



APO NEWS

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50th GBM: green light for membership contribution increase

The 50th session of the APO Governing Body (GBM) took place in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, 21–23 April. In attendance were 45 delegates and advisers from 19 member countries, two observers from the United Nations Development Programme, and one from the Iranian Confederation of Employers' Association. The meeting elected the new APO Chair and Vice Chairs for 2008/2009 (see page 7) and received reports from Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka, which included the financial report and reports on the programs and activities of the organization for 2007 (see page 2 for a summary of the Secretary-General's annual report to the GBM). The meeting also decided the amount of the total membership contributions for 2009 and 2010 and approved the program plans for that biennium. Although "discussions of budgetary matters are never easy," pointed out the Secretary-General, they proceeded in the spirit of mutual cooperation, as explained below.



50th GBM in progress

The 50th GBM opened with a welcoming address by APO Director for I.R. Iran Mohsen Haji Mirzaie, who expressed delight that Iran was able to host this important event for the first time in the country's 40-year history of membership in the APO. Mirzaie proudly announced that Iran's fourth fiscal development planning program had produced a national economic growth rate of 8%. Productivity improvements alone had generated growth of 2.5%, and this was expected to continue into the fifth development program.

In his opening message, APO Chair Besar Setyoko of Indonesia conveyed appreciation to Secretary-General Takenaka and Secretariat staff members for their efforts and speedy response to put into practice the Governing Body's decisions on the new membership contribution formula and the Secretariat reform plan.

Vice President of the Islamic Republic of Iran for Management Development and Human Capital Dr. Ebrahim Azizi delivered the inaugural address. He said that the APO had played an important role in strengthening productivity among its member countries in the nearly 50 years of its existence. He went on to explain that productivity had immense importance in Islamic culture and in the teachings of the Quran. Dr. Azizi shared his analyses of the relevance of productivity and concluded by stating that productivity would continue to be a major pillar in I.R. Iran's development plan.

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Annual report of the Secretary-General

One feature of the APO Governing Body Meeting (GBM) is the annual report of the Secretary-General. That report sums up the previous year's activities and administrative matters, comments on new initiatives, and casts an eye ahead to future plans for APO projects and programs. The gist of Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka's annual report to the GBM in Tehran is given below. For the full text, please see the APO Web site.

After welcoming all present to the 50th Session of the APO Governing Body, Secretary-General Takenaka expressed sincere appreciation to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting the meeting in Tehran and commented on the beauty of the Alborz Mountains ringing the capital. He continued by pointing out that the 2008 GBM was historic, since for the first time in a half-century, the Governing Body was to decide the amount of total membership contributions for 2009 and 2010 in a clear departure from past practice, when individual contributions were decided automatically based on GNI and the total was the sum of all individual contributions. Now membership contributions are linked directly to program contents and direction. The transition to the new system would not be smooth without the support of all member governments, Takenaka acknowledged, while expressing the hope that a decision on the amount of total membership contributions would be made by the GBM so that 2009 project preparations could start immediately thereafter.

The Secretary-General also hoped that the GBM would support an increase in total membership contributions, pointing out that they had been frozen since 2005, and that sharp rises in oil prices had triggered increases in airfares. In addition, the rapid weakening of the US dollar against the Japanese yen adversely affects the APO, since Secretariat personnel expenses are estimated in yen and then converted into dollars using an exchange rate determined for budgetary purposes. For example, the 2009 calculation rate was based on the exchange rate of one US dollar to 110 yen, although the current rate has fallen far below that. An increase in the amount of personnel costs in US dollars would push up overall APO expenses substantially, he explained.

