddhist monk who manages a therapeutic community for drug rehabilitation. He provides a location for training and the NGO provides the materials. Village Action Teams (VATs) are created to support the efforts in communities; these teams usually begin with twenty-five members and often expand to fifty-five as people see the advantages (Interviewee 669).

A third graduate (Interviewee 483) and employee of the INGO leads the work with 4000 youth and matches 3000 jobs per month with a Chamber of Commerce in a Business for Peace Alliance. Another (Interviewee 1261), at ARI during the time of organizational transition, was seeking employment during the researchers' visit, after having taken care of some family responsibilities.

Another organization (Org 166) was formed more than twenty-five years ago to assist poor urban communities improve shelter and livelihoods. This is being done in collaboration with two private limited companies to manage community housing support and solid waste management. Three graduates returned to the organization on graduation: one (Interviewee 1022) left after several years to establish a poultry business that failed due to bird flu, and has returned to the organization. Two (Interviewees 1106 & 1022) have management roles and work with women's banking; one (Interviewee 1106) also works with the government on redistribution of unused land. The third (Interviewee 9014) is a project officer for composting activities. As a result, women cooperative members are able to purchase parcels of land with monthly repayments for five to six years: at least twenty-eight have been finalized.

A national association (Org 170) began in the early 1960s to work in very diverse fields such as child protection, human rights, reconciliation, disaster management, poverty alleviation, drug abuse, mental illness, etc. Two graduates from the mid '90s are now independent consultants, one (Interviewee 538) having established 300 credit unions in poor communities in Sri Lanka and internationally. The other (Interviewee 570) developed a successful timber farm while consulting with NGOs, four currently, on development and management matters while balancing valued time and talents with family and charity.

One graduate (Interviewee 1000) mentors another (Interviewee 1133) in a consortium of NGOs (Org 90); the two work with 3500 women members in savings and credit groups. Microfinance is combined with training on composting, charcoal, agricultural practices and home gardens. In addition, a three month ARI style training helps graduates from the program start home gardens and have better job opportunities.

Following philosophical differences with a SB, one graduate (Interviewee 964) taught high school agriculture and worked with another ARI graduate (Interviewee 454) in an international NGO before establishing a training center connected to government resources and working in 150 villages. Yet another (Interviewee 683) left his position with an NGO (Org 120) to join tsunami response efforts. After those ended, he combined housing project work in another INGO with developing radical educational materials on the dangers of chemicals in food production and processing.

Researchers visited a relocated community with a couple (Interviewees 452 & 454) that had consulted with national and international organizations for more than fifteen years, he in IPM and rural and urban agriculture and she in health. After more than ten years, most of the 3800 families they worked with are still doing rice paddy cultivation on the three acres they were provided with. Quality of houses has improved and three preschools with trained teachers are in operation. Family livelihoods are more sustainable with the presence of cooperative societies replacing middlemen, the presence of a weekly market, and mini-irrigation for short term high yield crops. The couple are now farming in retirement after responding to the 2004 tsunami by attending to needs of the elderly. Along with several other graduates, all of different faiths, they have aspirations to start a non-profit organization to further assist the elderly in the country.

7.7.2.3 *Government employees*

A woman (Interviewee 701) had attended ARI as an exception to ARI's policy, at a time of not taking government employees, by being recommended by another NGO she had a relationship with. She returned to serve in various government capacities where her work allowed her to provide counselling to 700 women (fifty also received loans) unable to be reached by NGOs because of government policy which graduates say does not allow anyone other than government to provide post-war psychological care. Her recent attempts at an independent NGO have met with funding challenges.

Government recognizes and consults three other graduates regarding peace process and disaster reconciliation responses. One (Interviewee 77) develops policies to integrate business and peace initiatives, including integrating militant cadres into society as good civilians.

7.7.2.4 *Independent graduate activities*

A volunteer organization (Org 165) dedicated to promoting a culture of peace by organizing international volunteer projects sent one person (Interviewee 78) to ARI who has worked with multiple international organizations over the years. She is currently an independent consultant to small local NGOs where she feels more impact to grassroots communities can be made. A more recent graduate (Interviewee 1192) recommended by that organization has struggled to

find a niche, especially after an unhappy working relationship with another ARI graduate (Interviewee 1193).

Another graduate (Interviewee 683), whose organization changed while he was at ARI, left to create CBOs and work for an international organization in addition to writing and teaching about food safety. He claims people are healthy after two to six months of not drinking milk in response to his educational pamphlets.

One graduate's award winning mushroom farm flourishes in a context with no competition and provides the family with a good and happy lifestyle (Interviewee 1100).

Another graduate (Interviewee 970) with ten years of experience in an organization prior to ARI, returned to form a foundation for his SB in which role he consulted internationally on group formation and savings and credit. He left that to form another foundation that works with eighteen groups; he supplements this activity by teaching Japanese.

A graduate (Interviewee 27) from the '80s moved to another country because of marriage and has been involved in various aspects of refugee support including employment by the U.N.



Figure 41. Devastation of war.



Figure 42. Tea plantation.

Photos courtesy of Steven Cutting.

7.8 Western Africa

Researchers visited the countries of Cameroon and Ghana.



Figure 43. Map of Western Africa. Copied from www.questconnect.org/

Western Africa has a mix of predominantly colonial Francophone Anglophone influence and myriad tribes. Hausa are the most populous, engaging predominantly in agricultural activity. The Fulani are predominantly Muslim pastoralists and throughout history have shifted from one location to another, including across national borders. Reasons mainly were for caring for livestock but disagreements, colonialization, and coups also impacted decisions. More recently many look for “*greener pastures*” in urban areas. The Ashanti in Ghana, are a matriarchal clan with a pyramidal government headed by a king. They emerged from the 13th century Akan tribes as gold traders; the Kingdom of Ashanti survived colonialization with its center in Kumasi in the heart of the country (Britannica, 2016; West, 2016).

Christians make up the majority of the population in the two countries, followed by Islam. Both have threads of animism intertwined in them and funerals are an important aspect of social life. Researchers observed giant billboard invitations and experienced packed planes and buses on Fridays as people traveled to home communities for the weekend events of honoring the dead. Wearing black and red, hundreds attend the funerals that remember the departed one, who

may be in a casket made to resemble the deceased's favorite object or profession such as that of a shoemaker (Newton, 2014).

7.8.1 Cameroon context

Cameroon lies at the junction of western and central Africa. It is sometimes referred to as "*Africa in Miniature*" (Barton, 2015) because of its geological and cultural diversity that includes beaches, forests, deserts, mountains, rainforests and savannahs. It is home to more than 200 linguistic groups with French and English as official languages because the territory was divided between France and Britain after World War I. It was reunited upon obtaining independence in 1961. For the next twenty years the country was quite prosperous with the government focusing on educational facilities, farm production, and selective industrialization. Rural development also took place and included the introduction of rural cooperatives.

However, in subsequent years less central planning and more reliance on private enterprise and free trade have become dominant (Britannica, 2016). Graduates explain that an economic crisis from the mid '80s to late '90s was the result of global economic downturn, drought, and falling petroleum prices, accompanied by years of corruption, mismanagement, and cronyism. One graduate (Interviewee 1041) is one of the many who abandoned coffee and cocoa at that time and is just now replanting coffee with government provided seedlings. As these were male dominated crops, men quickly moved to working on eucalyptus plantations which one graduate (Interviewee 605) said were introduced by Australian missionaries.

The unintended consequence of eucalyptus for future generations has been the depletion of the water table that increases distances traveled for water, as well as the destruction of natural forests and grassland. One organization (Org 168) is actively working with farmers to replace eucalyptus with indigenous trees (section 8.1.8). International organizations are also now linking with local governments and organizations to protect the forests of the Congo Basin (CBFP, 2016). Other sending bodies are involved in beekeeping and introduction of environmentally friendly trees in areas of deforestation.

Although now relatively stable politically and socially, English speaking territories that were home to all ARI graduates visited, have less developed infrastructure such as roads and schools than do Francophone areas. Graduates shared that Anglophone areas have grown increasingly alienated from the government and are increasing demands for decentralization. An example was given of a two week bus strike in 2008 in response to corruption, fuel price increases and general living conditions to highlight discontent with the system where the president is also the head of the armed forces and chief judge.

Graduates rely on public transportation, more reliable now in places where roads have improved. In one area, women are now allowed to ride busses as the need for pushing them out of challenging spots is no longer an issue. In another, a road accessible to vehicles was



Figure 45. Ghana coffin. Copied from <http://www.cnn.com/2014/03/11/world/africa/on-the-road-ghana->

completed just prior to the researcher's visit. The resulting market created excitement in the community with new opportunities for products and exports, including to nearby Nigeria.

Other governance challenges over the years have included the long-term dispute with Nigeria over the oil and natural gas rich Bakassi Peninsula that was finally settled in 2002 with the Greentree Agreement (UNOWA, 2013). In 2014, in the wake of the Chibok schoolgirls' kidnapping in nearby Borno State in Nigeria, the government deployed troops to the Nigerian border to combat Boko Haram (Smith, n.d.), the same year that thousands of refugees fleeing the violence in the Central African Republic arrived in Cameroon (UNHCR, 2015). One graduate (Interviewee 1066) spoke of HIV/AIDS rates increasing with even a three month stint of military presence in an area.

7.8.2 Ghana context

Ghana is a multicultural nation with a population of over twenty-five million spanning a variety of ethnic, linguistic and religious groups (BFW, 2015). There is no national language, according to one graduate (Interviewee 1116), because choosing one would imply superiority of that particular group.

Current borders were established in the 1900s when Togoland was divided into Francophone Togo and the British Gold Coast. The latter's name was changed in 1957 to Ghana when it became the first Sub-Saharan African nation to declare independence from European colonialization. With a series of governments alternating between military and civilian, Ghana has been devoted to ideals of nonalignment (Britannica, 2016). As a result, many diplomats and politicians hold positions in international organizations, including Kofi Annan as Secretary-General of the United Nations from 1997 to 2006.

Ghana's diverse geography and ecology, ranging from coastal savannah to tropical jungle, are productive in oil, natural gas, gold, diamonds, and cocoa. The country boasts Lake Volta, the world's largest artificial lake, and Bosomtwe, the largest natural lake in West Africa, created when a meteorite displaced forest (Sword, 2012). Attempts are being made to protect this Bosomtwe's surroundings from the deforestation of slash and burn agriculture prevalent throughout the country. With increasing population pressure, graduates say traditional practices of cropping a plot for eighteen months and then leaving it idle for five years, are becoming increasingly difficult.

7.8.3 Findings

Availability of agricultural land varies significantly. In some places it is cheap and occasionally even free for cultivation, but is often unproductive for women who dominate farming, using simple tools and having little technical knowledge. In other areas, graduates say land plots are becoming too small for sustainable livelihoods because of the combination of slash and burn methodologies with generational subdividing. This increases conflict and, although a traditional chief can grant use, official registration of land is costly (Javelle, 2013). Credit is limited for smallholder farmers and, even when present, may be disadvantageous with interest rates varying according to the characteristics of the borrower and activity being financed (Atai, n.d.).

Several spoke of challenges in attempting to do organic agriculture: its labor intensity, needing to substitute less desirable materials such as wood shavings for rice husks, and needing to supply organic fertilizer free of charge for it to even be considered. In one context where horse meat is part of local cuisine, horse manure is used because of its ease of collection from tethered horses, although it is less effective as fertilizer.

Women have greater challenges as they are traditionally not allowed to own land; one of them (Interviewee 117) is seeking to challenge this as there is no written law against it. She also works with women's groups on adding value to agricultural products to increase their livelihood security. This helps women avoid being "sold" for dowries or resorting to prostitution if they have no other means of support.

Three graduates have been involved in night paddocking⁸⁴, a system that has decreased conflict as farmers and herders have come to know each other as people. It also meets the needs of both by providing much needed fertilizer for the agriculturalist and cattle food for the grazer (Ndikintum, n.d.).

7.8.3.1 Faith-based organizations

A Christian medical clinic established more than thirty years ago has expanded and continues to be operational years after a graduate (Interviewee 377) has retired. However, a three acre church farm with onions in the one church served by a graduate (Interviewee 908) for many years was not kept up by others following his retirement.

7.8.3.2 Secular development organizations

Eleven graduates returned to their secular organizations. Five of those continue to work in their SBs in aspects such as sustainable agriculture, environmental protection, gender and women's rights, traditional healing, herbal medicines and/or computer courses.

One woman (Interviewee 605) had her seed money from ARI matched by her SB (Org 168) on her return from Japan to begin to implement what she learned with the 600 women's groups the SB was working with. Because of the time it took to visit this many, the groups pushed the organization to establish a training institution. The Ministry of Agriculture supported a rural training center on land donated by a local mayor. Foreign funding was acquired after four years of effort and the facility now includes a farm, dorms and classrooms. A good relationship is maintained with the government for seed supply with the farm regularly supplying three varieties of Irish potatoes.

Training is provided for large numbers of people in long and short-term educational opportunities. University internships are provided and thirty-five students have graduated from one ten-month course. Staff identified an 85% success rate with the 7000 people trained in short courses who go to work for government or as promoters for training on soil conservation and organic farming. Study visits for another 1500 people taught integrated practices and wind energy. Market assessments are part of the learning by staff and students on garden plots.

⁸⁴ Night paddocking is a system whereby farmers allow pastoralists to keep their cattle overnight in a confined pen for certain periods. The cattle eat the grass, are kept safe overnight and leave their manure for the farmer.

Sales of value-added products such as plantain flour, dried cabbage, dried pepper and soya flour (sold out at time of the researcher visit) provide funds to aid in the support of the institution.

This educational farm is the only one of its kind in the area that responds to environmental issues by utilizing four kinds of renewable resources: hydro, biogas, wind, and solar. A poultry house is heated by biogas and hydro; 400 chicks at a time are protected with antiseptic dip ready for shoe disinfection at the door.

Culturally appropriate practices are also studied and introduced: practices such as night paddocking or considering sheep versus goats because of ease of raising and Muslim preference for them. Veterinary services are supplied to the community.

After attending two training events and constructing an animal shelter at home, participants receive pigs or sheep along with an amount of animal fodder, some of which is produced on the farm. Group loans at 0.5% interest are available with the assistance of foreign funding. The group loans in turn are given by the group to individuals at 5% interest; group and individual savings having grown from two to twelve million CFA (About \$120,000) in nine years.

Community members value being together, correcting each other and learning new skills such as how to improvise, with activities such as overturning grass for fertility when manure is not available. Groups have received prizes for agricultural products and have a sense of dignity and confidence at being "*rich farmers*".

One organization (Org 154) with two graduates (Interviewee 1073 and another out of the country for advanced studies), produce artemesia⁸⁵. This medicinal plant is being raised as treatment for malarial treatment in conjunction with an international organization on a research and demonstration farm where international learning teams are also hosted. Communities are led to compare chemical and organic options and develop their own plans; groups also learn animal management, food processing and computer skills on site. Some community groups have started beekeeping and rotate potatoes with artemesia and moringa⁸⁶ production. Bokashi making was added to the program when the ARI graduates returned to the organization.

One graduate (Interviewee 1151) works in an organization (Org 133) that has an active board and some foreign funding. He has a strong personal relationship with a government official and is passionate about changing attitudes of what he calls "*suicide farming*", farming that focuses only on money and ignores health issues. He has connections with an organic institute as well as local government that have committed to opening an organic market in a local town. It is still to be seen whether a physical local location will actually create a market for the yams, poultry, fish and pigs produced by women's groups. These groups (one of them with twenty-six members) are organized, trained and monitored. They share whatever finances remain after planning for inputs for the next season, and do use some fowl droppings and fish foliar as fertilizer on their farms. The organization has also been involved in planting trees in a local preserve with a goal of developing it further as a tourist area.

⁸⁵ Artemesia is an aromatic or bitter-tasting plant of a genus that includes wormwood, mugwort, and sagebrush and used in herbal medicine for the treatment of malaria.

⁸⁶ Moringa is a drought-resistant oil-yielding tree, native to northwest India and widely cultivated elsewhere for its water purifying, nutritional and medicinal qualities.

One graduate (Interviewee 487) works with seven pig cooperatives. He feels his honesty has inspired people to follow him as a leader and views individual gifts to him of pineapple, paupau and corn as indicators of individual success. He sees groups failing because members do not take responsibility, and servant leadership requiring that he needs to do all of the work himself when they fail to participate. Bokashi from one training event was used to cover two hectares of land but it is too soon to know whether or not the scant amount was effective. Proceeds from pig rearing introduced by a foreign adolescent in a pass-on-the-gift project cover group member expenses for school fees, medications and funerals. The group has also planted trees for their city council.

One graduate (Interviewee 1066), after returning to find her SB (Org 137) “*was not yet stable*” established her own NGO (Org 37). Staff in three offices work with orphans, women and agriculture, human rights and advocacy, microfinance, and non-timber forest production. She travels long distances to train rural farming groups, preferring to go to them because they do not have the resources to leave their communities and because “*working with farmers was a whole treasure on its own*”. Delegates for training are selected by their communities, then representatives from ten farming groups at a time learn organic methods in two-day seminars four to five times a year. Fifty-seven groups began with market analysis, credit unions have been established, and all groups receive monitoring and backstopping. There is a waiting list of groups wanting to join and three farmers earn enough with indigenous tree nurseries that they have stopped raising agricultural crops. The government also recognizes the increased school attendance among children of group members.

In the short time one graduate (Interviewee 1116) spent with his organization (Org 123) before external funding ended, he participated in encouraging the growing of grain crops and shea⁸⁷ in micro-business savings and loans activities that were in operation for four to five years. He currently works for the government in unrelated activity and has a twenty-four acre farm being cared for by someone else while he is in the city. Of interest is the fact that he is married to an ARI graduate from another country that he met when they attended ARI at the same time.

7.8.3.3 *Government employees*

One organization (Org 49) supposedly referred two graduates to ARI; neither seemed to know anything about the status of that organization presently. One graduate (Interviewee 1045) is a pastor along with full-time government responsibilities, in which role she partnered for short periods with numerous development organizations. She combines training on organic fertilizer with being in charge of government distribution of chemical fertilizers. Fertilizer and cattle projects lasted about three years until project funding ended; she tries to refer those groups to other funding sources. She also trained people on food processing and using less expensive ingredients to increase market profit margins. She worked with another graduate (Interviewee 1072) to produce organic fertilizer commercially but that ended when external funding stopped. Quality of the product seen on one test plot seemed questionable – the bag of fertilizer seemed

⁸⁷ Shea a small tropical African tree that bears oily nuts from which a butter is obtained and used in food, soap and candles.

little different from surrounding soil and the crop where it had been applied was less healthy than surrounding rows. Concerned that bokashi ingredients need to be adapted to specific soils, this graduate (Interviewee 1045) published a document on bokashi (unavailable to reference) and has returned to school to be more knowledgeable and respected in teaching organic agriculture.

The other graduate referred from this defunct organization (Interviewee 635) consulted with several government ministries and NGOs regarding micro-projects such as sheep and goat raising, oil processing, artemesia growing, and registering cooperatives. Some of the slow work of changing marketable produce from cabbage to tomatoes is being continued by young men several years later. The completion of a road and opening of a market in the community during the researchers' visit will likely be a good impetus for this to continue. In recognition of his contributions to the community this graduate was elected to the Chamber of Agriculture.

He shared that change has been more successful with integrated pest management (IPM) systems than following pure organic methods. He also noted that positive change takes about ten years to happen and that the most sustainable changes are those which are introduced in school settings. On his return from ARI, he formed an organization (Org 148) to develop his family farm into an independent training center. Many years later, that center is still a dream because he has not had sufficient financial resources make it a reality. However, he does offer informal advice in response to community requests.

7.8.3.4 Independent graduate activities

The termination of project funding affected not only the graduate working for the government but also several others. One (Interviewee 1059), whose church did not renew his position but required he establish his own supporting congregation in his denomination, is studying and teaching at a university. His study on unemployment revealed that most of the jobless in the area are youth because of lack of education, skills, work experience and knowledge of available opportunities. In addition, interest charged on micro-credit loans is exorbitant and government policies to combat problems of youth are ineffective. He says these factors have resulted in rampant property and cyber-crimes in this society.

Three other graduates are farming. One of those (Interviewee 1041), after not finding a meaningful niche in his organization (Org 168) on return from ARI, further developed his own integrated farm and is looking to add coffee plants this year with government assistance as previously mentioned. He also joined a group of pig farmers who learn from each other. Their learning about improvements in pig raising and IPPM is accompanied by a loan fund. This foreign supported fund helped members with loans to restart their pig raising after losses to disease. Group selling also allows better prices to be negotiated.

The two other graduates who are farming are doing so together after being placed on “*technical leave*” by their organization (Org 36) when donor funding priorities changed. Together they farm on 1000 m² implementing organic technologies researched by one of them (Interviewee 1045). The latter has assisted an international organization in establishing a demonstration plot, providing some training on research regarding organic pesticides. He does have a desire to

produce fuel from jatropha⁸⁸, a crop promoted as biofuel in 2007-08 with less than desirable results. It competes with food crops and, although it can survive droughts and poor soils, it does not produce seeds in those conditions (Charles, 2012). It also takes a very large amount of seeds to produce a small amount of fuel: fifty kilograms of jatropha to produce six liters of biodiesel according to one graduate (Interview 937).

The other graduate (Interviewee 1117) has helped three groups (Anglo and Francophone members in separate groups) save \$200 by adding value through food processing and making handicrafts; profits are shared to meet home needs.

One independent graduate (Interviewee 1067) provides care for forty-three children (20% HIV positive) with foreign support, including internet contacts that raise \$2000 per year. His natural garden is eight years old, includes eighteen plant varieties and requires no weeding. Three indigenous plants raised with seeds from an ARI colleague in Myanmar have survived. His garden has a year around supply of water from two sources: a well and the government community water system. That water is supplied prior to chlorination as part of a special agreement he has been able to negotiate. He saves his own seeds and asserts that, although natural farming is less costly and workable for a family of three, it is not adequate for a larger number of people. A home-made wind turbine he adapted from a model learned at ARI generates electricity for his home use during power outages. He also trains women gardening skills on a community plot near a river on school property where eucalyptus and cypress trees have been removed to preserve the water table. He does this in spite of some physical disability and raises eighteen pigs along with two other disabled individuals who each have two pens of pigs. Pigs were chosen over chickens because they are less vulnerable to theft.

