



## 7th Regional APO Grantees Forum: driving innovation

**T**he Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP) organized the 7th Regional APO Grantees Forum in Quezon City, 19 October 2012, with the theme Driving Innovation toward Transformational Change and Competitiveness. Forty-six productivity and quality practitioners/advocates attended to discuss innovation in its many forms. Four APO grantee-resource speakers spoke on innovation through value addition to agricultural products, process improvement-Six Sigma, design in the packaging industry, and science and technology education. In his welcome remarks, DAP Vice-President for International Relations, Innovation and Strategic Partnership and APO Liaison Officer Carlos A. Sayco, Jr. pointed out that the theme was in line with the APO's strategy on innovation promotion and that many innovative ideas too often remained ideas, without being transformed into value added for enterprises. "Real innovation is useful to people, communities, governments, and even worldwide consumers. The challenge for all of us is how to transform the lives of others through innovation," Sayco said.

President of Leonie Agri Corporation (LAC Farms) Guillermo Saret, Jr. contended that the secret to LAC Farms' success was social innovation by teaching farmers to become microentrepreneurs on productive organic farms. Senior Consultant of Performex Asia Inc. Ariel Driz used his Master Black Belt/Instructor experience to illustrate that Six Sigma can be a value management approach to innovate processes. Since most processes in the service industry involve less than 10% value added, lean techniques could benefit nearly all service businesses. Best practices in innovative packaging were detailed by Packaging

Research and Development Specialist Virginia Robledo of the Design Innovation and Solution Center-Innovations Group, San Miguel Yamamura Packaging Corporation (SMYPC). SMYPC has its own internal and external innovation frameworks, which include the important elements of attitude and planning.



*Participants in the 7th Regional APO Grantees Forum, 19 October 2012 in Quezon City. Photo courtesy of DAP.*

"Innovation should start with the youth, because they are the best instrument to help achieve our country's growth," stated Felta Multi-Media Inc. President and CEO Mylene Abiva, who does not believe that IQ alone is the key. Instead, educators should focus on creativity and problem-solving skills. Abiva, also the Program Director of Philippine Robotics Olympiad, had seen how innovative robotics "inspire students to be life changers who contribute to socioeconomic progress through innovative ways to accomplish tasks more productively." *Contributed by Michael del Mundo, International Relations Officer, APO Liaison/International Relations Office, DAP.* 