The 50th GBM was also important because 2008 was the target year to restore a balance between administrative and project costs, as directed by the 47th GBM in 2005. That GBM also designated 2008 as the final year for a progress report on the Secretariat Reform Plan. The Secretary-General recounted how the reform had concentrated on



Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka (file photo)

restructuring, personnel policy, and financial discipline and management. During 2007, major progress in personnel policy was made with the performance appraisal rules based on management by objective. The system links salary adjustments with work performance, rewarding those with good or outstanding performance, instead of the previous automatic one-step increments and promotions to the next grade. "The introduction of the system contributed greatly to the work culture of the Secretariat by improving communication among staff members and by motivating them to contribute more to the organization," commented Takenaka.

Efforts in restructuring and financial discipline and management had produced positive results in many areas, but nowhere were they more evident than in restoring the balance between administrative and project costs, Secretary-General Takenaka stated, citing the imbalance between the two that had rightly been a major cause of concern at previous GBMs starting in 2003. Since then, however, declines were witnessed in administrative relative to project costs in all subsequent years, including in 2007. He attributed this partly to Secretariat restructuring, staff rejuvenation, and more disciplined financial management of projects, with the average disbursement rate per project also improving markedly in the years through 2007. "Although the US dollar is likely to remain weak against the yen for some time, as long as we maintain the current reform momentum, I am confident that we

will be able to maintain a proper balance between administrative and project costs through the end of this year as well," predicted Takenaka.

Following up on projects on new topics, utilizing new methods, and with new outreach contents, Secretary-General Takenaka said that about 10 projects on new topics like the aging of society and mergers and acquisitions had been held in 2007, with 15 more planned for 2008 and another 20 for 2009. Four e-learning projects were offered last year, attracting over 900 participants who recommended their continuation. Another novel step in 2007 was follow-up face-to-face projects on the same topic for outstanding participants in e-learning courses. "Since all the participants had enrolled previously in the same e-learning courses, it was possible for us to organize the projects more efficiently, producing better results," explained Takenaka; the Secretariat plans to increase e-learning projects in 2008 to six.

As projects with new outreach, last year the APO deputed one observational study mission each to Australia, Switzerland, and Canada with a total of 55 participants. Based on their evaluations, the number of such missions will increase to five, covering advanced manufacturing technologies and safe, green supply chain management in the new destinations of Germany and the Netherlands.

"I am confident that this year we will be able to make more concrete contributions to the institutional development of NPOs."

Activities in familiar areas were not neglected. The 4th EPIF, organized with the Vietnam Productivity Centre and Vietnamese government, attracted 92 exhibitors and record-breaking attendance of more than 98,000. Extensive media coverage spread the

message of Green Productivity throughout Vietnam. The EPIF also reached out to numerous private-sector businesses and enhanced APO visibility. In 2009, the EPIF will be held in March in the Philippines with the close cooperation of the Development Academy of the Philippines, the country's government, and its private sector.

Other projects on Green Productivity, the development of NPOs, and integrated community development were undertaken in 2007. Meetings under DON Strategy brought together 15 NPOs from two clusters of development and produced in-depth analyses of their institutional development priorities. The Secretary-General remarked that, "I am confident that this year we will be able to make more concrete contributions to the institutional development of NPOs." All other planned projects including those related to knowledge management, strengthening of SMEs, IT and innovation, and food safety will be implemented and he was "happy to report that Category B projects outnumbered those in Category A in 2007."

Touching on the APO African Program, Takenaka noted that a three-week

advanced course for the development of productivity specialists would commence at the end of April in South Africa with experts from APO members and financial assistance from Japan. He added that an APO delegation would attend the 4th TICAD meeting in Yokohama, where economic growth, human security, and the environment in Africa will be addressed.

After assuring the GBM that he would give full details on the 2009 Program and an update on research results at the 2008 WSM in Cambodia, the Secretary-General concluded his statement: "Our mission of creating a better tomorrow through productivity improvement today would not be possible without the full cooperation and determination of member countries to advance the productivity movement in the changing environment. The APO must constantly investigate new topics, adopt new modalities, and establish new outreach programs, the results of which can be incorporated when appropriate into project planning and design to benefit member countries.... With your fullest support, the APO can be relentless in the pursuit of higher productivity, which is fundamental to economic progress, prosperity, and the well-being of the people in the region." 