Three (3) graduates have retired; two are in ill health. One, very elderly, has significant memory issues but the words "*That we may live together*" struck a cord and were repeated several times during the researchers' visit. The other graduate with poor health has an individual oil palm plantation and a backyard farm with maize, cow peas, and cocoa to support family needs. The third (Interviewee 1091) left the organization (Org 148) founded by a graduate (Interviewee 635) when there was no money to support his family. He has consulted with a wide network on training to build civil society and monitor election fraud in addition to managing his own small family farm.

One recent graduate (Interviewee 1214) was very discouraged after returning to find her organization (Org 41) unhappy about communication during her time at ARI and the two parted ways. She receives some informal support from another social service organization she volunteers with, but is challenged as a single parent to support two children with no salary.

7.8.3.5 *Other*

Although graduates in various contexts in all countries in the study anonymously referred to those who had "*escaped*" from ARI, the only graduate (Interviewee 550) researchers met who had actually done so was in Western Africa. He shared a poignant story of family loss,

⁸⁸ Jatropha includes any of various plants or shrubs of the genus *Jatropha* (family Euphorbiaceae), one species of which (*Jatropha curcas*) produces seeds that can be used in the production of biodiesel.

remoteness and the need to repay a fraudulent SB that led to his decision to stay in Japan to earn money. He was detained but during his time in a detention center developed relationships with authorities that resulted in later opportunities to study in Japan. A government position back home in the capital city now provides a way, not only for income to support his rural family, but also connections for government support to his home community.



Figure 45. African hoe. Photo courtesy of Steven Cutting.

7.9 Japan

7.7.1 *Context*

Often called the “*Land of the Rising Sun*” because of the kanji that forms its name, Japan is a composite volcano archipelago of several thousand islands with the four largest ones, Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu and Shikoku making up the majority of the land mass. With a population over 127 million, the world’s longest life expectancy and lowest infant mortality, Japan ranks 10th in the world in terms of its Human Development Index (HDI) and has no foreign debt (BFW, 2015). It experienced rapid growth until a major recession in the 1990s and then a slow recovery under a constitutional monarchy with an Emperor holding limited powers.

World War I, on the side of the victorious Allies, enabled Japan to expand its holdings and influence until its surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in December, 1941. War was declared against it by several nations and Japan unconditionally surrendered in 1945 following the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A new constitution in 1947 emphasized more liberal democratic practices with Japan granted membership in the United Nations (UN) in 1956: in 2015 it was elected to a nonpermanent seat in the Security Council, more often than any other country (Japan Times, 2015).

Although it has officially renounced its right to declare war, the Self Defense Force is a modern military with the world’s 8th largest military budget used for self-defense and peacekeeping roles. Japan does have some



Figure 46. Map of Japan. Copied from <https://upload.wikimedia.org>

territorial disputes with its neighbors and the current leadership's changes in interpretation of Article 9 of the constitution allowing troops to go abroad are controversial in the country (Japan Times, 2016).

ARI had its roots in the Southeast Asian Christian Rural Leaders Training Course which started in 1960 at the Tsurukawa Rural Evangelical Seminary of the United Church of Christ with Toshihiro Takami as its first full time director in 1962. ARI was founded in its present location 180 kilometers away in Tochigi Prefecture in 1973.

This campus was deeply impacted in March 2011 by the country's strongest recorded earthquake that damaged buildings and triggered an earthquake that resulted in the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster. This was one of the worst disasters in the history of nuclear power and was just 130 kilometers northeast of the campus. Due to the general north and easterly direction of the winds, ARI was spared the brunt of the radioactive fallout. However, it was affected enough that measures were put place to regularly measure radio-activity in air, soil, water, and food, and take appropriate actions when radiation readings went above a limit set by the institution. The service of measuring radio-active contents in food was also extended to the wider community.

Japanese participants have been a part of ARI since its beginning. The first one was recorded in 1960, then none until 1971 after which numbers fluctuated between zero and five until the present. Active recruitment of Japanese participants began in 1995 to equip Japanese youth having an interest in international social work, mostly through the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) run by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). A secondary reason for their participation was to boost revenue for ARI as Japanese participants pay their tuition in full, not a requirement for other participants at ARI.

7.9.2 Findings

As further follow-up of Japanese graduates is more readily possible because of their close proximity to the ARI campus, a sample of only eleven were interviewed. Several fellow of one graduate employed at ARI verbalized how they have been positively impacted by that person's testimony of the existence of God.

7.9.2.1 Secular development organizations

Four graduates worked with Japanese programs in other countries, three of them working with Org 108. One (Interviewee 1263) found it very difficult to work in an African culture where people have a different work ethic, no knowledge of other countries and low literacy. Feeling it is better to have someone who knows the culture, this graduate decided to return to Japan and is managing a farm shop and natural restaurant on a family farm. Another (Interviewee 847) volunteered in a South American country for two years and returned to Japan after being challenged by the lack of infrastructure in the host country. He then made a challenging attempt in Japan to grow organic grapes before joining a university, now as Director General. The third (Interviewee 515) worked in an Asian country for ten years managing twenty staff in empowering women in ecological farming, raising ducks in rice paddies, food processing, environmental education, and forest management. Understanding of local language deepened

the interaction that supported a methodology of working “*with*”, rather than “*for*” people. Married to a woman from that country, this graduate is back in Japan as Program Officer of the same organization. Here he coordinates activities of multiple country offices.

The fourth (Interviewee 1266), with another NGO, found organic farming in another Asian country too challenging because of pests, so returned to Japan and works in two cafés with some organic products.

7.9.2.2 *Independent graduate activities*

Two (Interviewees 1002 and 1267) married ARI graduates from other countries and are doing farming activities there; one (Interviewee 1002) is also writing stories on rural life in his host country for Japanese audiences.

In Japan, one (Interviewee 688) is helping out in a nursery school while looking for land to farm. Another (Interviewee 1264) is farming with her husband in Japan and enjoying motherhood. A third (Interviewee 1142) in Japan is cheering the lives of elderly by writing their stories, and a fourth (Interviewee 717) translates news stories from English to Japanese.

Some work a combination of part time activities. One (Interviewee 1142) who, after working for several years on an organic farm with a restaurant, now is in a rural communal living arrangement with part-time work managing recreation activities in a park. Another (Interviewee 1265) distributed relief supplies to disaster survivors in Japan following the tsunami and now provides care to handicapped children but is disappointed in their lack of interest in farming.



Figure 47. Rural Japanese village. Photo courtesy of Steven Cutting.

8. Factors contributing to successes and challenges

Graduates come to ARI with anticipation mixed with apprehension of the unknown and expectations that often are not realistic. However, all are molded to see the world and their own contexts in new ways by living and learning in community for nine months. When they return home, eager to share new learning, they search for ways to adapt their learning into the reality of family, SBs, communities and wider contexts. Many factors contribute to both the successes and challenges they face, arising from their specific situations and what they learned at ARI.

8.1 Situational factors

8.1.1 *Family*

Graduate successes come with many personal and family commitments. Researchers met or heard about the families of 50% of those visited. About 10% of the graduates visited are single and most of those married, have children. Family sizes average three to five children, about half the size of previous generations, researchers were told. Extended families, many intergenerational, provide graduates with support but also may present significant care responsibilities. Responsibilities weigh heavier than in developed countries because of inadequately supplied health systems that are more curative than preventative in nature and families being responsible for care of the elderly and disabled. Stigma towards the disabled in some contexts often results in families hiding the handicapped individual from even care workers (Interviewee 1051).

8.1.2 *Community*

Graduates' ability to facilitate change in a community depends on a community's ability to work together. Poor rural education, especially for girls, results in low literacy and people "*slowly learning and hard to put into practice*" (Interviewee 1191). People establish their priorities in different ways: one graduate (Interviewee 491) shared how people prefer to buy bicycles over malaria medications "*because a mosquito net only helps you at night and a bicycle helps you in the day*". Community members' need to balance family obligations with community activities often results in slow growth of VDCs, few groups graduating from development activities, and difficulties in managing cooperatives. Graduates may need to act as intermediaries between donor organizations and communities for accountability and interpreting needs on both sides (Interviewee 1191). Dependency on development organizations is needed according to one graduate (Interviewee 1171) who observed that 200 villages, with a population of 100,000 and only one organization working in the community, could not survive if they did not grow opium poppies. This is in agreement with a journalist's explanation of the resurgence of opium growing in this graduate's area (Fuller 2015).

8.1.3 *Health*

Graduates' work with communities can be seriously compromised due to health problems. Both the health of graduates and the health of community members are impacted by a number of factors. Four graduates or organizational staff spoke of increases in cancer, one director (Org 42) reporting the presence of cancer patients in hospitals having increased from 0% to 75% of inpatients in the last twenty years. An additional five graduates, four of them from Sri Lanka, spoke at length of the increase in "*kidney problems*" in areas where the green revolution had

significantly increased rice production, with the chemicals leached into rivers and ground water, affecting both drinking water and fish being consumed. This concern has been supported in studies linking glyphosate (the active ingredient in Roundup) as acquiring the ability to destroy renal tissue when in combination with “*hard water*” and nephrotoxic metals (Jayasumana, Gunatilake & Senanayake, 2014). As a result, the government of Sri Lanka banned the use of the product (Chavkin, 2014). Low literacy with inability to read warnings on packaging further exacerbates the health risks when containers of toxic materials are recycled for water or food storage.

Nine graduates have been challenged with long lasting effects of injuries or illnesses and at least two by deaths of spouses or colleagues. One graduate (Interviewee 510) feels nutritional issues in her context are the result of lack of nutrients rather than hunger. In another country, restaurants place a complete array of food before diners, untouched plates are returned to the kitchen and served again to the next guests, and dish washing and toilet activities are sometimes carried out in the same spot. Hygiene issues are also a challenge where animals share the same living spaces with humans and one graduate, a hospital worker (Interviewee 830) admits “*til now I don't have that health mind*”. One graduate’s customs learned at ARI of covering her hair, wearing an apron and washing her hands before food preparation has increased business in her local restaurant (Interviewee 1183).

8.1.4 Gender

Women hold the key to food production and are involved in every stage of food production as compared to men who generally participate in specific activities of ploughing and handling draught animals (FAO, n.d.). In addition women bear the major burden for household duties and child care. However, often they carry out these responsibilities with dependence on men for safety, permission and/or resources because of cultural values. Arranged marriages, often at a young age and in exchange for valued cattle, decrease opportunities for girls to attend school. These culturally specific gender norms can have a significant impact on how female graduates are able to carry out their work. One graduate (Interviewee 541) quietly wept during the researchers’ visit as she spoke about being supported through her suffering at ARI because of leaving her parents as a single girl, having her grandparents die while she was away, and now experiencing a lack of freedom in living with in-laws. She was one of two graduates that others spoke of that face stigma because of giving birth to only girls. Two other women (Interviewees 1129 & 1129) may only travel beyond their villages in the company of a known male family member. Women in another country have just recently been allowed to ride rural buses in an area where roads have improved because there is no longer a regular need for passengers to push the bus through the mud or up hills.

Gender disparities in land ownership are pervasive even though land provides rural households with the basic means for subsistence and market production as explained by the Food and Agriculture Organization⁸⁹ (FAO, 2010). Without collateral it is difficult for women to get loans for capital, and even in Japan, it is more difficult for women to get land according to one

⁸⁹ Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is a United Nations agency that works on international efforts to defeat hunger by helping developing countries modernize and improve agriculture, forestry and fisheries practices.

graduate (Interviewee 688). In war situations this is especially traumatic as women whose husbands are killed also lose the assets of their deceased husbands. They are especially vulnerable to exploitation during and after conflict, often needing to provide sexual favors in order to feed their families.

Almost half of the interviewees acknowledged male superiority in home and work life in their communities. Rarely did women (two of 285 women interviewed) speak of being able to hand home duties off to their husbands for work responsibilities. In contrast, husbands handing their responsibilities to wives in their absence was a common practice. Graduates described learning about equality in gender roles at ARI by observing and participating in activities shared equally by men and women, such as cooking and cleaning which are stereotypically women's roles.

Women in leadership described their experiences as varying from "*different*" to a "*struggle*". One (Interviewee 9002) described the situation for men as "*it's like heaven everywhere, even in the office, and they (men) always command you.*" Another (Interviewee 677) maintained her employment position by reminding others that "*Pregnancy is not a disease*". Responding to situations like these has been especially challenging when the graduate is a lone woman in leadership or where traditional leadership roles are reversed and men report to her.

There was recognition that girls do better in school than boys (three Interviewees) and that women are often the power behind vocal men (three Interviewees). One graduate (Interviewee 118) openly attributes his success to his wife (Interviewee 1216) and has promoted her because of her training and financial skills. Several spoke of only men's voices being heard in public forums and, when women were too timid to speak up, men took credit for their ideas. One of the women graduates, who in her culture needed to be accompanied by a family male travel companion spoke of only being able to work with women and wondered about the advisability of sending women from such a culture to ARI. One graduate also verbalized a sense of ARI staff shutting down the voices of women during an earlier time at ARI.

Others, generally with supportive families, have persevered through the challenges and empowered other women through their examples. Four graduates spoke of ways they have worked to equalize these power dynamics by focusing on women in training events and inviting their husbands to join them. The fact that a majority of women who participate in training events head single households is related to need, especially in areas of conflict where husbands, who previously often even decided meal options, have died or where there is no formal employment for women over thirty-five years of age.

Graduates working with such groups spoke of the importance for women and children in vulnerable situations to know their rights and to have sustainable means of income. Evidence of women's increased dignity was seen in the savings and credit groups facilitated by one graduate (Interviewee 538) for 600 women in forty villages; their confidence was also bolstered and cultural barriers diminished by exchange visits.

Graduates are deeply concerned regarding human rights and trafficking issues and one graduate (Interviewee 685) is deeply involved with rehabilitation centers for trafficked women who become social outcasts. She also works with pastors and government to strengthen rescue and prevention efforts. One graduate (Interviewee 1159) shared that a Buddhist government invites him to do training on trafficking in spite of knowing he does so from a Biblical basis.

Several graduates use Biblical approaches to gender awareness training because, as one graduate (Interviewee 682) articulates “*we need the power and energy of all*”.

Several women in leadership roles in church structures and social organizations have been more active in referring suitable candidates to ARI, both from within and outside of their organizations. They also have been successful role models in combining the challenges of cooking, cleaning and child care with work in the wider community but not always as successful as they would like to be. This was expressed by one graduate (Interviewee 1149) whose efforts at gender equality in the kitchen at her institution failed after a year. In the words of another graduate (Interviewee 575) “*We still have a long way to go but it is much better than 20 years back when I went to ARI.*”

8.1.5 Infrastructure

Every graduate faces infrastructure challenges, especially when compared to Japan. Many in rural areas have intermittent electricity at best and even urban areas experience regular load shedding. Graduates in six countries shared how this directly disturbs communication and income generating activities such as food processing. Roads vary from good tarmac to paths where graduates have walked many miles or ridden buffalo to reach their destinations. Most graduates depend on public transportation with infrequent or erratic schedules as privately owned “*buses*” do not depart until they are full. These are often vans with drivers who also serve as mechanics, quickly repairing breakdowns as passengers, accustomed to these delays, wait patiently. Travelers may also be delayed by multiple military checkpoints or be subject to ambush. Farmers generally are dependent on marketing middlemen for selling and transporting products (Adams, n.d.).

This disparity between Japan and graduates’ home countries often means families and communities have unrealistic expectations of graduates on their return: expectations that they are returning with wealth or, at the very least, gifts for everyone. One graduate (Interviewee 1091) was able to return with a car because of the support of extended family, but twelve others spoke of the painful challenges of trying to explain why they returned with only invisible knowledge, no money to implement practices, and no formal diploma.

Graduates are also active in community infrastructure development: two led road construction projects providing access to their home villages (Interviewee 889 and 1046) while another drives his own electric car in a metropolitan area (Interviewee 730).

8.1.6 Land tenure

At least twenty-seven graduates, along with many of their small-holder farming communities, struggle with arable land being neither available nor affordable (including in Japan) for their own farming operations and/or demonstration models. Reasons for this include the increase in the amount of land being annexed by urban communities, tenure disputes and rising land values. One graduate (Interviewee 1152) does have thirty acres, one (Interviewee 1023) is in year twenty-two of a thirty-five-year land grant, and another (Interviewee 951) is renting land for a demonstration farm. One (Interviewee 652), living in a city to be able to educate his children, has someone else working his ten acres of paddy land some distance away. Others in

urban areas have only small areas around their homes and neighbors who would be disturbed by chickens or animals.

By contrast, land lies idle in some areas where people have migrated and one graduate (Interviewee 1052) has land but lacks knowledge to engage in the milk production he would like to engage in.

The global rush for land has resulted in those without documentation, such as in Kenya, losing their land in a process commonly referred to as land grabbing⁹⁰. Oxfam (2016) reports that in the last decade more than 81 million acres of land have been sold off to foreign investors in the last decade. Although the deals are supposedly intended to grow food, the crops such as oil palm and rubber in Indonesia and Malaysia are generally grown for export rather than feeding local communities.

8.1.7 Agriculture

The myriad definitions of organic agriculture generally converge to say it is a system that relies on ecosystem management rather than external agricultural inputs (FAO, 2016). There is general global agreement that sustainable agriculture is desirable and some equate organic agriculture with sustainable agriculture; however agreement even on the meaning of “*sustainability*” is nebulous. The Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (2010) defines sustainable agriculture as “*the efficient production of safe, high quality agricultural products, in a way that protects and improves the natural environment, the social and economic conditions of farmers, their employees and local communities, and safeguards the health and welfare of all farmed species.*” The economic conditions of farmers appears to be one of the most significant challenges in reaching this goal. Some feel that organic agriculture cannot feed the world (Connor, 2007) and governments often offer incentives for chemical inputs to farmers in many locations to increase production.



Figure 48. Maslow's hierarchy of needs copied from McLeod 2014.

It is not surprising that farmers would be attracted to chemical methodologies according to one graduate (Interviewee 1206), who shared that when people are hungry they do not care whether the food is chemical or organic. When people are struggling to survive they also generally live with a predominant value on the present rather than the past or future (Kluckhohn, 1944) so focusing on long-term less concrete benefits of organic food is less of a priority. This fits with Maslow's hierarchy of needs (McLeod, 2014) and is generally exacerbated in times of conflict when safety is an additional major issue.

⁹⁰ Land grabbing is the contentious issue of large-scale land acquisitions: the buying or leasing of large pieces of land in developing countries, by domestic and transnational companies, governments, and individuals.

8.1.8 Marketing

Graduates find the slow transition from chemical to organic practices especially challenging in the face of widespread government and business promotion, and sometimes incentives, for chemical products. It is only in some remote areas of the world, such as in areas of Northeast India and Myanmar, that this has not changed the face of agriculture to going beyond subsistence.

Numerous marketing challenges included distances from available markets, transportation costs, vulnerability to middlemen who control prices, and/or lack of demand for products being produced. As an example, several graduates in one context spoke of local chickens and their eggs being worth more than others, while another (Interviewee 1100) stopped using an incubator because of a lack of market for local chicks. One (Interviewee 1130) spoke of the challenge of supplying sufficient products without seasonal price increases and another (Interviewee 1174) of the challenge of farmers wanting money faster. One creative graduate (Interviewee 510) helped a group, in the face of no market for weaving, to transition activities to making pickles and selling used clothing. Others say adding value could bring better prices but they often lack skills in food processing and/or experience shortages of suitable affordable packaging materials.

Often there is no organic price advantage with niches for organic products generally found only in big cities. One organization (Org 167) is working to connect rural communities with an urban organic market opportunity. Complying with certification requirements can be difficult in the face of regulations that do not always consider cultural values but are a priority in seeking the better prices of specialty markets (Interviewee 1097) or organizing farmers to work for fair trade (Interviewee 1222).

Graduates have mixed views on cash crops: some seek to supplement family incomes by balancing short-term crops with long-term crops such as cardamom, tea, coffee, and rubber. One graduate (Interviewee 614) is working on a collaboration with a rubber company to introduce rubber to farmers. However, without any guarantee of market, falling rubber prices and the environmental impacts of rubber agriculture (Ziegler, 2009), this may hold risk for the future. In addition, dependence on plantation mono-crops may leave people with money but no availability of food in some areas.

Two crops introduced by foreign interests, have proved especially challenging. In Western Africa, one graduate (Interviewee 1045) is struggling to grow sufficient *jatropha* for biodiesel while another (Interviewee 1072) teaches women how to press it for washing products in the light of insufficient production for biodiesel. *Eucalyptus* is the other: a tree indigenous to Australia and introduced to many parts of the world. On the one hand it has been very popular in the market for building materials and electrical poles because of its fast, straight growth; on the other it has devastating impacts on water tables and consequently on agriculture. Attempts are being made to remove it in most places (Albaugh, 2013 & Dessie, 2011). Graduates in Cameroon explain that getting rid of it is no easy task and when burning the stumps fails, people often resort to chemicals.

8.1.9 Environment

Graduates are challenged in introducing new crops as crops that do well in one context may not do well in other contexts depending on soil conditions, altitudes, latitudes, and access to water. Rain fed agriculture is becoming increasingly difficult with climate change and more chronic cycles of drought. In many cases soils have already been depleted with deforestation, erosion, mono-cropping, or crops being destroyed by animals that are allowed to roam freely.

Two Kenyan graduates (Interviewees 49 and 51) were distressed to see lumber from the depleting forests near their home being used for construction in Japan.

Three graduates raised concerns regarding the practices of Japan and other industrialized countries of sending banned pesticides to less developed countries. In addition, heavily promoted chemical inputs leach into ground water and rivers making environments unfriendly, and even dangerous as discussed in section 8.1.3.

8.1.10 Government

Often national government policies are well written but not followed as seen in the example of the low representation of women in government explained in section 7.3.2.2. Lack of transparent government policies result in situations such as the extensive destruction of Indonesia's rainforest (Vidal, 2014). One graduate (Interviewee 1081) explains that forests are being cleared and burned to make way for plantations and companies have been responsible for chemical accidents such as chlorine leaks with major impact on humans, paddies and fish.

Graduates or donors become discouraged in the face of politicians attempting to claim credit for activities graduates have implemented in communities; this happens with greater frequency around election times and often has led donors to attach their names to projects they have supported communities with, when in fact they would have preferred to honor the community efforts.

In many places, political appointments benefit cronies, government staff are "*expected just to obey orders*" (Interviewee 510) and politicians siphon money for personal interests. Government policies also raise concerns such as those regarding the ASEAN trade agreement (Devonshire-Ellis, 2014) revisions taking place in December 2015. The removal of customs duties on imports from these countries is expected to increase market competition between Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam. Graduates worry this may have a negative impact on subsistence farmers.

Recognizing the role of government constitutions, policies, and services as important to community well-being, fourteen graduates have worked or are working in government positions to introduce their ARI learning in these contexts. Another ten who are part of collaborations that support communities with resources such as land, education and products, are intermediaries for accountability in development projects or activists for accountability in human rights and/or community projects. One graduate's (Interviewee 1099) concerns about the potential of conflict with loss of land and culture when a current leader dies, points to the importance of good interpersonal relationships with all sectors of the community for effective stewardship of resources. Another (Interviewee 730) has been instrumental in advocating for government benefits for families of those who have died while working outside the country.

Political decisions often connect cultures who may not know each other or are even in conflict. Relationships are especially critical in those situations for graduates attempting to work in another culture where they are not trusted and perhaps even feared, which is common in areas with ethnic conflicts, such as Sri Lanka (Interviewee 1193). Several graduates have been a part of conflict relief efforts, sometimes with government protection, and working toward long-term reconciliation. This is not easy as pain runs deep and only surfaces occasionally in agonized facial expressions such as upon hearing labels with negative meanings, or seeing a government tourism project on confiscated land. Comments by graduates and community members carried a theme that alluded to structural genocide dismantling educational and traditional institutions. One graduate (Interviewee 718) in another context of conflict and living near a military base, spoke of trying to change physical appearance with a different hair style and growing a mustache to be harassed less.

One mature graduate (Interviewee 921) participated in developing a country's new constitution and supporting local oral communities in holding their representatives accountable; this has included accompanying the community to court. Others have received personal threats because of their advocacy work; one (Interviewee 558) who has had personal land confiscated describes "*discrimination here is very visible and ignored. If you have money you can have your way*".

8.1.11 Globalization

"*It's a small world after all*" is becoming increasingly true and has brought positive changes, such as countries being able to tap into global economies to improve health and education systems. Media tools have made it possible for many in developing countries to imitate cultures in developed countries, often with less desirable results. Traditional clothes and languages are disappearing while drug abuse is increasing and deadly diseases are spreading more rapidly (Hamdi, 2015). Several graduates spoke of a societal trend to devalue rural life and farming, especially where educational systems use "*digging as a form of punishment*" (Interviewee 1008)".

Several graduates noted contrasts with Japan, such as one (Interviewee 199) who defined development as having all of the facilities that are available in Japan but not in most graduate home contexts. Several were critical of development in Japan: one (Interviewee 1109) questioning how the high rate of suicides (Wingfield-Hayes, 2015) fits with development while another (Interviewee 1000) emphatically shared that "*Japan is not development... because many people (are) going to elder's house; many people suicide; many, many day care center*" and seeing it as lacking inspiration of family and community. However, seeing how technology is increasingly isolating individuals in Japan, a graduate (Interviewee 1258) warns of the "*Hikikomori*"⁹¹ witnessed there. Japanese graduates found it particularly challenging to work in other countries because of community members' limited resources, more relaxed cultural values regarding work, and lower literacy levels with little knowledge of the outside world.

Globalization, in addition to leading people to want more, brings tourism to once remote areas. On one island the presence of tourists has promoted an attitude of "*relaxing*" among the local population (Interviewee 935). In other places anger wells up against American media

⁹¹ Hikikomori is the phenomenon of reclusive Japanese adolescents or adults who withdraw from social life, often seeking extreme degrees of isolation and confinement.

portrayals of negative images of Africans (Interviewee 934). One Asian graduate (Interviewee 1257) dreams of changing the perception that people from a remote forest community are like monkeys. The wake of increased migration away from rural life into urban centers and even abroad has also introduced rural communities to new anti-social behaviors such as substance abuse and human trafficking.

One graduate (Interviewee 615) notes that although globalization is generally seen as a blessing for people it is not so for the environment. Slash and burn agriculture, mining and logging by international companies contribute to deforestation. Waste management of imported plastics, which should not be burned, is problematic. Even organizations promoting organic production are not always consistent in their message: an example was given of an international conference on organic food issues using disposable products for meals (Interviewee 145).

Even global aid efforts may have negative consequences. International NGOs can further decrease agricultural productivity as people learn to depend on handouts. With the diminishing post war recovery services in one country people “*are suffering but it is too late*” (Interviewee 701). The NGO response to the 2004 tsunami and earthquake on Nias Island, Indonesia resulted in new buildings in urban areas but people losing their community work ethic and now “*they want instant - like noodles*” (Interviewee 1223). In other countries, communities are becoming disillusioned with the NGO world as they attempt to respond to as many as four NGOs coming to any one village while still trying to engage in their own farming activities to feed their families. One director (Org 4) spoke of the coordination attempts of an NGO working group to build the capacity of VDCs to respond appropriately in the face of all the NGOs wanting to be first with short projects, but requiring extensive monitoring and evaluation.

8.1.12 Migration

Migration has also increased with awareness of a wider world. Youth moving from rural to urban areas often abandon farms to squat in cities in their search of work or better educational opportunities, depleting the strength needed for agricultural activities. Young men and women are the majority who migrate to other countries in search of a better future or means of support for their families. When women leave, the children left behind are often marginalized. One graduate (Interviewee 618) explains that often daughters of these women not only drop out of school in early adolescence, but are often abused by their own fathers or other males in the family. This is exacerbated by increasing substance abuse, especially in areas of the world where drug and human trafficking has escalated near the Golden Triangle.

Nepal has one of the highest and steadily increasing rates of migration (World Bank, 2016). Many migrants return ill or dead (as described in section 7.6.2); however, Nepal’s GDP depends significantly on remittances from its diaspora. Although not statistically as high, Sri Lankan graduates also spoke of dependence in their country on remittances (section 7.7.2).

One graduate (Interviewee 27) who left for a developed country, spoke of the hard reality of “*wasted years*” in needing to retrain because the education of his home country was not recognized. However, others in Myanmar and Nepal share about more positive experiences in their communities as they see returning migrants establishing businesses and providing new employment opportunities. Some East Africans, mostly males, who left for education, also return with new skills to help their communities.

It is encouraging that migration has decreased where rural life has improved in terms of quality, education or job opportunities. Graduates committed to making that happen include people such as one (Interviewee 1191) who spoke of deciding to stay in his challenged mountain community in spite of being encouraged to migrate to an affluent country to work. He firmly believes that “*the solution is there only, not from the outside*”.

8.1.13 Conflict.

The horrors of war mean redefining success; sometimes “*success is staying alive*” (Interviewee 1195) as many victims go from being wealthy to impoverished. Several graduates spoke of their own refugee experiences, of having lost all and living with constant military presence but no protection. An African proverb “*When two elephants fight, the grass gets trampled*” summarizes what happens when innocent people are caught in the middle of fighting by opposing sides and forced to provide food or porter supplies.

Women are even more vulnerable, with abuse and rape common. According to one graduate (Interviewee 27), even in IDP camps, that are filled years after conflict has ended, raped women are unable to leave camps for HIV treatment. He also spoke of the challenges of recovery going far beyond physical, as child soldiers even at thirty-five years of age psychologically continue to be between child and adult. He sees hope for the future lying in education - education that is not about buildings but the greater challenges of access, paying teachers and providing meals as incentive. Some tribal leaders even burn schools to maintain their control of people. Girls have even fewer educational opportunities, especially when a girl’s worth at age twelve is 100 cows. Then she is readily sold off for the cows.

Even after fighting has ended, graduates spoke of not being able to share their culture for a long time because of military occupation with rigidly controlled movement, “*spies everywhere*” (Interviewee 1159), and strong distrust of other cultures or tribes involved in the conflicts.

A Buddhist affiliated government has replaced a number of Christian sites with pagodas and proclaims evangelism of any Buddhist by a Christian, graduates say including spouse to spouse, as using force and subject to as much as two years in jail (Christian Aid, 2015). Clergy are not allowed to vote; however, recently that government has approved a doctor and nurse for a Christian clinic that was closed for several years when no Christian doctor was available and no one else would come. Buddhist influence in another country is attributed to redistributing mission land when a land grant expired, leaving the mission with only one of the original one hundred acres of an active integrated program (Org 110).

All areas suffer when any area is destabilized as the person with the gun in reality has the power. Economies slow, and shortage of landmine detection deters return to agricultural activities, and corruption escalates with unstable infrastructure.

8.1.14 Corruption.

Corruption is not limited to conflict situations. At international levels, companies may make unrealistic promises and employ only expatriates in leadership positions. Graduates speak of these companies also having poor employee policies (low wages, long hours and child labor) and producing inferior infrastructures such as roads.

At the community level, finding honest managers can be a challenge and reporting to donors, who may not understand the context well, leads intermediaries to report on what is expected rather than the reality in order to keep funding (Interviewee 1191). One graduate (Interviewee 891) spoke of bringing assistance for children but “*the elders have a need even more than the children and they have the authority; they end up taking it*”. Communities’ stewardship of foreign funds is less stringent than for community owned funds. Theft of personal property of pigs, chickens and crops is prevalent, especially in West Africa, and careful monitoring of self-help groups is needed to carefully analyze each situation for individual dishonesty. In one Asian military context, people may be forbidden to host foreign guests if the government official is not given a gift (Interviewee 1159). One graduate (Interviewee 1109) summed up a discussion on corruption with the words “*We are all corrupt to allow it to happen.*”

8.1.15 *Organizational dynamics*

A large barrier to success of any endeavor centers around the need of families, including those of graduates, to survive. For graduates, this often means needing to supplement their salaries as pastors or intermittently volunteering for their organizations to keep them operational during funding gaps between projects. It has been a frequent source of frustration to graduates when leadership or direction of a SB changed while they were at ARI. However, SBs are challenged by donor interest in short term projects that may have ended while the person was away, or lack of donor interest in new endeavors a graduate would like to pursue.

Graduates spoke of ARI’s focus being entirely social and being challenged on return in facing the need to combine business and social programs. While ARI does not focus on profit, organizations and individuals in communities need to consider it to survive: one graduate expressed the feeling that ARI didn’t really care if things didn’t work and a community staff person in a struggling organic shop asserted “*Organic is only one of 1000 ways to help increase people’s quality of life*”. This conflict, as well as the need for their own personal livelihoods, has prompted several graduates to leave their SBs. Sometimes graduates themselves migrate to urban areas where they are further challenged in the face of needing to modify their skills. In urban contexts income generation and marketing skills are limited but even more important.

Management issues related to government policies and relationships with NGOs both hindered and supported communities. In one country, government policy forced foreign development workers to leave; in another the decision to limit size of local chicken flocks to 1000 birds protected interests of small farmers (Interviewee 651). NGOs, fearing loss of future funding, may find it hard to turn down donor practices inappropriate for local contexts; one example includes fresh water fish tanks in drought or salinized areas (Interviewee 1152).

Transition from relief to development in post disaster contexts is challenging (Vogt, 2015). Governments may focus only on visible infrastructure development at the same time as NGOs are trying to support staff in transitioning from the immediate gratifying experiences of providing relief to the long slow work of development.

Internal disputes also challenge progress as in the example of an internal split (Org 97), when a graduate (Interviewee 935) project was taken over by the group which had attached itself to the government and assets disappeared. Ten of the twelve graduates from this organization who attended ARI expressed frustration with hierarchical attitudes and behaviors. They noted a

resistance to organic agriculture and a drift away from servant leadership coupled with poor salaries and lack of concern for people with disabilities (Interviewee 1051). ARI agricultural skills were not often able to be used in the usual arbitrary assignments and frequent transfers.

Staff working with other faith-based organizations also felt some rigidity, along with the stress of small salaries for pastors, and bosses who tend to be directive, even when those bosses were ARI graduates. With declining numbers of church members in several places, and resulting depleted revenues, staff felt stressed when increased responsibilities were combined with dwindling resources and time constraints.

8.2 Integration of ARI learning with context

Both leadership and practical skills were acquired at ARI. Arriving home with much enthusiasm about ARI practices, graduates had varied experiences in being able to implement them. In spite of challenges shared regarding organizational work, most graduates (83%) were satisfied that they were able to meet their aspirations and family needs as reflected in Table 2. Satisfaction was significantly greater for those working in faith-based or secular development organizations than in other areas. The greatest percentages of those who faced challenges were in West Africa and Japan where satisfying employment opportunities utilizing skills learned at ARI were more difficult to obtain.

Table 2. Satisfaction in meeting personal aspirations and family needs.

* Retiree satisfaction is tabulated as prior to retirement

Country	Satisfied				Challenges	Percent of graduates with challenges
	Organization ¹	Employment	Independent Agriculture	Independent Non-agriculture ²	All types of employment	
India	26	3	2	7	8	17%
Myanmar	25	1	3	1	6	17%
Sri Lanka	23	5	2	6	6	14%
Indonesia	21	1	3	5	5	14%
East Africa	12	5	3	1	3	13%
West Africa	6	2	5	2	5	25%
Nepal	5	3	1	2	2	15%
Japan	2	5		1	3	27%
% of total	53%	11%	9%	11%	17%	Total 229

¹ May or may not include other individual activities.

² Includes activities such as consulting, managing own hospitality businesses.

8.2.1 *Practical skills*

ARI practices and teaches methods of integrated organic farming that incorporate sustainable techniques of enriching the soil, cultivating crops, and rearing livestock. It promotes the use of local materials and technologies to reduce dependency and to more readily lead toward self-sufficiency in food and feed production participants, staff, and volunteers working together to produce the food eaten at the institution. A number of graduates alluded to staff having little knowledge of products available in their home contexts (such as Interviewee 1232).

The majority of graduates were able to implement agricultural skills, skills to raise livestock, or both, as depicted in Figure 49. A total of 163 (71%) graduates visited had tried to implement some sort of agricultural activity either with their SB or individually on their return home. It was possible only to document whether or not they had made the attempt to do any type of agriculture. Different approaches were tried with varying degrees of success. Many stopped after one or more failures; deeper analysis was not possible within the context of this study because application of organic practices was so sporadic and ARI had no definition of success.

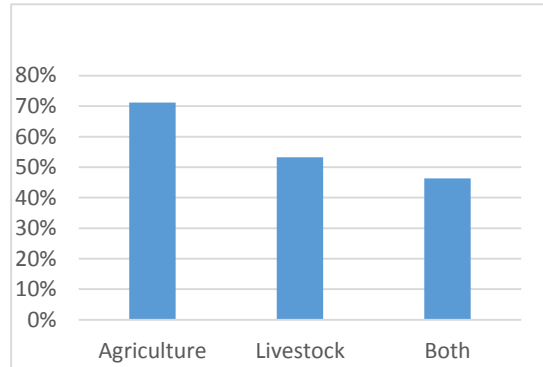


Figure 49. Practical skills application.

8.2.1.1 *Organic agriculture*

With a deep sense of being expected by ARI to participate in organic practices, most conversations first went toward practical skills which eighteen graduates explicitly identified as difficult. They shared examples of only being able to do bokashi on a small plot, or “*knowing a little bit about many things*”. They voiced having many ideas but lacking skills to apply them or answer questions (7). Materials suggested by ARI were sometimes nonexistent or expensive: one graduate (Interviewee 1046) said “*the food of pigs at ARI is more than we eat here.*”

Figure 50 shows the contexts in which graduates applied agricultural skills. In addition to applying agricultural skills in work places, 39% also were able to have some sort of agricultural activity in their own homes.

Implementation of agricultural practices depended on the cultural, climatic, and resource opportunities and challenges of home contexts. More graduates spoke about challenges than successes that they faced upon returning home. The organic production easily done as a community in ARI is a challenge for individual families or small groups because of the manual labor entailed. This was resolved in one context by using a “*food for work*”

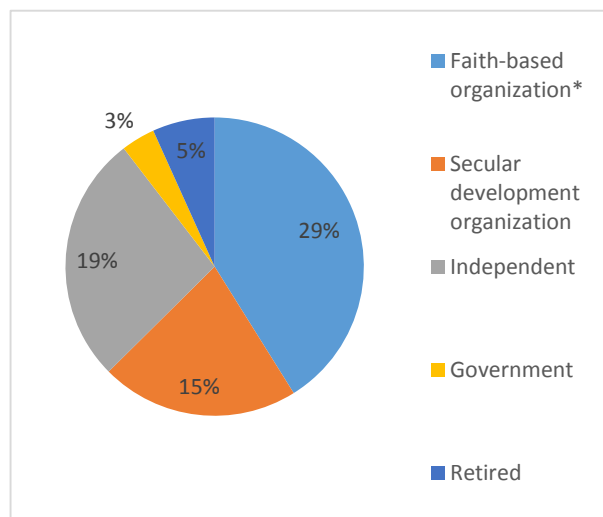


Figure 50. Application of agricultural skills.

approach that resulted in extending the practices to every community home already having a home garden (Org 1470).

Some spoke of it being very difficult to get started; some still speak of unrealized dreams years after their return, such as one (section 7.8.3.3 re Interviewee 635). Challenges varied, such as paddy rice failing in a context where upland rice is now being trialed (Interviewee 51), or being unable to implement agricultural practices because of the absence of policies limiting animal roaming (Interviewee 718). Graduates also were confronted with community members' concerns with yield rather than nutrition (Interviewee 951) and/or being unable to meet community expectations of being an expert after returning from ARI (Interviewee 1089).

Introducing home gardens was said to be effective when accompanied by promoting locally available seeds or grants and credit for seeds and organic fertilizers. It often failed on larger plots because of the lack of sufficient organic material for fertility. In those instances, graduates adopted, some with a sense of guilt, integrated methodologies for fertility and pest control. One (Interviewee 272) creatively adapted what he had learned at ARI through a controversial visit to a hydroponic greenhouse to organic gardening in gunny bags in an urban slum.

Perspectives of graduates (Interviewees 637 and 673) that "*organic is the same everywhere*" and "*Everyone can do organic, no matter where you live*" were not shared by the majority of graduates. Many feel challenged by resistance to change, lack of appropriate materials for making bokashi, negative attitudes towards using manure, and greater incidence of pests and diseases with organic methodologies. Because of these factors, most agree that it is only possible to do organic agriculture on small scale plots; few farmers are ready to endure the economic problems one graduate (Interviewee 614) says they are certain to have in making the transition on a larger scale. He explains "*We cannot be providing them the money needed to do the organic farming, so it will never be sustained.*"

8.2.1.2 *Livestock*

A total of fifty-one graduates visited are engaged in at least two types of livestock activities: the number in each activity are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Graduate work with livestock.

Type of Livestock	Personal activity attempted	Personal activity stopped	Organizational activity attempted	Challenges in organizational activity
Cattle	11	2	30	12
Fish	11	1	24	2
Pigs	22	4	40	14
Poultry	41	14	47	14
Rabbits	3	1	8	3
Total	88	22	149	45

Three organizations using cooperative structures have been successful in building functioning dairies and one organization is endeavoring to expand a cooperative model in response to 70% of the milk in that country being imported (Interviewee 711). Other cattle projects failed for reasons such as poor location, donor funding, or graduates leaving. Although cattle are a major expense and responsibility, they are important for cultural practices such as dowries and in some contexts even valued more than women (Interviewee 27). With livestock grazing freely, conflicts arise between herders and farmers; night paddocking with its exchange of grass for manure has been a way graduates (Interviewees 605 & 988) have found to build peaceful relationships (section 7.8.3).

Pigs are an important part of several Asian cultures, often running freely and raised on kitchen scraps. Many people prefer the flavor of local pig varieties, especially when fed a cooked mash very different from pig feed in Japan. Pig manure is valued for agriculture and in one case even bought by Muslims (Interviewee 911) for their fields. Those working with organizations and one working with government (Interviewee 857) generally worked with community groups, but not all monitored communities after animal distribution and/or training activities. Activities that were stopped were most often the result of shortage of food or money to buy food, disease, lack of vaccine, or theft. Larger projects ended when external funding was withdrawn. Some chose not to raise pigs because of the challenges of climate, food and housing or resistance by others of pig raising as an appropriate activity for a pastor (Interviewee 1015).

Three organizations have been involved in fish breeding and one government stocks lakes and rivers with gold fish that are important in extending cultural hospitality. Challenges in four contexts have been related to loss of external funding, polyethylene breaking and leaking, fish not adapting, or being too costly a venture when using tap water in an area with a high saline water table. One graduate (Interviewee 1060) speaks of people only constructing fish ponds after more crucial needs for health care, food and education are met; another (Interviewee 1074) has not introduced fish ponds because of deeming them inappropriate in contexts of water shortages. Others (Interviewees 649 & 1060) speak of fish dying in paddies and irrigation reservoirs because of chemicals in the water. Three graduates work with groups on adding value to fish to improve market prospects.

Although poultry raising was the most popular livestock activity, it also met with the most challenges: the time needed for close supervision, neighbor dislike of the noise and odor, disease and theft. Dislike was especially prevalent in large scale efforts or when free-range poultry invaded neighboring agricultural plots.

Rabbits were least common but graduates found them quieter, less disease prone and faster growing than chickens: the only challenge reported was trying to care for their large numbers when other employees were on vacation (Interviewee 735). Meanwhile two female graduates spoke specifically of community appreciation for their skills in castrating pigs.

Several spoke of the importance of beginning with small animals as building on people's skills for animal care helps them build up gradually. For example, three or four pigs may be sold to buy one cow. This process is described by ILRI (2004) as a livestock ladder⁹².

The addition of goats at ARI was seen as important in teaching skills regarding animal rearing, while those missing the cow spoke of it in terms of the milk it provided for ARI consumption, not in terms of learning for cattle rearing back home.