Comment board



Director Praba Nair, KDiAsia, Singapore.

Chief expert, expert group meeting on Curriculum Development for the Basic Course on Knowledge Management, 19–21 March 2008, Philippines.

"The purpose of the meeting was to design the basic KM training course curriculum to enhance APO member countries' capability in this area.

The meetings on KM commenced in September 2007 in Manila, the Philippines. A draft APO KM framework and KM implementation approach were formulated then. They were refined and finalized at the second meeting held in Kuala Lumpur in January 2008. KM training courses based on the APO KM framework were also proposed at the meeting. The latest meeting, in Cebu, the Philippines, was devoted to the identification of relevant topics for a training course. The meeting succeeded in finalizing the training curriculum for KM, including objectives, modules, contents, training methodology, and the template for presenting the training materials. It was characterized by lively exchanges of ideas thanks to the active participation of all experts. The training materials will be developed by the experts for the pilot APO Basic KM course to be held in September 2008."

Vice-Director Nguyen Xuan Dinh, International Cooperation Department, Vietnam Farmers' Union.

Participant, multicountry study mission on Best Cases of Green Supply Chains for Agribusiness SMEs, 10–14 March 2008, ROK.

"The mission was really interesting and useful for me, particularly in the context of rapid globalization. The mission equipped me with the essential

knowledge and practical experiences in green supply chain (GSC) development in the Republic of Korea. Through site visits, I could observe with my own eyes the effective application of environment-friendly technology in agribusiness, well-organized business practices for environmental protection, and interactive relationships among producers, scientists, government, businesses, and consumers. The mission satisfied my curiosity and furnished me with new ideas concerning GSC development in my country. However, the five-day program was a little too short to cover all the main issues, experiences, and concepts. I hope that the next program will be a little longer. I would also like to suggest that the APO organize a pilot project to demonstrate the applicability and practicality of major methodologies learned during the program."

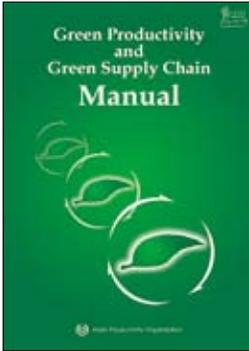
Manager Minoru Yamamoto, Research & Development Division, and Manager Toshikatsu Kanaoka, Global Business Development Division, Fuji Xerox Learning Institute Inc., Japan.

Participants, forum on Innovation and Competitiveness, 4–6 March 2008, Malaysia.

"This forum provided us the opportunity to discuss 'innovation and competitiveness' with representatives from other Asian countries. We quickly realized the diversity of Asia and different definitions or implications of innovation. We also noted that the uniqueness of each country or organization can be a source of innovation. The forum gave us new perspectives to understand the uniqueness of each country in which Fuji Xerox operates. We believe that this new view and knowledge will infuse the spirit of innovation into our work and business. We are now looking forward to reading the APO's white paper on these issues complete with future plans and suggestions. We believe that it will provide guidelines and a framework for all APO member countries."



New APO publication



GREEN PRODUCTIVITY AND GREEN SUPPLY CHAIN MANUAL

APO 172 pp. May 2008
ISBN: 92-833-2384-X (print edition)
ISBN: 92-833-7070-8 (e-edition)

The April *APO News* reported in detail on the smashing success of the 4th Eco-products International Fair (EPIF) in Hanoi, Vietnam, in March. The most recent EPIF was by far the largest and most successful to date. With almost 100,000 visitors, it demonstrably raised public awareness of eco-living and eco-business, promoting sustainability and the availability of eco-products and -services. The APO marked the 2008 EPIF with the simultaneous publication of the latest version of the *Eco-products Directory*. The directory, a treasure trove of eco-products/services, is a significant effort to promote the concept and practice of environmentally responsible purchasing among enterprises and consumers in the region.