Those livestock projects that resulted in more family food security occurred where they were integrated with other activities, especially agriculture, microfinance and/or value addition.

8.2.1.3 *Demonstration models*

Graduates often felt a need to demonstrate success in agriculture in order to convince farmers to try new innovative ideas because farmers are often in vulnerable states and needing to support their families. Most graduates desire a demonstration farm modeled after that of ARI although those are very costly to establish and maintain. Researchers visited some excellent demonstration farms (Interviewees 605, 614, 651 & 911), some in poor condition (Interviewees 1045, 1049 & 629) and heard how others disintegrated when the graduate left the area (Interviewees 234 & 1007). Conflict between organizations and graduates (Interviewee 1184) arose around the length of time needed for a demonstration farm to be profitable: one graduate (Interviewee 1089) left his organization because "*social business is not easy*" and takes at least five years. Another graduate (Interviewee 482) refuses to call his farm a demo farm "*because demo farms generally have no sense of generating resources for their own operations*" and without resources the farm will not be sustainable.

Some (Interviewees 574 & 614) combine successful integrated models in their private homes with their work in organizations, or with natural neighbor affinity relationships (Interviewees 1067 & 1204). Those graduates who have successful demonstration activities within their organizations (Interviewees 605 & 574) or who establish their own independent training centers (Interviewees 614, 651, 911, 934, & 1124) are valued as resource persons by other individuals and graduates in their areas.

Other graduates working in organizations (6) found various models of FFSs (FAO, 2016) to be more effective because people could learn, practice, apply on their own farms and share the innovation with others (Interviewee 1184) without taking risks on their own vulnerable farms.

A private consultant (Interviewee 651) has adapted his intensive pig raising experience at ARI to a wider variety of animals. He also incorporates a wide variety of ARI practices including wood vinegar, fish ponds and fermented flooring for his chickens who live in the comfort of twenty-four-hour music on his demonstration farm.

Twelve graduates spoke of fermented flooring: three failures were noted, one graduate was confused about the concept and one was sure the ARI system would have improved by now.

⁹² A livestock ladder is a process of a farmer beginning with small animals: chickens are at the most basic level, followed by sheep and goats, local cattle and finally dairy cattle. Those with dairy cattle "*are considered to be relatively well-off*".

Three were among the fifteen who spoke of making fermented plant juice; two of those combined it with other local methods to make it work in their contexts.

8.2.2 Leadership

With even the basic mechanization of ARI and composting materials often lacking in graduate contexts, graduates had much more success in utilizing their leadership skills in multiple walks of life. They recognized servant leadership skills gained at ARI as preparing them for sharing with sending bodies and communities; one (Interviewee 724) saying “*You have even the guts of standing before people.*” Figure 51 shows graduate application of leadership skills in the slow work of community transformation that begins with listening. Ten graduates shared their thoughts on this process as one which involves people in thinking, practicing and planning to stand on their own rather than receiving handouts

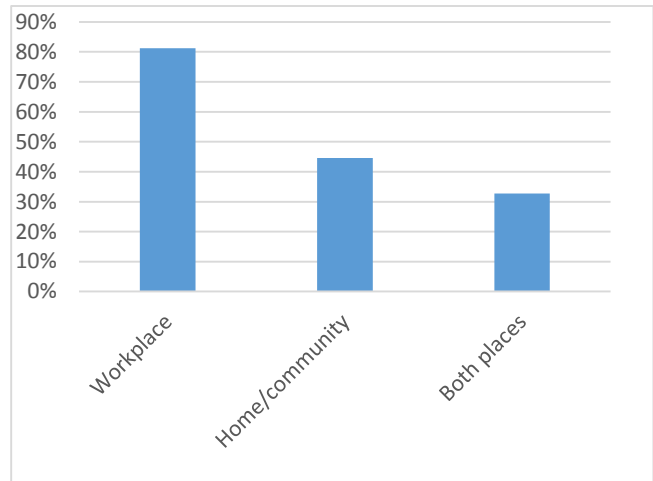


Figure 51. Leadership skills application.

One of ARI’s 40th anniversary resolutions (Appendix F) identified ARI’s “*central aim is to develop the capabilities of women and men, transforming them to become effective change agents in their own grassroots rural communities to achieve inclusive growth with sustained blessings from God*”. Exposure to a wider world at ARI has affected the way graduates are accepted into their own communities. Some experienced communities as being slow to respond with comments such as “*maybe okay for Japan*” (Interviewee 1164). Some graduates felt communities were more willing to listen to foreigners or expertise beyond a local graduate. Many graduates have deep rooted respect from their communities while a few, generally younger, are better received in places they are less known. They noted that it is generally easier to work with younger people and in communities that are more committed to growing together rather than splitting into multiple smaller villages. Recent graduates (2) struggled to try to articulate a long-term vision for how they would use their leadership skills. Especially younger graduates were challenged in trying to introduce values of democracy and servant leadership into cultures that do not allow one to speak out against anyone older. Connections with authorities help voices to be heard, especially in human rights lobbying efforts. One (Interviewee 1060) attests that “*one voice is not enough; however, the government is afraid if the voices from all nine districts are combined.*”

8.2.2.1 Community mobilization

During visits to graduates, 132 of them took researchers to visit their sending bodies, employers, groups they work with and/or neighbors. The characteristics of communities where larger numbers of members have achieved, or shown progress in working towards food security and secure livelihoods included those working in groups. These groups were engaged in integrated activities such as animals, crops and value-added income generation activities that were supported with savings and credit and/or cooperative buying and selling. Group formation

had generally been through a variety of participative methodologies that help communities realize their potential, and sometimes were combined with exchange visits to provide further positive impetus. Work with groups and schools was reported to be more successful than working with individuals (Interviewee 635). Those depending on externally funded and directed projects found themselves needing to bribe community attendance with handouts such as food or travel support. For some, projects ended when external support ended, especially when production had been subsidized by the program in times of no market (mushrooms), the graduate left the area, participants were unable to imitate the practice, or products could not compete in the market, especially export markets.

Those who were more successful in helping larger numbers of people move along the continuum towards sustainable livelihoods, including having enough food for their families and sharing, had captured the importance of being like the people (28) whether or not they actually were members of that community. These graduates acknowledged the importance of balancing personal and family health and education needs (Interviewee 509) with that of working together alongside, rather than for, communities. One graduate (Interviewee 1066) does demonstrations plots in rural communities because it is expensive for community members to travel, saying *“I prefer working with them there, to serve them there and when they are happier everyone is smiling and they sing and dance and when they’re happy, you’re happy. It really consoles; you really know what you are doing has an impact.”*

Those graduates who were successful had a good understanding of the communities they worked with, in addition to the knowledge of, and ability to connect with local and international resources (church, government and NGOs) to create opportunities for helping people to stand alone. They maintain an attitude of humility, as noted by the director of one organization (Org 166 & Interviewee 700), even after being provided with a vehicle; or the graduate (Interviewee 934) who reluctantly admitted *“They call me the director.”* One widely sought after consultant on community development (Interviewee 570) spoke of his own ongoing transformation, and needing to share beyond one organization to impact the wider community. He also highlighted the importance of personal assets *“Now I’m rich I can share. If I’m poor I cannot share.”* Researchers observed him modeling Christ-like love to the smallest children in a large meeting context and pointing out three core trainers with the words *“They are to pass me, not to follow. Pass me. Pass me. Pass me!”*

Those successful in equipping others most often used participatory tools such as Participatory Rural Appraisal⁹³ (PRA) and Participatory Learning and Action⁹⁴ (PLA) contribute to a bottom up approach that *“wakes people up”* (Interviewee 250). In these approaches leaders and communities together identify strengths and challenges and participate in the decision for the best way forward while focusing on affordable activities, several bring together people of

⁹³ Participatory rural appraisal (PRA) is an approach used by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other agencies involved in international development. The approach aims to incorporate the knowledge and opinions of rural people in the planning and management of development projects and programs.

⁹⁴ Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) is an approach for learning about and engaging with communities. It combines an ever-growing toolkit of participatory and visual methods with natural interviewing techniques and is intended to facilitate a process of collective analysis and learning.

different faiths and promote peace in training communities on sustainable livelihoods. On occasion this means becoming involved in wider aspects of advocacy to help local communities claim or maintain their rights while fitting into a regional and global context (Interviewee 921).

8.2.2.2 *Servant leadership*

As servant behavior was strange in their contexts, some faced ridicule because their behavior was not in keeping with cultural norms of directive leadership (16) or colleagues felt they were being mocked (Interviewee 1143). Three said it is not always possible to apply, such as in situations of church hierarchy (Interviewee 594) or locations of illicit crop growing where one's life could be threatened when taken to be a spy or detective (Interviewee 1171). One (Interviewee 1171) went so far as to say "*Servant leadership is very good, but not good for everyone, every community*" and another (Interviewee 536) spoke of needing to get rid of feelings of superiority on returning from Japan. Those who focused on listening and participative approaches were more successful in helping communities transform their thinking.

As would be expected following the ARI experience, "*doing*" was very important to twenty-two graduates but understandings of what that meant varied. One graduate (Interviewee 1232) felt one needed to close one's eyes to many things because "*if open can't be servant leader because you see group projects fail and individual ones succeed. Leader needs to do or it fails.*" Others captured the concept of servant leadership as carrying out physical activities, sacrificing everything. Varying degrees of helplessness and sense of failure were voiced because of not having finances for demonstration farms that people could observe.

The role of a servant leader is a lifelong process of self-discovery and bringing quality of life to communities (Interviewee 1118); ARI was an impetus of this journey for fifty-nine graduates interviewed. Sixteen went on to get university degrees and another twelve attended numerous conferences or short term courses on leadership, democracy and gender aspects. Fifteen attended courses specifically focusing on agriculture, livestock or water issues; three of these at Makino School of Continuing and Non-formal Education⁹⁵ in Allahabad, India (Makino, 2011), an institution founded by one of the original ARI founders. There are no official connections between the two institutions but many parallel philosophies and methodologies. Many graduates learned additional skills from donor organizations and/or volunteer mentors both in their own contexts and abroad; a number have also presented in international conferences.

8.2.3 *Relationships*

Sometimes ARI philosophy created conflict for graduates back home: children resenting the time a parent was away or stress on a marriage. One graduate's marriage dissolved when she insisted on working to apply the values of ARI in her community (Interviewee 646). Several families would have preferred their children to have government jobs rather than futures in organic agriculture or service organizations; one family became supportive only after a graduate (Interview 1257) saved the family's pig population from disease. Personal challenges include inability to influence other family members or servants who do the cooking but do not buy organic products or have an understanding of nutrition, lack of available space for those living

⁹⁵ Makino School of Continuing and Non-Formal Education a constituent school of Sam Higginbottom Institute of Agriculture, Technology and Sciences of Allahabad, India.

in urban areas to do agricultural activities, and/or organic products not being available or affordable for family consumption.

Graduates need supportive relationships to determine what aspects of ARI learning to try to implement in their contexts, especially in the challenging opportunities such as described by one graduate (Interviewee 1144) working as a Christian within a predominantly Muslim context who shares “*If we start with religion, we fight but if we start with culture we come together.*” Graduates especially appreciated being in proximity to each other when they did not feel supported or were in conflict with their organizations (Interviewees 1117 & 1194).

8.2.4 Project sustainability

Of graduates who mentioned challenges in long-term impact of their projects, key issues centered around management (33), conflict in values around traditions, faith and work ethics (10) and the vision ending when the graduate left the community (5). Limited resources of people, materials, money and time also are a challenge, especially when associated with unrealistic expectations of instant profit (9) and inadequate physical structures because of lack of funds or shared vision (5).

More than forty graduates spoke of funding challenges, usually with the expectation of external resources. Seven spoke of project funding approaches of donors resulting in losing good people. Donor approaches are often too short termed for development results such as when they expect unreasonable reports (crop results before crops can be harvested) or make sudden changes in program directions according to popular trends. Because of inability to access funding, four graduates felt the ARI experience had benefitted only themselves personally, two of those in independent farming. Seven graduates referred to funding shortages with no explanation. None of the four graduates who were asked if they’d seen the information in the Nov. 2014 ARI Newsletter regrading donor possibilities recalled seeing it. One other (Interviewee 1184) spontaneously mentioned it as a run around for funds with no concrete results.

Project funding challenges resulted in six graduates leaving their organizations; another two were placed on technical leave (Interviewees 1117 & 1194) in hopes of further funding. Meanwhile graduates need to live with the reality of feeding and educating their own (often extended) families now and during retirement when, in many places no retirement benefits exist. As a result, some have migrated or work at long distances from family; they shared of some of the challenges of trying to keep families intact and functioning during those times (Interviewee 664).

Lack of more formal certification from ARI, not possible with its license in Japan as a registered vocational institute, is seen by many graduates as limiting their credibility for individual progress in competitive employment markets. As a result, one couple (Interviewees 49 and 51) established the African Rural Institute for local training and has linked it with a university to provide the accreditation needed for meaningful employment (Interviewee 700) in their country.

A significant challenge to long-term sustainability is the lack of graduates and organizations monitoring communities following training. The difference was evident in visits to struggling efforts in communities of six graduates who, when asked, spoke of verbal or no follow-up and visits to two grassroots farmers who attributed their success to the monitoring received by

graduates (Interviewees 580 & 2610). Visits to successful community farmers included three that were retired school teachers and two agricultural extension workers.

Table 4. Graduate role in change in communities visited

Country	Organization	Government	Independent Agriculture	Independent Non-agriculture
West Africa	4		2	1
East Africa	12	4	2	1
India	13	1	2	2
Indonesia	14	1	1	1
Malaysia	1			
Myanmar	11		1	
Nepal	5			
Sri Lanka	17			1
Total	77	6	8	6
% of total	79.4%	6.2%	8.2%	6.2%

As per table 4, graduates have most often been part of implementing change when working in organizations. Change has been most effective when there are monitoring systems in place. Organization 6 works with more than 9000 groups learning about sustainable development: being together, learning together, staying together, and working together. Organization 104 organizes communities as well as campaigns and advocates for implementation of agrarian land rights with methodologies from the Institute of Cultural Affairs⁹⁶ (ICA). A part-time employee (Interviewee 1174) in another area is helping to develop agricultural skills at the lowest level of community government for those with newly acquired land. Yet another (Org 77), recognizing political trends in the country, reorganized into four organizations led by ARI graduates and supports them in implementing integrated activities and holding staff and communities accountable through results based management⁹⁷ (RBM). Its widespread work has had success helping youth transform from “gun holding home guards” to democratic organizational leaders to ensure the rights of people, especially women and children, in forming organizations.

Immediate and aftermath effects of natural disasters, war, internal conflict and repressive political systems are major threats that require the resilience of starting over again (Interviewee 889) or result in the near demise of organizations. One of these SBs (Org 110) helped seventy-seven families with housing and integrated agricultural activities: children of

⁹⁶ The Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) is a global community of non-profit *organizations* advancing human development worldwide by empowering authentic and sustainable transformation of individuals, communities and organizations, through methods and values.

⁹⁷ Results based management (RBM) is a management strategy which uses feedback loops to achieve strategic goals. All people and organizations (actors) who contribute directly or indirectly to the result, map out their business processes, products and services, showing how they contribute to the outcome.

these families own cars and “have many things”, some even driving buses and trucks. Another (Org 35) helped women with loans that successfully launched them into businesses that supported their families: this was the impetus for one graduate accepting employment with the organization but being very disappointed to be on technical leave because of a lack of resources.

8.2.5 Implementation of core ARI concepts

8.2.5.1 Foodlife

Although graduates were articulate in what the concept meant to them (section 3.3) they spoke less of being able to implement the concepts. Fifteen graduates working in organizations, churches or government spoke of teaching the value of food, safe food, and organic agriculture. One expressed that the concept was good but not practical in hot climates that contribute to rapid food deterioration (Interviewee 921).

8.2.5.2 Dignity of labor

Of the nearly forty graduates who spoke about perspectives of work, three spoke of the dignity of work in farming more readily being felt when it provided a good income. This most often happened for large farmers or those who combine farming with government jobs that supplement farm income. Four graduates spoke of two types of farmers: large profit making ventures with owners living elsewhere and small subsistence farmers. Ten graduates voiced that most subsistence farmers are involved in agriculture because they have no other options. For farmers with less than half an acre of land, seasonal migration is often needed to supplement family incomes. Eight graduates spoke of farming being seen as outdated or a poor man’s occupation and less desirable than activities such as mining or even waiting for relief handouts.

8.2.5.3 Local resource utilization

Learning to manage resources effectively is a valued skill at ARI. Several graduates demonstrated their ability to manage financial resources: some saved their stipends, received grants, or solicited Japanese funds outside of ARI for personal or organizational needs. One graduate (Interviewee 1091) said he was not the only one to return from Japan with a car and even the cost of changing the driving system from one side to the other was worth the flexibility and mobility this has provided him in working with rural communities. Furthermore, the ARI credit union model was helpful to those graduates returning to contexts where credit unions are a model for entry into community development work. Some of these graduates are even introducing teikei⁹⁸ models.

Material waste management was learned by observation rather than as part of the ARI curriculum and graduate concerns regarding ARI practices were explained in section 4.2.4. Efforts to implement waste management in home contexts were mixed with one graduate

⁹⁸ Teikei is the system in Japan where consumers purchase food directly from farmers. It is closely associated with small-scale, local, organic farming and volunteer-based, non-profit partnerships. It is popular to many Japanese and cited by many as the origin of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) in other contexts.

(Interviewee 1109) successful in community-wide change and another sharing about it to others “*whether they understood or not*” (Interviewee 26).

ARI “*emphasizes the importance of making the best use of locally available resources, both natural and human... with effective use of organic materials.*” The most commonly available organic material identified by graduates was manure, although in limited amounts. Mention was also made of rice husks, but those needed to be substituted with coffee pulp or sawdust when rice husks were not available or were needed for more urgent needs such as animal fodder or fires. In one situation rice husks are such a valuable commodity that they are not returned to farmers who take their rice for milling. One innovative graduate (Interviewee 969) created a system where rice husks fuel a machine that in turn hulls rice and presses sunflowers. Forty baskets of rice husks are able to run the machine for four hours.

Charcoal making is common and often a last resort activity for families in times of hunger; however, it contributes significantly to deforestation. Extracting its vinegar was a new skill learned at ARI mentioned by ten graduates. Three of them needed to substitute bamboo, palm wine or sawdust in places of scarcity of wood. The nine graduates producing IMOs (two for animal fodder) were one-third of the number whose reflection papers revealed plans to use it.

Shortages of local resources in terms of money, skills and materials are sometimes compounded by illness and/or death and those graduates with assets say the large number of people coming to them for assistance is “*like a mission field*” (Interviewee 821). While more than 10% of those visited spoke of needing external resources to be able to implement their learning from ARI, four spoke of local or personal donations making their work possible. Three were adding value to local resources to improve livelihoods. One organization (Org 166) took this to a larger scale by hiring local people to process locally available raw materials; local people profit with the wages and sales support from the organization’s activities. The external resources used to set this up exemplify the kind of partnership seven graduates identified as necessary for success.

Local knowledge was noted as crucial in adapting to different human desires and animal feeds from those common in Japan (Interviewee 1105). Leadership is essential in bringing together community members as “*the most important resource, it’s ‘we’ in the community*” (Interviewee 1135). One graduate (Interviewee 904) is intentional about the future by encouraging young people to raise pigs in their free time where wild fodder is readily available, providing both meaningful activity and assets at a time of life many might be tempted to leave the community.

8.2.5.4 *Time management*

Graduates found it challenging to apply to their own contexts the systematic time management of an industrialized country where everyone is equipped to do their own work (Interviewee 1054). Some tried to establish daily schedules in their workplaces with limited success achieved through penalties for lateness such as shaming (Interviewee 970). One (Interviewee 656) used more harmonious penalties such as singing or dancing. The latter also spoke of learning at ARI having contributed to staff in her organization now discussing and implementing work plans that previously were only on paper. However, most often graduates laughingly responded with comments such as a rubber growing context contributing to “*rubber time management*” (Interviewee 1097) or “*We left that in Japan*” (Interviewee 677).

9. Recommendations

These recommendations are the result of an analysis of comments from 173 graduates (86% of those interviewed) during interviews; it also includes comments and observations recorded in trip notes of visits with 229 graduates in addition to organizations and communities. Some of these recommendations were already being considered and/or implemented at the time of a staff review of the initial draft of this report in March, 2016. Others may not be able to be implemented for a variety of reasons, but are included here to respect those who contributed to the study.

Graduates first responded with their gratitude for their ARI experience and learning. Specific affirmation was regularly expressed for particular staff, observation and study trips, and especially for the introduction to international contexts and servant leadership by living in community and the benefit of cultural interchange. Although some recommendations were offered spontaneously, most were in response to requests for suggestions to “*make ARI an even better place.*”

Graduates were frequently reluctant to express anything that was not affirming to ARI so were reminded that ARI is seeking this information. Even then, for some there was reluctance (section 2.2) such as that of one graduate who acknowledged concerns but “*no time to think each one through seven times before speaking*” or one who felt his community had given too positive a report of what is happening in their community but did not elaborate further. These situations imply that recommendations were given with deep sincerity rather than superficial observations as graduates reflected on life before, during and after their ARI experience.

9.1 Recruitment and preparation of potential participants

Choose participants who have commitment and vision for communities wherever they are working.

In order to select candidates with the most potential for sustainable future impact, key criteria should be the candidate’s commitment and vision for communities, selected from a wider range of possibilities. There is a need to be open to candidates from different entities: faith-based or secular organizations, governments or individuals recommended by other graduates. It also means being open to considering people of different qualifications or different organizational levels: pastors and lay workers, grass roots or senior employees. Often a more senior person with good servant leadership qualities can have a wider positive influence than someone working in a single community. Sometimes graduates have had to leave their organizations in order to do this, such as the five who were part of starting new organizations to be able to have a wider impact.

Develop deeper relationships with SBs and potential candidates.

Sending bodies and trusted and respected graduates can be helpful in the important process of selecting candidates to go to ARI. Increased mutual understanding of opportunities and expectations between ARI, sending bodies and applicants would help to clarify roles and expectations of each. Skype communication is a readily available and affordable tool that could be used for this. Clearer ARI orientation during calls could help organizations select

appropriate candidates and decide whether benefits outweigh the sacrifice of employee time away. ARI staff could assess interaction between the potential applicant and SB as well as English skills and motivation. English skills were identified by several graduates as more important than educational levels for learning.

Often more value is attributed to something when it is not given for free and graduates had mixed perceptions around whether or not SBs and participants should be expected to pay a portion of the training costs. Some, especially those with a passion to not waste ARI's valuable resources, felt that if organizations and applicants were required to pay a portion of expenses there would be more commitment to the program and fewer adventure seekers. Others would not have been able to attend had it not been for this support so it is important to continue the current practice of scholarships for those who have a strong case but otherwise could not afford to attend.

Great financial involvement by SBs may also increase ARI's accountability to deliver useful results to them and is an aspect that merits ongoing analysis by ARI in light of ever changing world situations.

Accept two, but not more, participants from any one organization, area or language group at any one time.

It was recognized that individuals from less developed contexts will glean more from the training; however, they are often those with fewer language skills or cross-cultural experience. Being together with someone else with the same language and/or similar culture can help them process what is being learned as happened in the case of two early graduates (Interviewees 470 & 475). They were allowed to be roommates as one had no English skills; their relationship developed into a long-term supportive one.

This might also be an opportunity to have a man and woman participant from an area where women are not generally accepted in leadership roles that could possibly help the man become an advocate for the women in their communities.

It was also recommended not to have more than two from any one entity at any one time to prevent the formation of cliques while at ARI.

Develop teams of two to three trusted graduates in geographic areas to assist in screening applicants.

Graduate associations and individuals are a helpful resource in learning about organizations and individuals in their contexts; there is graduate interest in helping with this but with a desire for clear expectations of the role. Arrangements for remuneration of expenses in situations of travel should be worked out in advance.

9.2 ARI participant experience

The learning that takes place at ARI is a combination of curriculum and experiences of daily living that cannot be separated.

Strengthen the leadership component beyond rotation of leadership roles to providing tools that support development of leadership and transformational community activities.

Although not the verbalized intent of ARI, organic agriculture is often seen as the main focus of the institution. Even many who verbalized satisfaction with the leadership aspects of the training blamed their inability to mobilize communities on their inability to establish an ARI-style demonstration farm. This is a natural tendency as hands-on skills are easier to grasp than less concrete ones, especially where language skills are a barrier. However, the priority of ARI for leadership is affirmed by those graduates successful in organizations, demonstration plots or FFSs within rural communities. One graduate (Interviewee 78) explained that it is the “*soft skills*” of values such as sharing labor and respect that help most and that the “*hard stuff*” could have been learned as well in other places.

Prepare participants for group facilitation.

As group activities were the most productive in long-term impacts, it is important for participants to become proficient in a variety of team building methodologies. An opportunity to practice them could decrease the amount of “*learning the hard way*” in working with grassroots communities. It is also important to understand how to choose the most appropriate ones and adapt them for specific cultural contexts. Skills in PLA, PRA and Asset Based Community Development ⁹⁹(ABCD), and methodologies have proven effective and in wider contexts and are compatible with the principles of servant leadership important to ARI.

A change from 80% practical to somewhere closer to equal time for practical and classroom experience would allow time for going beyond “*good job*” (Interviewee 618) to understanding the theories and developing skills for baseline surveys, participatory planning, proposal writing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating to repeat the cycle. With these skills, graduates can take on more meaningful roles in their SBs and wider contexts such as donor and government sectors. This would contribute to increased effectiveness in a rapidly changing world where networks are becoming increasingly important for long-term sustainability. There are several graduates with expertise in these methodologies that could be helpful resources.

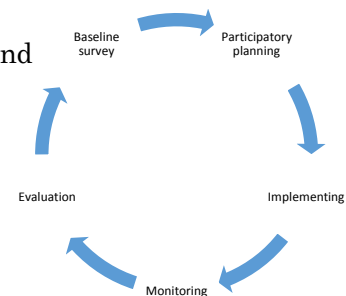


Figure 52. Planning and monitoring cycle.

Another crucial area of leadership is in the area of conflict management: graduates often face challenges of domestic and community violence, business and government corruption, and/or war and human rights violations. In 2012 an external consultant attempted to incorporate a component into the program but participant needs at the time were beyond the skills of the consultant to address. Ongoing efforts for staff learning about restorative justice are recommended to support this significant issue (IIRP, 2016).

⁹⁹ Asset based Community Development (ABCD) is an approach to community based development, based on the principles of appreciating and mobilizing individual and community skills and assets (rather than focusing on problems and needs). It is community-driven development rather than development driven by external agencies; and builds on appreciative inquiry, social capital, and participatory approaches to development, community economic development models and efforts to strengthen civil society.

Prepare participants for leadership in gender equity.

Seeing the impact that gender roles have had on the ability of graduates to have an impact in their home communities, training on gender analysis tools should be added to the curriculum so that both men and women graduates are more aware of their own culture, be better equipped to both analyze inequities and address them in culturally appropriate ways. Tools are available from the Asian Project Management Support Programme (Shankar, 2013) and

Understand and respect participant contexts.

Of those commenting on ARI curriculum, 57% suggested ARI have more knowledge of the participant contexts (geography, culture, and resources) “*beyond the five-minute asking about their countries*” (Interviewee 1077). This includes more opportunities for peer learning, applying knowledge from a wide range of contexts, treating all participants with the same respect, and where possible, educating volunteers and guests to do the same. Equal respect without regard to age, culture and status is important to discover the potentialities of each; “*In ARI we are learning about integrated farming, why not integrated human being?*” (Interviewee 726). Care needs to be given to not overrate certain cultural values such as the work ethic of Japan. This could help to avoid instances such as one graduate (Interviewee 548) publicly telling young school children of subsistence families that they were hungry because their parents were lazy. It is recognized that people can be over sensitive to situations in which no negativity was intended; however, increased opportunities for staff to learn from participants would help participants to feel understood. Staff biases should also be acknowledged and addressed to avoid perceptions that sometimes exist that participants, whether it be for country of origin, culture or gender, are not valued equally.

ARI staff identified the value of the country context sections of an early version of this report for future orientation of new staff and participants. It is recommended that this be used as a beginning and be updated as new information becomes available. Aspects such as land distribution, unemployment and migration, human and substance trafficking patterns, dependence on relief, international policies, new technologies and access to them are ever changing and increase the importance for ARI to always be a learning community.

Go beyond working with hands in agricultural and livestock aspects, to teaching the scientific method and practical cost-effective methodologies that graduates can translate to their own contexts with fewer or significantly different resources.

The transition to organic agriculture is one that takes several years, even under the most favorable environmental conditions; most grassroots families live in less than ideal conditions with little margin for risk without endangering family food supplies. Providing people with low risk options to begin small incremental changes can be a way to start. To do this graduates need to be able to provide good explanations and respond to questions in order to instill confidence to try something new: a way of practicing this could be to have them prepare workshops for staff, fellow participants and guests to the campus.

More time is needed for understanding practices. One graduate expressed this as needing more time learning how to make compost or cattle feed rather than just the duties of cleaning and feeding (Interviewee 705). Another said “*Not just how to make bokashi but what it is so you can*

teach it to others' (Interviewee 919). Composting is only one of a wide range of activities that make up conservation agriculture¹⁰⁰ (Patton, 2016) that can make a difference in graduate contexts: choosing appropriate ones to be explored for particular graduate contexts should be considered.

Understanding the strengths and challenges of a variety of methodologies such as FFSs and model farmers for teaching agriculture in addition to the ARI demo farm can help choose appropriate approaches for specific contexts. This includes contexts such as those where land available for agriculture is becoming ever more limited. Graduates in urban settings, increasingly important for food production, need skills for implementing high intensity agriculture in small spaces.

Although animals are important in providing composting material, they also compete with human needs for food: the livestock ladder of starting with smaller, hardier animals helps people build the skills they need for larger animals that they can then buy themselves with an added sense of ownership and care (ILRI, 2004). Skills in livestock breeding and castrating, analyzing appropriate fodder and building animal shelters with locally available materials are important. Only one graduate farm visited had the capacity to implement large scale pig and chicken raising taught at ARI; this makes it important to provide practical and theoretical learning on how to manage a few chickens, pigs and/or rabbits in small numbers with locally available resources.

Graduates suggested providing training on basic technologies, some of which are included in the current curriculum: small biogas models, tree grafting, crop diversity, germination testing, repelling insects, treadle pumps, SALT, and how to help people change systematically from shifting to permanent agriculture while still being able to feed their families.

Graduates had little knowledge of green manure cover crops; this topic is important in presenting suitable options for fertility beyond kitchen gardens. Cover crops¹⁰¹ are beneficial for erosion protection, weed suppression, nitrogen fixation, soil structure creation, and insect pest reduction. Using green manure¹⁰² adds to soil fertility and structure with certain crops also valuable as livestock fodder (Card, 2016). A helpful decision tree for determining appropriate cover crops is included in the book *Restoring the Soil* (Bunch, 2012).

Present curriculum material step by step with repetitive, frequent cycles of action and new information.

The value of illustrative handouts that can be taken home was especially seen in a visit where one graduate (Interviewee 711) of more than ten years ago pulled out ARI handouts from his office drawer that he still made use of from the time of his training.

¹⁰⁰ Conservation agriculture is any system or practice which aims to conserve soil and water by combining surface cover (mulch) with reduced or zero tillage to minimize runoff and erosion, as well as improve the conditions for plant establishment and growth.

¹⁰¹ A cover crop is one grown for the protection and enrichment of the soil.

¹⁰² Green manure is fertilizer consisting of growing plants that are plowed back into the soil.

Staff indicated that most technical material is presented during the first few weeks of the program when English skills are very basic. Presentations do include photos but explanations are often in a level of English that may be challenging for those with low skills. Providing information in small amounts interspersed with activity and frequent repetition can be helpful in comprehension. A review near the end of the curriculum at the time take-home resources are distributed may also result in greater use.

Include strategies on how best to decide which technologies are appropriate for adapting to home contexts. As possible, allow participants to study aspects relevant to their own contexts more deeply and/or link with appropriate learning experiences beyond ARI at the end of the program.

Include marketing, adding value and microfinance components in the curriculum.

Graduates and especially grassroot communities have a need to make their activities support their livelihoods. The ARI credit union is managed by participants and also includes staff and volunteers. Competencies learned there were deeply valued: incorporating theory and skills in the value and development of community savings and credit organizations (SACCOS) would strengthen graduate abilities to contribute to this growing movement in many contexts.

The words of one graduate (Interviewee 1002) “*We learned farming but not how to sell*” also point to needed skills on evaluating markets and related components such as adding value, processing, packaging, and quality control¹⁰³. Techniques for storage and managing early or late planting to maximize market advantage are also important. Adding value to agricultural products can contribute significantly to family livelihoods: activities such as food processing, which has been offered on occasion, should be consistently offered.

Include systems of developing economic calculations for cost benefit analysis of which animals are profitable in which environments, as many cannot afford to buy animal feed and do not have access to the free waste products of Japan. One successful and well respected graduate (Interviewee 614) also suggested including skills on helping people to evaluate pros and cons of cash crops rather than totally discouraging them. A methodology for helping participants develop and practice business plans might be able to be adapted from Earth University¹⁰⁴ (2014).

¹⁰³ Quality control is a system of maintaining standards in products that are produced by testing a sample of the output against the required specification.

¹⁰⁴ Earth University (2014) is a university in Costa Rica with an innovative curriculum where “You will develop and run your own business while at EARTH. In your first year, you will form a company with four to six classmates and create a business plan that analyzes financial, social and environmental factors. Once the project is approved, the University will grant your company a loan to operate the business during your second year. In the third year, you will

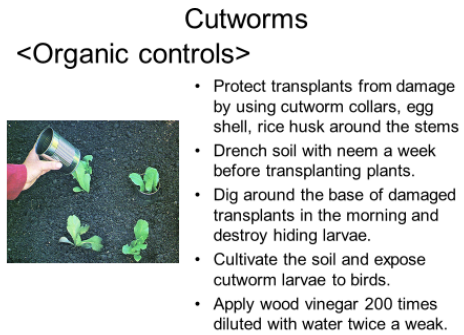


Figure 53. ARI curriculum material sample.

Be aware of, and include aspects on changing world trends.

Since the beginning of ARI the world has changed greatly. Computerization, internet and cell phones have resolved some of the communication issues of earlier years for participants in staying in contact with families. Reliance on these tools to access resource information has also created increased need for training in their use, especially for those coming from areas where these are still rare or unavailable.

Changing world patterns mean water harvesting techniques and biosand water filters have ever increasing importance as clean water sources in the world become less available. Creative methodologies for minimizing and disposing of increasing amounts of garbage without polluting the environment are important such the six Rs: refusing to generate waste, reinventing, reducing, reusing or repairing, recycling, and rebuying (Alatervo, 2013). Current strategies are also needed for confronting climate change, globalization, disasters or other emergencies. Some of the learning around ARI response to the 2011 earthquake may be helpful in developing this aspect of the curriculum, combined with learning from graduates and participants from varying contexts to determine the most crucial aspects to be taught in a specific year. These need to be reviewed and changed over time to be relevant.

Take whatever steps are possible to formalize certification for graduates.

In a changing world where donor funding is based on short-term projects, graduates are often searching for jobs. Employment through an organization is usually necessary because most often graduates do not have personal resources to implement community wide changes. The need for credentials valued by employers was highlighted by one graduate who said “*At ARI we get skills but you can't find jobs without the paper*” (Interviewee 1192). Some jobs have also been threatened by not having a formal diploma (Froede K, personal communication, March, 8, 2016).

It is recognized that ARI under its legal status as a vocational institute is not allowed to issue diplomas and is now including more information on certificates about what is covered; this may be helpful in some situations. Some graduates also suggested having more competency requirements while at ARI, in the words of one (Interviewee 1067) “*to upgrade the ARI, not to make people to fail but to grade people after three or two months to make you know that you have to work.*” Perhaps an arrangement with a local university could be made for participants who are interested in meeting more stringent requirements for a diploma being able to do so, while others, especially those with lower language skills or educational levels, could continue as per the present process.

This lack of certification was also identified by several graduates as a deterrent to recruitment of quality potential candidates, yet another reason for ARI to explore what might be possible within the realities of Japan.

close the business and formally evaluate its profitability and effectiveness. After repaying your loan with interest, you share the profits among your group.”

9.3 Post-graduation monitoring by ARI

The concept “*That we may live together*” has great potential beyond ARI campus life in guiding relationships between ARI, sending bodies, and graduates in encircling communities to help them flourish for the long-term. Mutual learning, celebrating successes and providing encouragement all are key to that future. In addition to the much appreciated newsletters (paper copies for those without internet access), and Facebook page for graduates, a number of other recommendations are offered for these relationships.

Organize ARI staff visits to graduates, sending bodies and communities for purposes of deepening relationships and learning.

Interviewees expressed deep appreciation for the researchers’ visits. It is recommended this become a regular ARI staff practice to all graduates’ home countries. Suggested frequency for such visits varied from every one to ten years: the cost implications to be borne by ARI are a significant factor in determining that. Clear parameters need to be spelled out in advance that expenses incurred for food, transportation and lodging not become a burden for graduates but are part of the ARI budget for this purpose. Every staff person having at least one opportunity to participate in such a trip would have multiple benefits.

The benefit for staff would be a deeper understanding of non-Japanese contexts, learning needs and celebrating graduate accomplishments and encouraging them. One very specific way for the latter is done by not responding to community questions as the “*outside expert*” but referring questions to the graduate along with the affirmation that the graduate is able to combine both ARI training with knowledge of the local context. The staff person has little knowledge of the local context and asking solid questions is a helpful way for both staff and community to learn. Documenting and sharing the learning from such visits would help the entire staff to stay current on what is happening without embarking on a study such as this one.

The benefit for graduates would be affirmation that ARI cares about what they are doing and being challenged to do their best as a result. This would also result in increased status in the community “*because there is no people come from outside to give motivations for the grassroots*” (Interviewee 615). These energizing visits can also be the impetus for graduates to meet together, participate in exchange visits, exchange ideas and information, as well as feel connected to ARI without the expense of a trip to Japan, unaffordable by most. Communication with graduates ahead of time could develop the most beneficial itinerary responding to specific needs or requests for short courses.

Graduates come together eagerly when someone representing ARI is visiting, so graduate associations may be strengthened or organized as the result of such visits. Formal graduate organizations are seen to have challenges with internal politics and/or funding but there are a number of informal relationships equally or more effective in providing mutual support and learning. Their value should not be discounted.

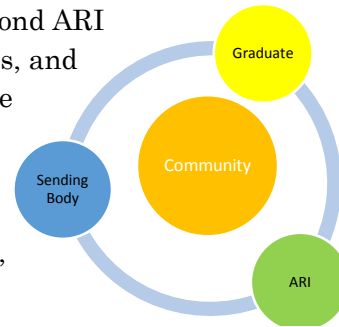


Figure 54. Community support circle

Such visits should also include sending bodies or employer organizations. In addition to those aspects discussed in section 9.1, sending bodies are an important asset for ARI. They can aid in identifying potential participants, internship possibilities and resources for learning and can work with ARI to develop a shared vision of an appropriate curriculum. Links with other potential sending bodies could be established through organizing and facilitating meetings of graduate organizations within readily accessible geographic areas. Some organizational staff also suggested ARI convene a meeting at ARI for key leaders from sending bodies to facilitate their understanding of ARI and include them in ARI visioning and planning to be more relevant to graduates' contexts.

Explore opportunities for ARI graduate internships near their local contexts.

Most graduates who followed their ARI training with a three-month experience at the Santa Rita Training Center¹⁰⁵ or later attended the Makino School of Continuing and Non-Formal Education spoke of how this benefitted their application of ARI learning in their own contexts. A number of organizations affiliated with ARI graduates have the capacity to do this with some having experience with interns from other places and/or indicating a willingness to participate in this way. Doing a pilot experiment with one or two graduates in one or two locations would be a way to explore this option and deepen ARI relationships with organizations and networks within regions. Some SBs spoke of a willingness to participate in hosting interns; they are included along with other possibilities identified by researchers in Appendix J.

Explore feasibility of seed money for projects to sending bodies.

Relationships with a number of organizations some years ago made it possible for ARI to provide some seed money to graduates on return home. A few of the graduates involved shared stories of how this benefitted individual or organizational plans to implement ARI learning but it is unknown how widespread this was. To meet the challenge of returning to organizations with a plan for a new activity but no funds for implementing it, 20% requested ARI plan to help in this aspect either by considering grants for selected competent graduates or connecting them with granting organizations. Should ARI decide to implement this sort of plan, it is recommended that the grant be given to the SB for implementation of a plan mutually developed by the SB and graduate, submitted to ARI in accordance with guidelines developed by ARI in collaboration with key sending bodies, possibly at a meeting as suggested above. Linking this with the suggested adaptation of the Earth University entrepreneurial model might also be a possibility. Skills in small grant writing and use of the internet are important for graduates to explore possible sources of funding in their own countries such as the small pots of money embassies often have for community development and poverty alleviation projects.

9.4 ARI Continuity

Provide continuing education opportunities to equip staff to provide the optimum quality training for participants.

¹⁰⁵ The Santa Rita Training Center on Negros Island, Philippines, established with the cooperation of ARI, was the base of the Negros Training Project beginning in 1996. ARI graduates attended as an optional training extension from 1996 to 2003. Since 2004, the Augustinian Sisters of Our Lady of Consolation have continued to run it independently.

Providing opportunities for all staff to continue learning about aspects identified in this report and new ones that may arise in future is important for ARI to continue to be relevant in an ever changing world. Recognize that staff can learn much from TAs and participants about contexts outside of Japan and utilize those learning opportunities, in addition to providing opportunities for external courses or conferences to stay current. It is also essential to provide an adequate balance of work and rest to model care of families and to have the energy and enthusiasm for new learning.

Clarify the role of Training Assistants and recruit accordingly.

Of the twenty-three TAs interviewed, all had come to deepen their learning and some to share what they had learned in the intervening years. They can be important resources for staff and participant learning although few appeared to have had the opportunity to share these skills. Those interviewed agreed they had been a major component of the labor force and a “*middleman*” between staff and participants. If this is indeed the intent of the position, it is advisable to change that to having staff take more responsibility for developing deeper relationships with participants. This would help to mitigate the feelings in of staff having little understanding and concern for their specific contexts (section 8.1.15). If it is not the intent, more clarity for all regarding the role would be helpful.

Being clear on expectations ahead of time and providing appropriate time for learning opportunities promised, as well as for teaching can make this a rewarding experience for all.

Develop a strategic plan for long-term sustainability that responds to changing world realities.

Although most graduates want ARI to continue because of their very positive experience there, a few verbalized deeper perspectives on the importance of ARI to have a strategic plan that considers funding streams: not being solely dependent on donors and having multiple donors in addition to ending debt. One graduate (Interviewee 145) even offered to come to Japan to fundraise for ARI in organic farming venues in Japan.

Although nostalgic about their experience, some were surprised to see so little change over decades in the light of a changing world. One organizational director spoke of the specific focus on “*rural*” limiting choices of candidates best able to learn because of limitations with English in rural areas; another spoke of the limitations of learning by participants also not understanding Japanese.

Clarify roles and relationships of staff levels, governing bodies and American Friends of ARI (AFARI) and find an appropriate place for sending body participation.

An organizational chart that shows the relationships of all of the entities would be helpful in explaining the organization to others.

According to ARI’s Act of Endowment, the board makes decisions regarding the legal body of ARI and manages the execution of board member functions. The board is comprised of ten members: the ARI Training Center Director, four members elected in a Councilors’ meeting and five intellectuals elected by the board members. Councilors (21) are comprised of four members recommended by the board, three ARI graduates and fourteen intellectuals elected by the board.

Councilors need to approve the following issues prior to being discussed in the board meeting including:

- Budget and loan
- Annual plans
- Bearing/abandoning responsibilities stated outside budget
- Changes of Act of Endowment
- Merging with another organization
- Termination of school due to inability of execution of main activities
- Recruitment of donation and donation items
- Selection of Director
- Changes of school regulations
- Any important items which are decided to be discussed by Councilors.