These two mega eco-projects are part of the APO's Green Productivity (GP) strategy for harmonizing productivity enhancement with environmental preservation. For the effective promotion and implementation of GP in close partnership with the private sector, in 2003 the APO set up the GP Advisory Committee (GPAC) comprised of senior representatives in charge of environmental management in leading Japanese corporations. Since then, the GPAC has supported the APO's promotion of green supply chains (GSCs) and green procurement, two of the main pillars of the GP Program and underpins of successive EPIFs and *Eco-products Directory* series.

GSCs mean that suppliers and vendors assume greater responsibility for meeting specific environmental requirements. GSCs are part of the green procurement process, which is especially important for large and/or multinational enterprises with many links in their supply chains. GSCs not only strengthen customer-supplier relationships, but also reduce costs, lead to sustainable production and consumption, and provide potential opportunities to add value to businesses.

The *Green Productivity and Green Supply Chain Manual* combines the GP and GSC concepts in a coherent, structured manner and explains at length how the GP approach and principles can be applied to identify, evaluate, prioritize, and manage issues pertaining to GSCs. It takes a step-by-step approach, complete with worksheets and a detailed methodology, in showing how industries can green their supply chains. The manual is organized into six sections. The introduction outlines the background and objectives. The chapter titled "Green Productivity" reviews the concept, tools, and techniques of GP. "Greening Your Supply Chains" details the definition, scope, GP steps, and associated tasks involved in making supply chains green. "Working with Business Partners" gives examples of collaborative partnering in GSCs. Indicators and methodologies for measuring GSC performance are introduced in the chapter "Measuring Performance on GSC." Finally, "Case Studies" illustrates GSCs developed by actual enterprises in various industries. Each section provides questions, checklists, examples, and suggestions that any organization or enterprise can easily follow and refer to.

The method of achieving GSCs varies according to the nature of the products/services of an enterprise, and there are many approaches that can be chosen, depending on available resources. This manual takes the form of a guide compiled from experience and current information. The APO hopes that the *Green Productivity and Green Supply Chain Manual* will serve as another effective, easy-to-use reference for enterprises desiring to adopt the GSC approach.

Common sense talk



"The human brain is a most unusual instrument of elegant and as yet unknown capacity."

Stuart Seaton

"The reason most people never reach their goals is that they don't define them, or ever seriously consider them as believable or achievable. Winners can tell you where they are going, what they plan to do along the way, and who will be sharing the adventure with them."

Denis Watley

"The best way to predict the future is to invent it."

Alan Kay

"A scrupulous writer, in every sentence that he writes, will ask himself at least four questions, thus: 1. What am I trying to say? 2. What words will express it? 3. What image or idiom will make it clearer? 4. Is this image fresh enough to have an effect?"

George Orwell

"Remember that fear always lurks behind perfectionism. Confronting your fears and allowing yourself the right to be human can, paradoxically, make you a far happier and more productive person."

Dr. David M. Burns

"It does not seem to be true that work necessarily needs to be unpleasant. It may always have to be hard, or at least harder than doing nothing at all. But there is ample evidence that work can be enjoyable, and that indeed, it is often the most enjoyable part of life."

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

"If we value the pursuit of knowledge, we must be free to follow wherever that search may lead us. The free mind is not a barking dog, to be tethered on a ten-foot chain."

Adlai E. Stevenson, Jr.

"Lack of money is no obstacle. Lack of an idea is an obstacle."

Ken Hakuta

"It is through creating, not possessing, that life is revealed."

Vida D. Scudder

For order and inquiry on APO publications and videos, please contact the Asian Productivity Organization, Hirakawa-cho Dai-ichi Seimei Bldg. 2F, 1-2-10 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0093, Japan. Phone number: (81-3) 5226-3920, Fax: (81-3) 5226-3950, e-Mail: apo@apo-tokyo.org.