In addition, Councilors can give opinions regarding the businesses of finances, states of job execution of board members, and respond to inquiries or receive reports regarding these matters. It seems Councilors have more authority because all the important agendas have to be agreed upon by them before they come to Board meeting. *“But in ARI’s case, we usually have Board meeting and Councilors meeting at the same time. It looks there is no difference”* (Arakawa T. personal communication April 5, 2016).

The Steering Committee is comprised of the Director, Associate Director and General Manager with the roles determined by the Director. The latest version of key concepts was drafted with input from the majority of the staff based on learning from the impact of having the previous version done with a small group (Arakawa T. personal communication, April 8, 2016). Clarity of the organizations decision making processes would be helpful for all to know what is expected of them.

American Friends of ARI (AFARI) is an American based organization whose purpose on paper appears to be raising funds in North America to support the work of ARI (Appendix K). No mention of a relationship to ARI other than that is evident although AFARI board members have been noted to participate in staff meetings and participant interviews.

9.5 General

Respond to graduate suggestions and give reasons when ideas are not implemented.

There were several conversations where graduates explained that they have raised issues before, sometimes on several occasions, with no response from ARI. Responding to people with reasons for a lack of action would help with their understanding, as well as help them feel less disappointment when candidates they refer are not accepted.

Note: A number of other aspects were spoken about but there was no definite pattern so recommendations are not made regarding them. As examples, some wanted the program to be longer, others wanted it to be shorter; some wanted longer homestays, others wanted fewer or shorter homestays; some requested shorter refresher courses.

10. Conclusion

“That we may live together” has been the guiding principle at ARI for more than forty years as the now more than 1300 individuals from more than sixty-five countries have been trained to be servant leaders in rural communities. Living in community with people from more than twenty countries at any one time on a working farm, participants, volunteers and staff, participate equally in all of the aspects of daily and seasonal activities. The focus of all activities from field to barn to kitchen culminates in the joy of sharing food and fellowship in a central gathering place, Koinonia.

Although the intended focus of ARI is that participants would learn leadership through organic farming, graduates often first focus on organic farming. Many graduates felt guilty when they were unable to implement pure organic practices or develop a demonstration farm based on ARI’s model. However, the leadership skills of graduates were implemented with an impact to wider communities through work in faith-based organizations, secular development organizations, government, individual agricultural endeavors or non-agriculture related employment. Several were instrumental in establishing new organizations to be able to have a wider influence in community development and advocacy issues.

Core concepts have always guided ARI; however, how these are understood by graduates varied. The meaning of *“rural”* in Japan with its available infrastructure is vastly different from that of the grassroots communities that the majority of graduates come from with some saying *“There is no rural in Japan”*. They were more likely to identify rural settings by the things that are lacking there, although many also realized the potential of rural areas and it being *“a privilege to live in a rural setting IF you can make that setting a happy place to live in”*. Graduates also experience less difference between rural and urban in their own contexts than in Japan; they spoke of *“grassroots”* and *“community leaders”* being more appropriate terms in striving for flourishing communities through capacity building and development in whatever settings. Most of the graduates interviewed were Christian and identified their faith as a major source of inner strength that had been enriched by interactions across cultures and faiths; others spoke of being energized by relationships with families, communities and ARI.

Learning at ARI was more experiential than theoretical, which is understandable because of the limited English skills of both participants and some staff. As a result, understanding of complex topics was limited. For example, foodlife was often understood as the aspect of chores rather than the deeper meaning intended. Graduates also felt limited by knowing how to make bokashi at ARI but not the principles behind it so that they could better adapt it to their own contexts. Resource management was seen to be inconsistent with graduate values as they saw food or material items being discarded that would have been useful in their home contexts. ARI’s style of time management was not able to be implemented in many cultures. Opportunities for graduates to learn beyond the nine-month course were different for Japanese GIs who focused on deepening learning in a specific area than for

TAs whose role focused on staff support and being intermediaries between staff and participants, rather than on finding opportunities for learning.

Graduates leave ARI with a dream or plan for the future. The ability, of the 53% that were able to implement these in whole or part, was impacted by the plan itself, whether concrete or abstract, and how it fit into the graduate's local context. Even more important was whether or not it fit into the vision or financial and time constraints of the SB.

Countries, and specific regions and even communities present unique opportunities and challenges as those relate to geographic, climatic, political, economic and social circumstances. Family styles, community structures and health issues impact what strategies can be explored in specific locations.

Globalization has been a double-edged sword, bringing health, education, materials and communication on one hand, but dissatisfaction and desire for more on the other, increasing migration of youth and trafficking of both substances and humans to the extent that some governments are increasingly dependent on remittance revenues.

Women in particular bear a heavy burden in agricultural and family responsibilities although not having the same access as men to capital or land, a commodity that is becoming less available because of environmental degradation, generational subdividing and land grabbing. Many migrate in desperate efforts to support their families and are especially vulnerable to sexual exploitation in trafficking war situations.

War, tribal conflict, religious conflict and natural disasters have often resulted in people fleeing for their lives. Corruption at all levels of society leaves recovery from these challenges even more difficult with people sometimes making simple choices of what to grow based simply on what is less easily stolen (section 7.5.2.1).

It is into these contexts that ARI graduates return. Although efforts at organic agriculture and livestock raising have been challenging, when combined with effective skills in leadership they have made a significant difference. Graduates' roles in night paddocking have promoted peace between pastoralists and farmers (section 7.8.3), introduction of conservation agriculture has helped families themselves and orphans (section 7.1.4.1), and a reflexology practice brings physical healing (section 7.1.4.4). Advocacy of graduates with communities and governments has resulted in stable pork markets in one remote area (section 7.3.1), death benefits to families of deceased migrants (section 7.6.22) and communities are supported in advocating for their rights with governments in several countries.

This has happened mostly in the context of organizations that graduates have helped to strengthen or have formed in their passion to help communities flourish. These have been most effective when participative methodologies, monitoring mechanisms and positive relationships with communities, governments and donors have been used. In spite of their leadership often being challenged by virtue of their gender, female graduates have also been a significant part of this movement for communities to flourish.

The recommendations in this report take into account recruitment and preparation of potential participants, participant experiences at ARI, post-graduation monitoring, and continuity of ARI itself, all intended to help ARI be the best it can be as its journey continues into the next forty years. May “*that we may live together*” guide that journey of building on the values of “*rural*” of the past to be relevant in the myriad of changing “*grassroots*” realities of today’s world. It is a journey well on its way with the theme at its fortieth anniversary, already well on its way with the fortieth anniversary theme “*Transformation at the Grassroots: walking with grassroots leaders*” and the efforts of staff in already implementing some of the recommendations proposed here.



Figure 55. Community group meeting. Photo courtesy of Steven Cutting.

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Appendix A: ARI Philosophical Level

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Asian Rural Institute is to build an environmentally healthy, just and peaceful world, in which each person can live to his or her fullest potential. This mission is rooted in the love of Jesus Christ.

To carry out this mission, we nurture and train rural leaders for a life of sharing. Leaders, both women and men, who live and work in grassroots rural communities primarily in Asia, Africa and the Pacific, form a community of learning each year together with staff and other residents.

Through community-based learning we study the best ways for rural people to share and enhance local resources and abilities for the common good.

We present a challenge to ourselves and to the whole world in our approach to food and life.

Motto: “That We May Live Together” (Review Writings / Teachings of Dr. Takami)

Purpose and Three Conceptual Pillars of ARI’s Rural Leaders Training Program

The purpose of the ARI Training Program is to discover the meaning of the motto “That We May Live Together.” Humans, nature and all living creatures are God’s creations and we must live together on Earth; however we all know how difficult this is. Failure to live together is the cause of many problems in the world.

Food is the result of the joint work of God, nature and human beings. Therefore, we strongly believe that in order to value all life on Earth, sharing food is essential; by sharing food we may live together.

**“Let’s create a world in which human life and the food that sustains it have the highest value
“That We May Live Together”**

The three conceptual pillars which support ARI training are:

- **Servant Leadership** – ARI is a place where every person can learn about himself or herself through new experiences and ideas and come to a deeper understanding of what it means to be a leader who serves people.
- **Foodlife** – is a special word used at ARI to show that *food* and *life* cannot be separated; both depend upon each other. ARI is a place that values the soil – including the farmers and rural communities that work the soil – and finds dignity and satisfaction in producing food with our own hands.
- **Community Building** – ARI is a place where we can learn through sharing – sharing food and sharing life. We come as people of different cultures, ethnicities and faiths, choosing to live and grow together through our differences and difficulties. In our life

together, we work toward the goal of becoming effective servant-leaders, learning with and from one another.

Ten Key Concepts of the ARI Rural Leaders Training Program and Guiding Questions

That We May Live Together

- What is the meaning of "That We May Live Together"?
- With whom do we live?
- How do we live together?

Servant leadership

- What are the characteristics of a servant leader?
- Who is your model example of a servant leader?
- How can you be a servant leader in your community?
- Is a servant leader "a leader who serves", or "a servant who leads"?

Foodlife

- What is the connection between food and life?
- What does "sharing food" mean?

Community building

- What is community?
- Who are my community?

Spiritual growth

- What is spirituality?
- What did you learn from people of other cultures, other faiths and people with no religion?
- Who affected your spiritual growth and how?
- What does prayer mean to you?

Dignity of labor

- Can all forms of labor be respected?
- What is the meaning of "dignity of labour"?
- What is the meaning of rest?
- How does labour bring meaning to life?

To live in harmony with nature

- What is the connection between nature and farming?
- What is the meaning/purpose of farming for human beings?
- What is the cycle of life? What is our place in the cycle of life?

Value of rural life

- What does it mean for a community to be self-reliant?
- What do richness, true development, happiness and money mean?
- What is globalization? What is localization?

To live in harmony with people

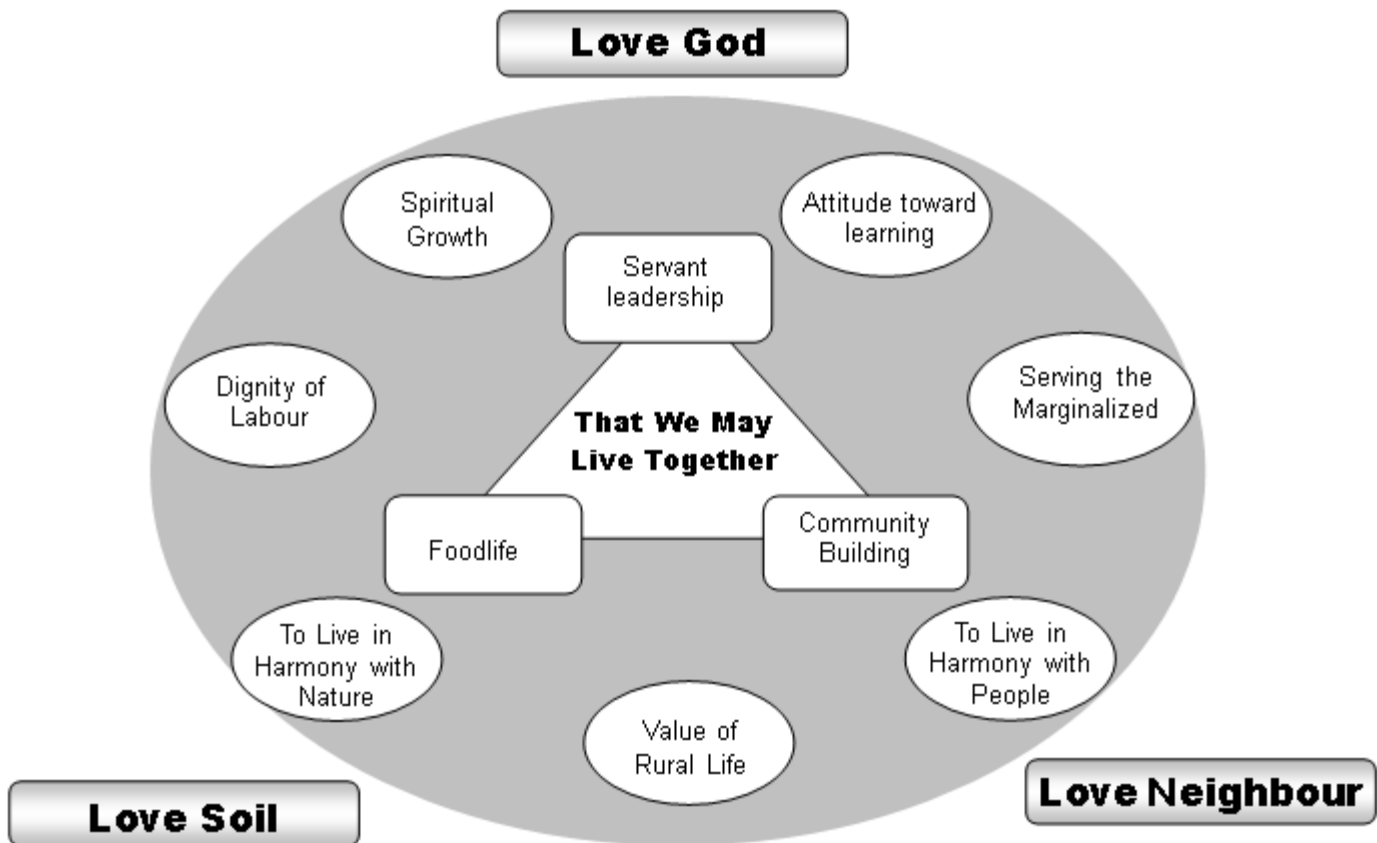
- What are the skills needed to live in harmony with people?
- What must I do to live (happily) in community?

- What is good communication?
Serving the marginalized
- Who are your neighbors when we say "love your neighbor"?
- Who are the marginalized?

Attitude toward learning

- What are the learning opportunities in this community (ARI)?
- What are the learning opportunities in your community?
- What can we learn through our differences, our miscommunications, our commonalities and our working together?
- How do you connect "learning by head" and "learning by muscle"?

Three Pillars and Three Loves



ARI Foodlife

Foodlife is a special word used at ARI to express the reality that *food* and *life* cannot be separated; both depend upon each other. God has given us the gift of nature so that we can sustain our lives by making food. Human beings cannot survive without food, so we work to sustain life through a healthy relationship with nature. At ARI we are making an effort to create *Foodlife* in which the soil becomes richer as we produce food, and human relationships become more beautiful.

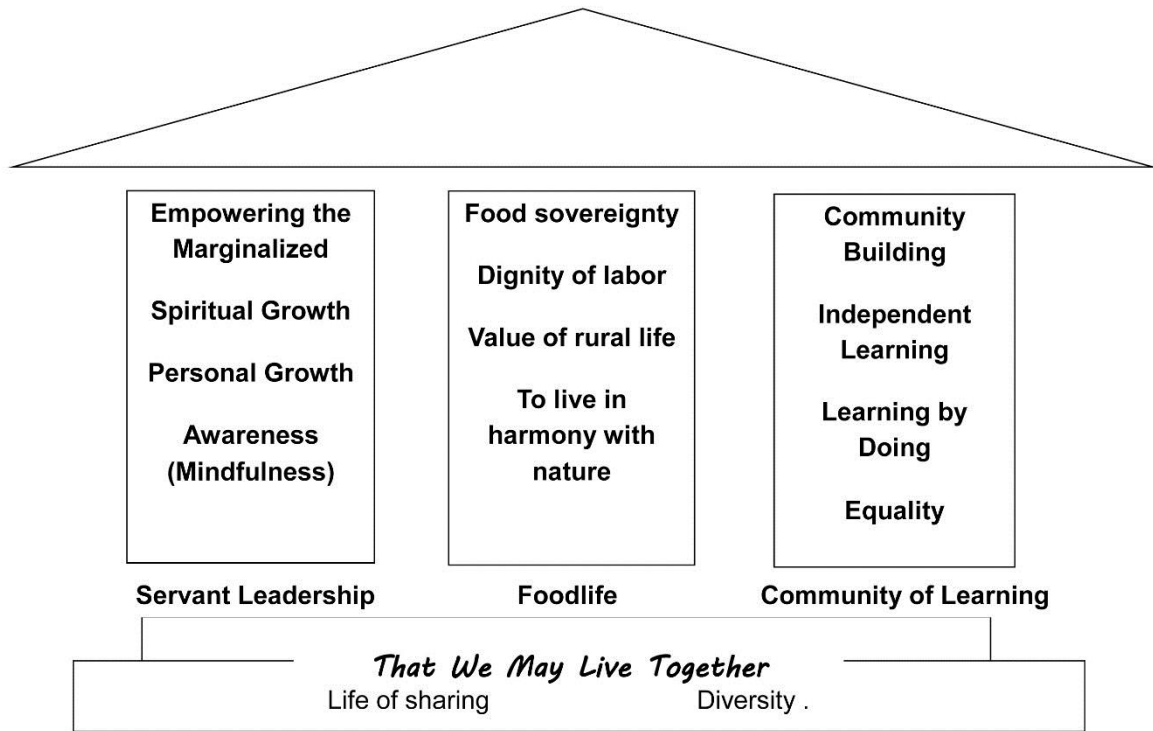
Encompassing much more than just producing food to alleviate hunger, Foodlife places great value in producing and sharing healthy food through the cooperative efforts of the community.

It emphasizes the importance of making the best use of locally available resources, both natural and human, and it leads toward the development of vibrant self-sustaining rural communities and villages which are essential for the peace and stability of a people.

It is a joyful experience for community members when we can produce food through our labor in the morning and evening and gather in Koinonia for meals, the center of our life. We give thanks to God and to the people who labor to produce and prepare our food. Whenever we have a meal, we can experience the blessings of God and the heart of the community. Let us make a world in which people value both food and life **“so that we may live together.”**

ARI Foodlife involves activities such as producing, processing, cooking and eating food and sharing with others. Foodlife provides learning opportunities to deepen our understanding of organic farming, the importance of food, the dignity of labor and the necessity of food self-sufficiency for people's self-reliance.

Key Concepts of ARI Rural Leaders Training Program



Key concept and three love with daily activities



Appendix C. Study time line

September, 2013: 40th Anniversary events.

- Approval of intent to do the study.
- External Research Coordinator included in Fetzer group interviews.
- Meeting with potential donors.

September to December 2013

- Proposal written and submitted to donors.
- October: United Church of Christ confirmed funding of \$80,000.
- Research and acquisition of equipment and software (NVIVO) appropriate for qualitative research.

January 2014 through April 2015

- UMCOR approval of \$50,000.
- Travel, visits and interviews to graduates and sending bodies as in Table 1.
- Meetings with ARI steering committee and staff September 2014.
- Intern completion of reflection paper and reality comparisons.
- Intern developed web based platform for sharing of graduate profiles.
- Interview transcriptions in process.

May 2015 through April, 2016

- Meeting of ARI and External Research Coordinator with UMCOR staff in June 2015 regarding extending the project.
- Meetings with ARI staff June 2015 and March 2016.
- Completion of interview transcriptions and coding.
- Completion of research report.

Both the Internal and External Research Coordinators received a stipend for the period from January 2014 through December 2015; all work before and after those dates was provided free of charge. Throughout the study both put in hours far beyond the 0.6 full time equivalent agreed on in the original proposal.

Note: Pending funding availability, the book is anticipated to be completed by the end of June, 2016 and translation of both the book and report into Japanese will occur as soon as possible after that, pending available funds. An event to launch the book will be planned once translation publications have been completed.

Appendix D. Staff questionnaire

Dear ARI Staff:

It has been a delight to listen to graduates in so many places talk about the influence you have had on their lives, reflected in your daily interactions with them. As we work on analyzing the impact of ARI specifically we humbly request your help with sharing your thoughts on some of the questions we have asked graduates during this study. There are no right or wrong answers so please just share your honest thoughts and your responses will be kept anonymous. Do not sign your responses unless you specifically want to do so.

Gender: M___ F___ Time with ARI: Less than 5 years: ___ More than 5 years: ___

1. What about your work gives you the most satisfaction?
2. What is the biggest challenge in your work?
3. What is your dream for your graduates?
4. In your own words, what is the vision of ARI?
5. What is a rural community?
6. What is a rural leader?
7. What is a servant leader?
8. What does dignity of labor mean?
9. What does foodlife mean?
10. What is meant by using local resources?
11. What is the importance and relationship between sustainable agriculture, organic agriculture and natural farming?
12. What is the focus of time management?
13. Which, if any, of the practices mentioned above do you implement in your own home? Why?
14. What is the role of a TA?
15. What is the role of graduate associations?
16. What advice would you give to ARI for the future?

Appendix E. ARI Graduates by country, gender and year

Country	Male	Female	60-69		70-79		80-89		90-99		00-09		10-14	
			Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Australia	2						2							
Bangladesh	41	35	1		14	5	18	8	6	5	2	16		1
Belgium	1				1									
Benin	2										2			
Bhutan	1										1			
Brazil	3												2	1
Burundi	1						1							
Cambodia	5	3			1			1		1	4			1
Cameroon	11	8									7	7	4	1
Canada	1				1									
China		2						1				1		
DRC	1	1											1	1
Cuba	1												1	
Ecuador		1												1
El Salvador	3						2		1					
Ethiopia	4	1					1	1	3					
Fiji	4				1		1		2					
France		1				1								
Gambia	1										1			
Ghana	16	3			2	1	4	1	5		5	1		
Haiti	1	1									1			1
Hong Kong	1		1											
India	143	70	8		36	11	49	21	30	19	13	16	7	3
Indonesia	59	21	2		7		17	3	10	5	16	6	7	7
Japan	54	32		1	11	1	6	3	15	11	18	12	4	4
Kenya	17	9					5	1	7	5	4	2	1	1
Kiribati	2	1								1	1	1		
Korea	46	14	14	1	11	1	13	7	6	5	2			
Laos	1	3						1			1	1		1
Lesotho	1	1					1		1					
Liberia	13	12			1	1	5			1	3	7	4	3
Madagascar	2								1		1			
Malawi	5	3											3	5
Malaysia	17	5	3		12	2	1	2	1					1
Micronesia	2	1	1	1			1							
Mozambique	2	1					2			1				
Myanmar	50	27	1				6	2	11	5	21	10	11	10
Nepal	25	14			2	2	4	1	9	4	6	4	4	3
Netherlands		1						1						
New Zealand	1						1							
Nigeria	7	2			1		3	1	2	1	1			
Pakistan	6	5			2	3	1		2		1	2		
Palau		1						1						
Papau New Guinea	10	1	1				3	1	4		1		1	
Peru	1						1							
Philippines	77	52	12	2	13	8	20	19	11	7	15	14	6	2
Portugal	1								1					
Samoa	2		2											
Sierra Leone	8	3					3	1	3		2	1		1
Singapore		1						1						
Solomon Islands	4	1					1	1			2		1	
South Africa		2								1		1		
Sri Lanka	54	33			8	9	14	8	17	2	12	9	3	5
Sudan	1						1							
Swaziland	2	1					2	1						
Taiwan	19		16		1		1		1					
Tanzania	10	11			1		5	3	2	5	1	2	1	1
Thailand	51	38	14	3	12	10	15	20	9	5	1			
Timor Leste	3	1									3	1		
Togo	1										1			
Tonga		1						1						
Uganda	14	2					1		6	1	4		3	1
United Kingdom	2						1		1					
USA	8	6			4	2	3	1	1	3				
Zambia	4	8					1	4	1	1	2	2		1
Zimbabwe	1	1											1	1
Subtotals	826	441	76	8	142	57	216	117	168	90	155	116	65	57
Total	1267		84		199		333		258		271		122	
% of females		35%		10%		29%		35%		35%		43%		47%

Appendix F. 40th Anniversary resolutions

The Asian Rural Institute's 40th Anniversary Community Statement

ARI's 40th Anniversary Celebration and Symposium was a unique and historic event allowing approximately 300 people from twenty three countries, including various community members from the past and present, to gather in Tochigi giving us all an opportunity to relive the Institute's motto "That We May Live Together," and celebrate the great harvest ARI and her graduates have achieved in rural areas over the past four decades throughout the world.

Those present included present staff, participants, volunteers and domestic individual and organizational supporters as well as graduates from throughout the world and history of ARI, representatives of supporting churches and sending bodies from overseas, representatives of AFARI and local government officials. The success of this event was a product of everyone's cooperation, and spurs us towards a continuation of sustained collaboration among all sectors of the ARI community,

The theme of the symposium was, *Transformation at The Grassroots: 40 years walking with grassroots leaders*, and the community had the opportunity to hear from graduates, who talked about the transformation they see that ARI graduates have brought about in their communities and vision for the future.

The 40th anniversary challenged us to think of ongoing situations in the world. This includes the increased migration from rural to urban areas, climate change and it's impacts on rural communities, the intersection of our training with peace and conflict and how people of various cultures, faiths and world-views can truly live together. We are committed to both an immediate response and long-term actions in regards to these issues.

We seek to reaffirm several of our values.

1. Seeing the importance of life giving agriculture to rural empowerment and autonomy, we will continue to use organic farming as one of many tools in our training program, all with the aim and goal of forming servant leaders. That is, we recommit to our mission to nurture rural leaders to be servant leaders. We seek to reclaim the word rural. Recognizing how the word rural has been stereotyped to be synonymous with "backwards" or "uneducated," we seek to promote the value of

rural life and the dignity of labor. As food sovereignty is an issue for growing numbers of people, we commit to our belief in the importance of having rural leaders who work for the food of all people and remind urban people of their dependence on rural communities for life

2. ARI is a community rooted in the love of Christ where faith is practiced and not just preached, and we commit this community to continue to be a place where each one of us can grow as we each share from our own diverse religious beliefs and traditions. We will continue to be a place for spiritual growth, a place where people can express, consider and expand their understanding of the sanctity of life as taught to us by the diverse religious faiths and spiritual traditions present in our community. We seek to live together across any and all boundaries created by the systems of the societies in which we live, both here at ARI and in our own communities throughout the world

3. Recognizing that the world is changing around us, ARI strives to diligently work at understanding and addressing the issues at hand. To this end, we also commit to continuing education of our staff to better meet these emerging needs.

4. ARI will seek to assess the transformative impact of the work of both our graduates and their sending bodies, which we believe to be the organizations working for transformation on the ground, and to also find how best we may partner with them. ARI will also seek the support of graduates in its ongoing curriculum improvement and recruiting process of future participants. In particular through two ongoing studies (*The Basic Learning on Love and Forgiveness Case Study of the Asian Rural Institute* and *The Asian Rural Institute Graduate Impact Study*) of our graduates impact we commit to utilizing these studies, using these results to improve and hone our training and our ongoing partnership with graduates.

At ARI, we continue to believe that our central aim is to develop the capabilities of women and men, transforming them to become effective change agents in their own grassroots rural communities to achieve inclusive growth with sustained blessings from God. We hold as important “learning by doing” and “learning by sharing,” in humility and again call for a renewed importance placed on food life as a secure method of gaining trust and transforming rural communities and our world.

Appendix G. Key Concept Descriptions (2016)

Life of Sharing

Life of sharing is the sacrifice a living organism do or perform to support, protect, save and sustain the life of another. In ARI we try to recognize the interconnection of each and every living creature and try to understand each and every role they perform to support each other. The plants, animals, insects, microorganisms, human being, and we include the soil and water. All of them play a role to support life.

In ARI we live together as a community. We recognize the importance of every member of the community. We try to take care of each other. We take care of our source of life, the soil, the plants, the animals, microorganisms- they sacrifice their life to provide us FOOD which is our source of life. To do this, we share in the labor of taking care of our source of food which we call as FOODLIFE WORK. As a community, we work together and help each other

Diversity

“A body isn’t really a body, unless there is more than one part. It takes many parts to make a single body.”
1 Corinthians 12:19-20

Diversity is a core value of ARI training in a community; composed of people from many countries, cultures, languages, backgrounds, religions, values, ages and customs. We can achieve personal growth by adapting and adjusting, understanding and appreciating social and natural diversity. We understand diversity to include bio-diversity, the basis to realizing our goal of a sustainable way of living. The richness in difference in nature, humanity and the world is necessary to realize our motto, “That We May Live Together.”

Servant Leadership

A servant leader is one who loves people and takes action based on this love for his/her people. Jesus exemplified servant leadership as he reached out to the sick, the poor and powerless, listening, healing and teaching them with deep love and humility. He demonstrated this love by washing the feet of his disciples, a task considered to be lower than any other. He gave his life for others.

The life of a servant leader serves as an example and inspiration to empower people to reach their highest potential. A servant leader is a person who willingly takes up all tasks required to serve the people, beginning with those that are most needed or most hated, and who seeks to help by putting other people and the community first.

Personal Growth

ARI as a place where one can carry out self-reflection through exposure to new experiences and ideas and come to a deeper understanding of what it means to serve as leaders for their people.

Spiritual Growth

ARI strives to be a place where all people can come to explore, deepen and share their faith and spiritual lives. It is a place where we can become more fully human. There are different faiths in the world such as Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. We cannot express fully what spirituality is, but we can experience it when we share life, love and service. “At ARI we have many different kinds of Christians, as well as other religions and those with no religion, and we all equally participate.” (Takami)

Empowering the Marginalized

ARI training is especially centered on serving marginalized peoples living in grassroot rural localities—with a focus on the landless, peasants, child laborers, street children, outcasts, refugees, war victims, the disabled, and those who are politically oppressed, economically deprived or who experience discrimination. Through reflection and activities to raise awareness, we empower and help them reach their highest potential. At ARI we attempt to build a network with marginalized people in our area.

Awareness (Mindfulness)

ARI is a community where we acquire knowledge of how to accept cultural and religious differences with respect. It is a community where we appreciate and celebrate role rance, recognition and creativity. We motivate ourselves in order to live out our dream of learning to build a better life and a supportive community

Foodlife

Foodlife is a special word used at ARI to express the reality that *food* and *life* cannot be separated; both depend upon each other. God has given us the gift of creation so that we can sustain our lives by making food. Human beings cannot survive without food, so we work to sustain life through a healthy relationship with nature. At ARI we are making an effort to create *Foodlife* in which the soil becomes richer as we produce food, and human relationships become more beautiful.

It is a joyful experience for community members when we can produce food through our labor in the morning and evening and gather in Koinonia for meals, the center of our life. We give thanks to God and to the people who labor to produce and prepare our food. Whenever we have a meal, we can experience the blessings of God and the heart of the community. Let us make a world in which people value both food and life “so that we may live together.”

ARI Foodlife involves activities such as producing, processing, cooking and eating food and sharing with others. Foodlife provides learning opportunities to deepen our understanding of organic farming, the importance of food, the dignity of labor and the necessity of food self-sufficiency for people’s self-reliance.

Food Sovereignty

Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations. It defends the interests and inclusion of the next generation. It offers a strategy to resist and dismantle the current corporate trade and food regime, and directions for food, farming, pastoral and fisheries systems determined by local producers. Food sovereignty prioritizes local and national economies and markets and empowers peasant and family farmer-driven agriculture, artisanal fishing, pastoralist-led grazing, and food production, distribution and consumption based on environmental, social and economic sustainability.

(Forum for Food Sovereignty in Mali, 27 February 2007, about 500 delegates from more than 80 countries adopted)

At ARI we seek to establish a life of self-reliance using local resources. We produce as much of our own food as possible, emphasizing the connection between life, food and nature. Urban people become out of touch with this connection. Self-sufficiency of a community or society

that leads to a stable and secure life is found in a life of sharing. Self-sufficiency is protection against the instability of monoculture, the exploitation of globalization's changing markets, and a tendency to take control over land, undermining local culture. Food security is one of the most important basic human rights. It should be considered in relation to the factors that are threatening it, such as the dangerous side effects of the Green Revolution, chemical farming, Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO), and global trade. With this in mind, ARI practices self seed collection for food sovereignty.

We are producing many varieties of food (more than 80 varieties of crops/vegetables, eggs, meat and so on) throughout the year. Most of the production goes to Meal Service for our own consumption on campus, and the rest to staff members, neighbor families and the Food Processing section as ingredients for sales products.

Living in harmony with nature

Nature means the world with all its features, living things, and the physical power that produces these. It is the natural condition of living, uncultivated or undomesticated, before the spread of civilization. Throughout civilization and the advancement of human development, nature was disregarded and destroyed by over exploitation. It was not regarded by human being as part of our life but as a commodity that can readily be traded or disposed. In ARI we regard Nature as the best practice in supporting and sustaining life. The natural forest is an example of how nature, and the living things inside it – the plants and animals (flora and fauna), and microorganisms, without the intervention of human being, have created a balanced relationship to build a rich environment where everybody could live harmoniously with each other. We try to go back and learn from nature. Through the training program, we try to seek the best way on how to live our life, considering the important roles of plants, animals, the soil, and microorganisms, and so we seek the best way to take care of them that sustains life.

The Value of Rural Life

Those who till the soil create food that supports human life. In producing food to sustain people's lives we experience the connection of nature, food and life in God's creation. In rural life we gain appreciation for other life that is sacrificed for food to provide for our human survival. We have a vision that people celebrate and appreciate the value.

Dignity of Labor

The labor of farmers who produce food is of the highest importance for feeding the world. From administration and food preparation to caring for livestock and raising crops, all labor has dignity and equal value. Even though one may be formally educated, that person's labor and physical work is as valuable as any other work. We give our life through labor to produce food to sustain our lives and the lives of others.

Community of Learning

Every year ARI gather participants, volunteers, study campers, visitors, and including the staffs, form a community. The ARI community is much diverse that it is compose of people from different nationalities from Asia, the Pacific, Africa, the America and the Europe.

As a community, we try to support each other by sharing work, food, knowledge and skills as well as culture. We try to learn from each other. The diversity of people in the community has so much to offer for learning through our shared daily activities and thus we form a community of learning.

Community Building

Community begins to build when people genuinely listen and openly share with each other. Each foodlife work group, dormitory meeting, or committee can become a community. A community develops from a superficial level, through conflict, and confusion to a genuine community where there is acceptance, understanding, freedom, responsibility and love among the members.

Equality

A basic policy in ARI is working toward equal relationships not based on title, status or gender. Even though roles are different we stand in the same line. There is no discrimination or favoritism in distributing work or offering learning opportunities. Everyone joins Foodlife work, community work, meal service, dish washing, cleaning, and so on.

Independent Learning

Independence in Learning is an attitude toward learning, not a technique or methodology. It is the attitude that learner take responsibility for learning, decide the focus of learning, monitor and assess his/her own learning.

In traditional attitudes to learning, student receive knowledge and teachers give knowledge. Teacher gives an assignment, and student complete the assignment. The teacher is responsible for learning of student. But in independent learning, student learn and share, find his/her learning, reflect and check his/her learning. The student takes responsibility for their learning

ARI is not your typical school. At ARI we approach learning in many different ways; Learning by Doing, community based learning, and process oriented learning. Everything at ARI is a learning opportunity such as dorm life, vegetable fields, our sweat and labor, dish washing, Morning Gathering, after meal discussions and so on.

Learning by Doing

Real learning comes through actual practice in daily life.

If we hear, we forget.

If we see, we remember.

If we do, we understand.

Most of the learning in ARI is through the experience of active participation. Graduate John Nyondo said, "From the ARI way I have knowledge inside me."



Asian Rural Institute

Admissions Information



Rural Leaders Training Program

What is ARI?

The Asian Rural Institute is a training center for rural community leaders, set on a 6-hectare farm in Northern Japan.

Each year, from April to December, we carry out our Rural Leaders Training Program which focuses on servant leadership, community building, and sustainable agriculture. The aim of the program is to nurture and train grassroots leaders to be more effective in their communities as they work to serve the poor, the hungry, and the marginalized.

The training is community-based, and hands-on learning is emphasized in all areas. Each year we invite about 30 women and men from a wide variety of countries, cultures, and faiths. Working together, we produce and share our own food. At the heart of the program is **FOODLIFE** - a term designed to recognize and value the interdependency between life and food that sustains all life.

Since our foundation in 1973, ARI has trained more than 1,200 rural leaders - dedicated servants committed to working side by side with their people toward more sustainable, healthy, self-reliant communities.

THE MISSION

The mission of Asian Rural Institute is to build an environmentally, healthy, just and peaceful world in which each person can live to his or her fullest potential. This mission is rooted in the love of Jesus Christ.

To carry out this mission, we nurture and train rural leaders for a life of sharing. Leaders, both women and men, who live and work in grassroots rural communities primarily in Asia, Africa and the Pacific, form a community of learning each year together with staff and other residents.

Through community-based learning, we study the best ways for rural people to share and enhance local resources and abilities for the common good.

We present a challenge to ourselves and to the whole world in our approach to food and life.

That We May Live Together



02

Contents & Methods

THE RURAL LEADERS TRAINING PROGRAM

ARI works according to the precept that all people have within themselves and their communities the capabilities and resources to live a life that is healthy and dignified.

Servant Leadership

A truly effective leader is one who serves; one who works at the level of the people, and lives a life that is an example and an inspiration for people to reach their highest potential. We practice servant leadership by example. Participants, together with staff and volunteers, take part in the daily work on the farm and campus. We have no hired laborers. We do all work ourselves and we find great purpose in this work as it helps us develop leadership skills and deepen our appreciation for the dignity of labor, along with gender and position equality.



Sustainable Agriculture

We practice and teach methods of integrated organic farming that incorporate sustainable techniques of enriching the soil, cultivating crops, and rearing livestock. In all areas we promote the use of materials and technology that are available locally in our participants' communities, thus reducing dependency on outside inputs and leading toward self-sufficiency in food and feed production. Working together, participants, staff, and volunteers produce most of the food we eat.

Community Building

All people have within themselves and their communities the capabilities and resources to live a life that is healthy and dignified. Our training facilitates the discovery and utilization of these inherent strengths by involving all community members in decision making, contribution of abilities, and access to resources.

Community Based Learning

Throughout the training we build a multicultural, multifaith community in which everyone actively participates. Learning and growing are experienced together as we share in our work and exchange our ideas, values, and life experiences.

"FOODLIFE"

Foodlife is a special word coined by ARI founder, Rev. Toshihiro Takami.

It represents the inseparable connection between food and life. It is a joyful experience when community members produce food through their own labor and then gather together around the table to share meals prepared from their own harvest.

At every meal, we can experience the blessings of God and the heart of the community.

Learning By Doing

A significant part of the training lies in the daily labor required to maintain our self-sufficient farm. Participants manage their own fields, care for livestock, and cook and serve the foods they raise. These seemingly simple daily activities, carried out in the context of community, give many opportunities for practical experience in agriculture, leadership, management, communication, and cooperation.



The Asian Rural Institute is a training institute duly registered with the Japanese Government. Our training methods, however, are quite different from what you might find at a traditional school, college, or university.

We do not provide an academic degree, nor do we promote industrialized agricultural technology, such as chemical fertilizers and pesticides or large scale monocultures. Much of the learning takes place through the simple acts of living in community, working on an organic farm, and sharing food. Upon completion of the program, participants are issued a "Certificate of Graduation."

A Non-traditional School

www.ari-edu.org



Who Takes Part?

Rural Leaders

ARI is looking for **grassroots rural leaders**, who are living and working with marginalized groups in their rural communities. We are seeking local leaders who have demonstrated through their actions a commitment to serve their people and act as catalysts for positive change within their own communities.

Note *We do not accept applications directly from individuals. Applicants must be nominated by a "Sending Body" - an organization in which they are currently working and where they will continue to work upon completion of the training. See pages 6-7 "HOW TO APPLY?" for more information about the application process.*

We place emphasis on reaching the most marginalized, poor, and oppressed peoples, such as women, tribal minorities, and those of low castes or so-called untouchables. We follow the ideal that all people are equal in God's eyes and all are welcome regardless of ethnicity, religion, class, or gender, as long as they are willing to share ARI's vision. In the past, we have trained clergy and church leaders, agricultural trainers, community and village leaders, NGO personnel, teachers, orphanage staff, and many more.

To make the most of the ARI experiential learning process, each applicant should be ready to take initiative, challenge her/himself, be open to change, and assume responsibility, while at the same time, exercise flexibility, and self discipline.



The costs of the training program is US\$ 17,840. This includes tuition fees, room, board, study tours, health insurance, and a small monthly stipend. Additionally, there is the expense of the round trip airfare, which varies depending on the country of origin. We also require an additional US\$ 100 registration fee upon acceptance of the applicant.

As ARI actively seeks to serve some of the poorest and most marginalized people, we are very much aware that many Sending Bodies cannot cover these costs. Because we do not wish to discriminate against any applicant due to financial capability, we work hard to assist in connecting potential supporters to Sending Bodies in need of funding. We ask for the fullest cooperation of SBs and applicants, to work with us to secure funding.

Qualifications Of An Applicant

The applicant should be a woman or man dedicated to **serving people at the grassroots level in rural areas**.

The applicant must have **at least 3 years of experience** as a leader in her/his rural community.

The applicant must be nominated by a **Sending Body (SB)** - a specific organization within which she/he is carrying out her/his work as staff or as volunteer. The applicant, together with the SB, must be able to provide a clear objective or plan for the use of the ARI training.

Additionally, both the applicant and SB must pledge to collaborate after the completion of the training. The applicant, as a new graduate, has the responsibility to bring back his/her learning from ARI to the SB, and the SB must reintegrate the new graduate into the organization.

In our selection of participants, preference is placed on **field staff** who are working directly with the people. Those working primarily in administration or in the directorship will not be considered.

ARI places high priority on the **training of women**, that they may participate more fully and equally in all aspects of society. We strongly encourage the SB to select qualified women leaders to apply for this training program.

We welcome people of all faiths, as well as those without any religion.

The applicant must be prepared to live a **simple and demanding life**. Daily manual labor on the farm and campus is required of all community members. **ARI accepts applicants between the ages of 20 and 50.**

English is used for all program activities and also in daily life. The applicant should have sufficient ability to communicate in English.



04

Setting & Conditions

IN DETAIL ...

Campus

The campus is located in the town of Nasushiobara, about 200km north of Tokyo. Using methods of integrated organic farming, we produce most of the food we eat, including rice, wheat, soybeans, and about 60 kinds of vegetables. We also raise a variety of livestock, all on our 6 hectares (15 acres) of land.

Timeframe

The annual nine-month program runs from April to December, which coincides with one full agricultural cycle from spring planting to autumn harvest.

Accommodations

Dormitories are provided for participants and volunteers. Rooms are double occupancy. Everyone shares a room with a person from another country and perhaps another religion. Dormitory life is an integral part of the learning in ARI and provides many opportunities to put our motto into practice - "That We May Live Together."

Religion

ARI is Christian in inspiration but interfaith in practice: We openly recruit people of all religions. We strive to form a community in which people of all religious backgrounds and beliefs may participate fully with mutual respect in order to learn about one another and explore our own spirituality more deeply. We seek to create a world in which religion does not serve as a tool for dividing people, but for bringing diverse people together.

People

The ARI community is composed of a diverse, multi-cultural group of individuals, wholly devoted to working for the people.

PARTICIPANTS Each year we invite about 30 rural community leaders from Asia, Africa, the Pacific and the Americas. During the training we refer to them as "participants" rather than "students," because each person holds a wealth of experience and all are encouraged to participate in the program as teachers as well as learners.

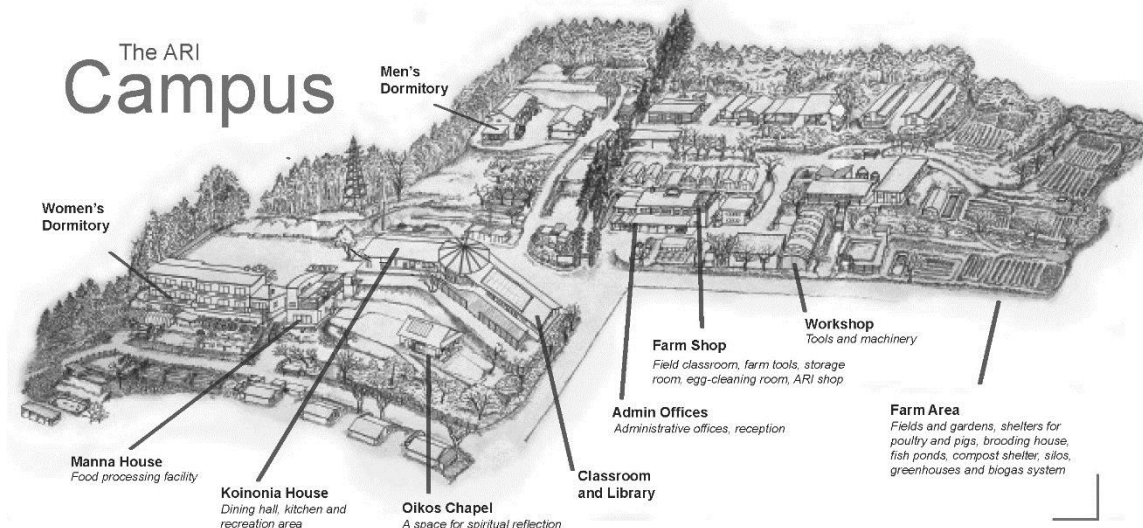
VOLUNTEERS Staying for as long as one year, volunteers willingly give of their talents and labor in support of the training program.