Innovation for global competitiveness

The 24th Top Management Forum was held in Kyoto, Japan, 2–6 March, 2008. The forum series brings together executives of public and private enterprises including NPOs of APO member countries and provides a venue for CEOs and managers in the Asia-Pacific region to examine the best practices of leading Japanese companies in a specific area. This year the focus was on how innovative corporate strategy allows businesses to survive and thrive in fierce global competition. APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka kicked off the event with a video message in which he stated that, “In today’s economy, the borders separating different business fields are blurred as a result of technological innovation and deregulation.... Therefore innovative strategies are required to determine the type of superiority which will gain a greater market share and which competitors are most significant in complex, interconnected markets.” The opening ceremony was graced by representatives of the coorganizers such as President Tsuneaki Taniguchi, Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development, and Chairman Kiyoshi Otsubo, Kansai Productivity Center.



APO Secretary-General Takenaka welcoming forum participants via video

The 36 participants from 17 member countries plus eight local attendees heard Executive Vice President Keisuke Okada of All Nippon Airways (ANA) outline the strategies that the ANA Group deployed on the flight path to becoming the No. 1 airline in Asia. Division General Manager Atsuyoshi Nakamura, Sharp Corporation, introduced a unique adaptation of *monozukuri*, the art of manufacturing, as a means to succeed in global competition. Chairman and CEO Yoshiharu Kaihara, of the denim producer Kaihara Corporation, explained an international expansion strategy focusing on product and workforce quality with continuous product development. Ajinomoto Co., Inc.’s history of innovation and business diversification was presented by Corporate Vice President Koichi Maeda. After the discovery of the amino acid umami, Ajinomoto developed a wide range of products including fundamental foods, seasonings, pharmaceuticals, and nutritional supplements found in households throughout the region and beyond.

Reflecting the realities of a globalized economy, the APO invited two guest speakers to the 2008 Top Management Forum: Vice President Bhat Harikrishna of Wipro Japan KK, the Japanese headquarters of the Indian IT service provider Wipro; and Visiting Lecturer Tatsuo Tanigawa, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University. Harikrishna described Wipro’s innovation-oriented operations and global management strategy. The cutthroat competition in the global auto industry and necessary survival tactics were the topics of Prof. Tanigawa, who stressed the importance of strategic alliances and capability learning. Researchers and government representatives were also invited to share their views with forum participants.

After a group discussion on how Japanese strategies could be adapted to allow businesses in other APO member countries to compete worldwide, a site visit was made to Shimadzu Corporation, a multinational manufacturer of measuring instruments, medical systems, and industrial equipment headquartered in Kyoto. 🌀

50th GBM

(Continued from page 1)

Following the decision of the Governing Body to adopt a new membership contribution formula at its 49th session in Mongolia in June 2007, the meeting used a new procedure to determine the amount of total APO membership contributions. Previously, national contributions were based on a fixed ratio of the gross national income of member countries. From this year onward, Directors are required to decide the total membership contributions for a biennium based on program plans prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with the Workshop Meeting of Heads of NPOs.

The discussions on the total membership contributions proceeded smoothly, and Directors arrived at a firm, unanimous decision on the amount for 2009 and 2010. The agreed amount represents a 3.2% increase above the current level, taking into account such factors as increasingly expensive airfares due to high oil prices and the recent depreciation of the US dollar. The increase thus ends a freeze on APO total membership contributions imposed since 2005. APO Secretary-General Takenaka appreciated the increase and stated that it epitomized the strong commitment of member countries to the productivity movement as well as a vote of confidence in the work of the organization.

Another highlight of the 50th GBM was policy initiatives proposed by Directors focusing on ideas to upgrade the productivity movement in the Asia-Pacific region before the 50th anniversary of the APO in 2011. Several ideas were expressed by more than one Director, such as strengthening the APO’s

think tank role, establishing centers of excellence in specialized areas among NPOs, development of national customer satisfaction indices, and improvement in public service delivery. The meeting requested the Secretariat to examine the proposals and devise an integrated plan to commemorate the first 50 years of the APO’s existence.