STAFF With a variety of skills and backgrounds, staff work, live, teach and learn together with participants in all aspects of training.

WORKING VISITORS AND WORK CAMPERS These are individuals or groups of mainly students who come for a few days to contribute to the program and experience ARI.

Food

At ARI, we do not only teach self sufficiency, but practice it. The whole community takes part in producing the food we eat - from seed, to harvest, to the table. All participants take part in preparing meals, so this offers many opportunities to discover new and exotic tastes.



The ARI Campus



THE CURRICULUM

Field Management Activity (FMA)

Participants are divided into four groups. With the help of volunteers and staff, each group is given the responsibility to manage one field, as well as one section of livestock (pigs, chickens, fish/goats/ducks). These groups also plan and prepare meals for the community. Each group will have a participant leader to coordinate and facilitate group work and plan activities. Group leadership will rotate, so that each participant will have the opportunity to serve as a group leader.

Practical Field Study (PFS)

PFS classes are set up to give both theoretical and hands-on knowledge of organic farming, animal husbandry, and food processing techniques. Examples include compost making, integrated pest management, chick brooding and meat processing, and many more.

Classroom Lectures

ARI makes great effort to ensure that our lectures remain relevant to the ever-changing circumstances of our participants' life and work. In addition to our own training staff, we invite guest lecturers in order to diversify the lecture agenda, and to offer a wider range of viewpoints.

Observation Trips

About 15% of ARI's training takes place off campus. Participants will travel through Japan to visit people, groups, and institutions that are involved in community development, social welfare, leadership, environmental issues and in Japan's active network of small scale organic farmers.

The ARI curriculum can roughly be divided into four categories: hands on training/field study, field management, classroom lectures, and off campus observation trips. Perhaps the greatest strength of our program is its practical orientation - learning by doing.

ARI graduate Peter Chandi said it best: **"When you learn by doing, you get the skill right inside you."**

Philosophy

The purpose of the ARI Training Program is to discover the meaning of our motto "That We Live Together." Humans, nature and all living creatures are God's creations and we must live together on Earth; however, we all know how difficult this is. Failure to live together is the cause of many problems in the world.

Food is the result of the joint work of God, nature, and human beings. Therefore, we strongly believe that in order to value all life on Earth, sharing food is essential. By sharing food, we may live together.

Our curriculum is built upon the "three pillars" of ARI training:

Servant Leadership

ARI is a place where every person can learn about himself or herself through new experiences and ideas, so we may come to a deeper understanding of what it means to be a leader who serves people.

Foodlife

ARI is a place that values the soil - including the farmers and rural communities that work the soil - and finds dignity and satisfaction in producing food with our own hands.

That We Live Together

Community Building

ARI is a place where we can learn through sharing - sharing food and sharing life. We come as people of different cultures, ethnicities and faiths, choosing to live and grow together through our differences and difficulties. In our life together, we work toward the goal of becoming effective servant-leaders, learning with and from one another.

Daily Schedule

A typical day at ARI is rigorous and full of variety. More than just training sessions, ARI is a dynamic farming community in which participants take full part.

FOODLIFE WORK Since food is at the heart of our training, we all participate in producing the food we eat. Each morning and evening, everyone takes part in ARI farm work such as feeding the chickens, pigs, fish, goats, or ducks, and cleaning their pens. In the fields, our hands are in the soil; sowing, weeding, and caring for the crops. Additionally, every community member will have opportunities to join in preparing the daily meals.

MORNING GATHERING Each weekday morning begins with a time for spiritual nurturing and meditation. Leadership is rotated among community members, who reflect and share about their life, work, beliefs, struggles, etc.

MORNING AND AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES These include lectures, workshops, field trips, field work, community events and more.

MEALTIME Every meal is a time for sharing at the round tables in our dining hall.



06

Admissions Information

HOW TO APPLY?

Two-step admissions process

- 1 Approval of the organization as a Sending Body
- 2 Submission of the individual's application

Approval of the organization as a Sending Body 1

Anyone interested in taking part in the ARI Rural Leaders Training Program must be employed, or actively involved, in an organization that will serve as her/his Sending Body (SB). The organization may be an international, national or local NGO, religious organization, or other organization based in a rural area. The organization must have a clear history of working for **at least 3 years** with marginalized people in the local community, and a commitment toward self-sustainability.

ARI does NOT promote church-planting evangelism, large-scale agriculture and industrial development, and will not consider organizations with these goals. Single church organizations should apply through their regional association or Diocesan authority. Government offices or departments are normally not considered as SBs. Exceptions are made for countries without NGOs or church organizations.

ARI views SBs as partners in a common mission. In order to form a productive relationship, it is essential to begin with a mutual understanding of each other's work and mission.

If you are interested in sending a leader from your organization for training, please submit the following information to ARI by email:

- (1) **Organization Profile** (page 7)
- (2) Detailed answers to the **Six Questions** (box on right)
- (3) **Information materials** about your organization, such as brochures, annual reports, and project descriptions
- (4) **Financial statements**, such as recent details of income, expenditures, assets, liabilities, and capital
- (5) **Organization Chart** listing the names and positions of your organization's officers, management, staff, and volunteers, in order of responsibility
- (6) **NGO Registration Certificate** from government of your country (if applicable)

The submission deadline is **April 30th** of each year.

You may send items (1)-(6) to ARI via email to:

recruitment@ari-edu.org

If you have no internet, please send by fax:

+81-287-37-5833

or post: Asian Rural Institute | 442-1 Tsukinokizawa, Nasushiobara | Tochigi 329-2703 | JAPAN

www.ari-edu.org

The Six Questions

These questions must be answered by the Sending Body's representative/responsible person, NOT the individual applicant. Please include the name and email address of the respondent.

- 1 **How did you learn about the ARI Training Program and why are you interested in it?** Do you know any ARI graduates? Please tell us their names and how you know them.
- 2 **Please describe in detail the community and the people that you are serving.** Where, exactly, does your organization operate? Where are the people you are serving? Describe the cultural, historical, and environmental situations of your community.
- 3 **Please provide a brief history of your organization.** Including how and why it began. What is the mission of your organization?
- 4 **Provide detailed descriptions of 3 projects or activities that your organization has completed or is currently carrying out.** Choose both successful and unsuccessful projects and provide reasons why you feel your projects succeeded or failed. Within your descriptions include dates, the project goals, target people, activities, duration, challenges, results and reasons for success or shortfalls.
- 5 **Tell us about the proposed applicant.** Please provide the complete name, work status (full time, part time, volunteer, # of hours each week, how long worked with organization), date of birth, and work activities of the person you would like to send to ARI. Explain why you feel she/he is suitable for ARI training.
- 6 **Describe your future plan concerning the applicant.** What will she/he do when returning to the organization after ARI training? Specifically, how will the ARI training be utilized by your organization?

ARI will carefully review the materials sent by the organization. If the information received is not sufficient, we may ask you some additional questions. The process may take a few weeks or even longer. Upon approval of your organization as a Sending Body, we will send you an official ARI Application Form for the individual applicant.

Submission of the individual's application 2

This application is to be filled out by the individual applicant. The deadline for submission of this application, with all supporting materials, is **May 31st**. Screening is carried out by ARI in September and you will be notified of the results in October. The training program begins in April of the following year.



Please print

Date: _____

Full name of the organization _____
 Organization address _____

 Email address(es) _____ Website www. _____
 Phone + Fax number +
country code area code number country code area code number
 Date of Foundation
day month year
 Name of responsible person _____ Position _____
 Email address of responsible person _____

Is your organization affiliated with any church organization or larger organization (local, national, international)?

Name _____

Type of Organization _____

Category of the organization (please check all applicable fields)

- Foreign-based organization (international organization / NGO)
- National NGO Religious organization Other: _____

Workers	Number of full-time employees	<input type="text"/>	# men	# women
	Number of part-time employees	<input type="text"/>	# men	# women
	Number of other workers (e.g. volunteers)	<input type="text"/>	# men	# women

Project locations _____

Purpose of the organization _____

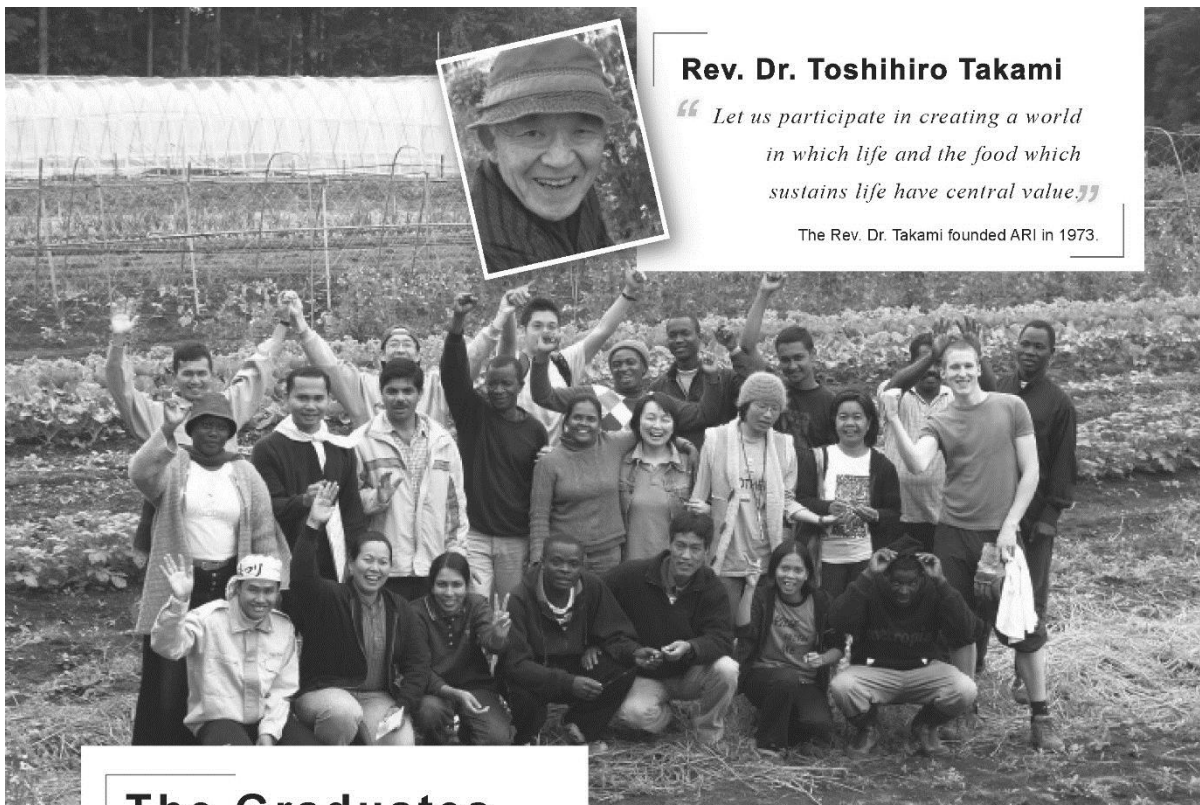
Activities/projects/programs (please check all applicable fields)

- Agriculture / livestock / forestry / fishery (specify) _____
- Education / training
- Health / nutrition
- Cooperatives / group formation
- Environment
- Income generation (specify) _____
- Other (describe) _____
- Micro-Finance
- Legal aid / social welfare
- Women

Summary of activities _____

Partner organization(s) (relationship e.g. endorsing, funding, affiliate, mutual cooperation etc.)

Name	Contact Information (country, email, phone)	Relationship
1 _____	_____	_____
2 _____	_____	_____
3 _____	_____	_____



Rev. Dr. Toshihiro Takami

“ Let us participate in creating a world in which life and the food which sustains life have central value.”

The Rev. Dr. Takami founded ARI in 1973.

The Graduates

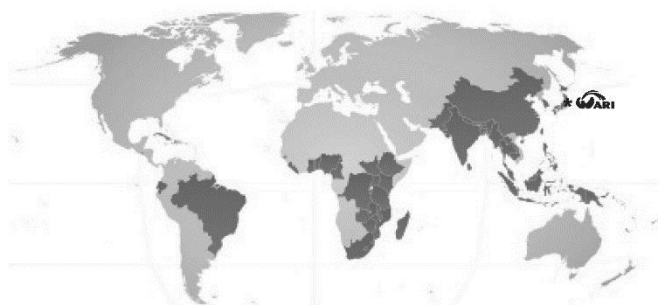
Over 1,200 graduates of ARI are now working alongside their people in grassroots rural communities in over 55 countries.

“ I learned that servant leadership is the best way to change a society. I experienced this personality when I started to work with my people. ARI is the place where I found theology in action.

Fr. Laksiri Peiris, Sri Lanka

I join hands with my community to build a better community where we can live together, work together, and produce healthy food for a healthy life.”

Mrs. Theodora Tirbaban, Cameroon



Graduates' countries (as of 2014)
Dark gray areas show the countries of ARI graduates



Asian Rural Institute
Rural Leaders Training Center
442-1 Tsukinokizawa,
Nasushiobara,
Tochigi-ken 329-2703 JAPAN
Tel: +81-287-36-3111
Fax: +81-287-37-5833
E-mail: recruitment@ari-edu.org
Web: www.ari-edu.org

Appendix I.

Year 2002

Introduction

Section 1

1.1 Country overview: geography, administration, religion, currency, languages, best months to visit, economy, major problems and difficulties. Organization: target group, problem, history of problem, problem statement and problem tree.

1.2 Solution to the problem: solving, achievements, what still needs to be done.

1.3 Available resources.

1.4 Conclusion

Section 2

2.1 ARI overview

2.2 Learning at ARI: biogas, bacterial mineral water and action plan

2.3 Concepts of integrated farming: old and new ways of thinking, developmental approaches, PRA, qualitative data analysis.

2.4 Action plan: poultry management (brooding, identification of chicks, ventilation, vaccination and hatching); soil improvement (charcoal, compost, vermicompost, bokashi, IMOs); fish raising (pond construction, location, dikes, stocking, feed, spawning, dangers of pesticides)

Section 3 Future plan goal and objectives: creating an organic/integrated farming center, empowerment (income generation). Includes time frame, available resources and how to obtain and use them, anticipating difficulties, monitoring and evaluation.

Conclusion.

Plan/dream content samples

Year 2012

Introduction

Section 1: Myself

About myself, community, sending body, work and peak experience.

Section 2: My Life and Learning at ARI Homestays, foodlife group, summer individual project, organic farming from impossible to possible, fellowship with choir, living together in one room, relationship with ARI community, study tours, fellowship with Japanese church congregations.

Section 3: My Dream

Organic farming, tei kei system, organic restaurant, life cycle of collect, produce and process, processing.

Conclusion: How to make it work?

Final comment

Appendix J. Potential internship partner organizations

Cameroon:

- Berwodev Coop NGO - Mrs. Mbivka Jane-Francis Berinyuy
- Strategic Humanitarian Services (SHUMAS) – Mrs. Billian Njodzeka Nee Nyuykighan
- Rural Transformation Center – Mr. Collins Yenika Litika

India:

- Jamte Plantations Manipur and village – Mr. Letkhojang Touthang
- Center for Social Development (CSD) – Ms. Babycha Devi Mangsatabam
- Dorcas Noble Fund - Mrs. Toshang Khaling

Indonesia:

- Activator for Rural Progress (BITRA) - Ms. Jumarni
- Training Center Saung Organic – Tigor Sihombing
- Rural Development Action - Mr. Wesly Lingga
- YAPIDI – Mr. Kalpin Sembiring
- Center for Organic Farming Movement – Mr. Janri Parkison Damanik
- Petrasa Foundation – Ms. Lidia Hotmaida Naibaho
- Credit Union Modifikasi (TALENTA) - Mr. Liharson Sigiro

Kenya:

- African Rural Institute (ARI) - Rev. Misheck Kanake and Ms. Jennifer K. Kanake
- Anglican Development Services (ADS) – Ms. Catherine Mwangi
- Institute for Participatory Development (IPD) - Mr. Mzungu Raphael Ngoma

Myanmar:

- Church of the Province of Myanmar - Rev. Daniel Myo Aung
- Lisu Baptist Convention - Mr. Sa Mu Ye Sam Bya
- Zomi Baptist Convention – Rev. Tuang Khan Kap
- Kayah Hpu Baptist Association – Ms. Naw Lee Myar
- Thantlang Baptist Association – Rev. Neely Lai Uk
- Catholic Karuna Loikaw – Mr. U Htilo

Nepal:

- Backward Society Education (BASE) - Ms. Shanta Chaudhary
- Didi Ghar (Sister Home) - Ms. Sayni Chaudhary

Sri Lanka:

- Ekabaddha Praja Sanwardhana Kantha Maha Sangamaya- Ms. Renuka Badrakanthi Gunawardana Meegaha Koratuwe

- Sevalanka - Mrs. Annet Premalatha Kabistan Royce
- Sevanatha - Mr. Lasitha Udaya Kumura Hangawatta
- WODEPT – Mr. Thaibu Lebbe Mohammed Makeen
- Healthy Lanka – Mr. Chamika Jayasinghe Arachchige
- RAHAMA - Recovery and Humanitarian Action Management Agency – Mr. Loganathan Iyampillai

Tanzania:

- Community Habitat Environmental (CHEMA) – Mr. Stephen Kileo

Uganda:

- Kanita Agricultural Education Center – Mr. John Moses Busulwa
- Office of the Chaplain St. Patrick's Center for Integral Development (SPACID) – Fr. Josemarie Kizito
- CIDI - Community Integrated Development Initiatives – Mr. Godfrey Serubanja Mutesasira

Appendix K: AFARI Board of Directors

Roles and Responsibilities

v 1.0 6.9.12

- **Title:** Board Member
- **Reports To:** Board President
- **Term:** 3 years (36 months)
- **Purpose:** Service as a member of the Board of Directors for AFARI is an honor and a responsibility. Effective Board service is critical to AFARI's fulfillment of its mission and is dependent on the deep and committed engagement of all Directors. The Board is ultimately responsible for making sure the organization is effective in fulfilling its mission and is financially sound.
- **About AFARI:** AFARI is nonprofit organization based in Seattle with a mission deepen and broaden support for the Asian Rural Institute throughout North America.

Essential Duties as an AFARI Board Member

Fiduciary and Governance Responsibilities

- *Mission and Strategic Planning*
Board members embrace the mission of the organization and make a philosophical or emotional commitment such that they continually help support the mission. Trustees make decisions about AFARI's direction and take part in long-range planning with the Executive Director.
- *Fiduciary Duty*
Board members learn –and carry out–the legal responsibilities of the board; the board is legally responsible for making sure that money and resources are being raised and spent in a responsible manner. This means that board members must approve a budget that they fully understand and must review income and expenses on a regular basis. Board members are also responsible for making sure the organization has adequate insurance and an annual audit.
- *Serve as Ambassadors in the Community*
Board members develop a deep knowledge of the organization to represent it with pride and passion. Board members serve as ambassadors for the organization throughout community and are responsible for creating the organization's identity.
- *Serve on Board Committee(s)*
Board members play a leadership role on at least one committee, bringing their unique talents, skills, knowledge, contacts or other contributions to the work of the board. The following are a list of current board committees where members can serve:
 - Development

- Annual Board Meeting
- Nominating
- *Select and Evaluate the Executive Director*
Board members make sure the organization is well managed. Board members have the authority and responsibility to hire and fire the Executive Director. They also must make sure that the Executive Director has what she/he needs to do the job, and is supported, held accountable and evaluated on a regular basis.

Fundraising Responsibilities

- *Support Philanthropy and Donor Relations*
Board members are responsible for building relationships with donors and raising funds for AFARI. While all fundraising efforts are done in partnership with staff, the board takes a strong leadership role by making their own personal philanthropic commitment and inspiring, soliciting and stewarding other donors to the organization. The Board is responsible for approving the budget and for insuring that the budget is raised to fuel the mission of the organization.

There are many ways that board members can support fundraising and donor relations. Not all board members need to solicit gifts, but each board member is asked to make the following commitments annually:

- Make a personal philanthropic contribution in an amount that is *significant for him or her*. The Board's leadership with their own philanthropic giving sets the tone for the community to follow. All board members are role models for others with their generosity.
- Make introductions to people in the community who may have an interest in learning more about the organization.
- Steward donors throughout the year by making thank you calls or joining the ED on donor visits to express appreciation to new or returning donors

Other Responsibilities

- *Participation in Meetings and Special Events*
Board members come to board meetings, retreats and special events prepared to participate fully. They are open to working with other people, respecting new ideas, and taking reasonable risks while maintaining confidentiality where needed.
- *Communication*
Open and respectful communication is essential to a highly functioning Board. All members commit to holding space for new ideas and sharing opinions with respect and grace.

What a Board Member Can Expect From AFARI

AFARI will provide:

- Clear and reasonable expectations
- Orientation and periodic assessment of the board's performance
- Consistent, timely communication from staff
- Access to any information needed about the organization
- Training, encouragement and strategic advice to carry out tasks
- Respect for the time, views, and talents you offer to the board
- Gratitude and appreciation for your gift of service

Estimated Time Commitment: 4-8 hours per month

I acknowledge that I understand the Roles and Responsibilities of being an AFARI Board Member and that they have been made clear to me through a conversation with the Board President.

Board Member Signature	Printed Name	Date
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Board President Signature	Printed Name	Date
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