Secretary-General Takenaka, in his closing statement, expressed appreciation for all the ideas suggested. He reported that the initial step in strengthening the think tank role had been taken with the launch of the new version of the *APO Productivity Databook* series. The new volume contains labor productivity data on all member countries spanning the 30 years from 1975 to 2005 and is the only publication that provides this type of data. The GBM greeted the Secretariat’s initiative with applause.

While in Tehran, the delegates had the opportunity on the second day of the GBM to visit the Royan Institute, the country’s leading institution in cell-based biotechnology research.

During the closing session, APO Director for Sri Lanka Mahinda Madihawewa presented a vote of thanks to the Government of I.R. Iran and National Iranian Productivity Center for their generosity and warm hospitality extended throughout the meeting. He then issued an invitation to all delegates to attend the 2009 GBM in Sri Lanka. 🌀

Food supply chains in the land of tulips

The Netherlands, famed for its prize tulips, is the world's third-largest exporter of agricultural products and a leader in high-tech market gardening, dairy farming, and modern food supply chain management from farm to fork. The APO, as an advocate of food safety and quality management, dispatched an observational study mission on Building Reliable, Safe, Green Food Supply Chains to the Netherlands in collaboration with the Wageningen Expertise Centre for Chain and Network Studies (WCNS), 1–5 April. The 13 participants investigated the Netherlands' food marketing system, roles and functions of each player in the supply chain, and related technology-intensive systems.

The mission first visited the Agricultural Economics Research Institute of Wageningen UR (LEI) where experts from the WCNS and LEI explained the horticulture sector, agricultural markets, and food supply chains in the Netherlands. A tour of Naktuinbouw, a nonprofit horticultural inspection service organization, demonstrated its value-added seed quality control practices. On the second day, FloraHolland, the Netherlands' foremost cooperative flower auction center, hosted the participants before they traveled to the commercial supplier Haluco to learn about its interwoven network of contractors, clients, and growers, both foreign and domestic. In the afternoon, participants observed the award-winning, energy-producing greenhouse at the Wageningen UR Greenhouse Horticulture. They also heard a presentation on greenhouses as a source of innovation at the Foundation for Innovation in Greenhouse Horticulture. "The innovative greenhouse was outstanding and proves that a greenhouse can be a source of energy," commented Executive Director Tan Jin Soon, GS1 Singapore Council-cum-member of the Singapore Standards Council, SPRING.

The third day featured speakers from the Product Board for Horticulture, Holland Product Promotion, and Flowers&Food who spoke on the importance of collaboration among trading partners and supply chain members. Then Hessing, a leading vegetable and fruit cutting operation, opened its factory to the mission to demonstrate its processes. The fourth day also comprised three lectures on



Participants at the Wageningen UR Greenhouse Horticulture

food safety practices, governance, and research activities before visiting Friesland Foods Western Europe, a multinational producer of dairy products, fruit drinks, and food ingredients. The mission ended with the annual Kom in de Kas (come in the greenhouse) festival, where APO participants joined locals in learning how growers ensure safe products.

Mission members expressed satisfaction with the study mission. "We saw and studied many wonderful systems, organizations, and processes. We may not be able to apply everything in our country, but most of our learning will be used someday within our organizations," commented Senior Manager Nihal Senerath, Jaykay Marketing Services (Pvt.), Sri Lanka. 🌱

Job creation through rural tourism development

Rural areas are becoming popular destinations for tourists wanting to experience unique attractions, adventures, and authentic rural food and amenities. This trend provides opportunities for rural communities to develop products and services while generating employment and income. The Philippine government, through its Department of Tourism (DOT), is positioning the country as a key destination in Asia for tourists seeking the rural lifestyle. DOT envisions marketing the more than 7,000 islands across the archipelago based on their unique endowments, colorful heritage, and culture. However, the need to organize rural communities to develop local tourism enterprises is recognized. Improved product quality and upgraded services are critical for robust, sustainable rural tourism development.

Inspired by the APO multicountry seminar on Community-based Rural Tourism (CBRT) in Malaysia in 2007, former participants and resource person Dr. Mina Gabor, President of the Philippine SMEs Development Foundation (PHILSMED), organized a follow-up national seminar, 26–28 March, in Cebu. DOT, PHILSMED, Philippines Convention and Visitors Corporation, and Development Academy of the Philippines cooperated in organizing the project. The APO deputed three international experts under the TES Program and the Secretariat program officer responsible for CBRT projects as resource persons, who were complemented by four local experts.

The seminar was resoundingly successful, attracting 320 participants, or more than twice the original target, from all over the Philippines, representing both the government and private sectors, including tour and travel associations. DOT Undersecretary Oscar Palabyab, who gave the keynote address, attributed the success to timeliness and the focus on the value of tourism to the life of rural communities. He said that CBRT had great potential for job creation, increased demand for local products and services, greater awareness of cultural heritage, environmental protection, and agrobiological diversity. Tourism niches, such as bird watching, whale watching, diving, ecotourism, agrotourism, and rural homestays improve the demographics of the tourism labor force, since jobs are not limited to the hospitality business but create new tourism professionals including marine experts, botanists, ornithologists, and ecologists.

Other topics discussed involved global trends in tourism development, the CBRT framework, community participation in rural tourism project planning and development, sustainable management of natural resources for tourism, ecolabels for rural products and services, and promotion of local culture and indigenous products as part of the tourism package. Participants grouped into regional clusters and prepared marketing plans for their tourism products on the final day for presentation to the entire seminar. 🌱

Program calendar

August

Indonesia

Study meeting on Financing of SMEs, 5–8 August.

► Objectives: To analyze the results of the research on Financing for SMEs conducted in 2007; and identify best practices and formulate practical, innovative recommendations for strengthening SME financing in member countries.

► Participants: Senior government officials responsible for SME policy formulation, senior managers, NPO heads, senior researchers, and academics with professional knowledge of or direct involvement in the area of SME financing.

Pakistan

Regional workshop on Biomass Utilization for Industrial Boilers, 18–23 August.

► Objectives: To build the capacity of industries, especially SMEs, to collect, store, process, and use biomass as fuel in industrial boilers; and create a pool of professionals in the target countries (Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka).

► Participants: Industry (especially SME) managers, energy professionals, biomass specialists, boiler users or manufacturers, and energy consultants.

Sri Lanka

Seminar on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) for Improving the Productivity of Irrigation Systems, 25–30 August.

► Objectives: To review the present status of PPPs in irrigation system management in member countries; enhance the understanding of participants of the issues, challenges, and opportunities in PPPs for irrigation management; and share the best examples of PPPs and identify lessons for their adaptation to country-specific situations.

► Participants: Senior officials or researchers in the public or private sector, senior managers of water companies, and senior representatives of water users' associations with experience in participatory irrigation management.

e-Learning course

Toyota Production System (based on the Global Development Learning Network of the World Bank platform).

Phase 1: 18–20 June for Indonesia, I.R. Iran, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand;

Phase 2: 4–6 August for Cambodia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, and Vietnam; and Phase 3: 11–13 August for Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

► Objectives: To understand the methodology of the Toyota Production System, its application, and critical success factors to enable participants to use the knowledge in setting up flexible production systems for small-quantity production in their own processes.

► Participants: Quality personnel, trainers/consultants, and senior/mid-level managerial and technical personnel from industry involved in manufacturing, production systems, and automation.

Kindly contact your NPO for details of the above activities, including eligibility for participation. The project details along with the address of your NPO are available from the APO Web site at www.apo-tokyo.org.

Photo report



MPC (L) and CPC (R) signing an MOU on innovation and competitiveness Forum on Innovation and Competitiveness, 4–6 March 2008, Malaysia.



Experts debating the KM training curriculum Expert group meeting on Curriculum Development for the Basic Course on Knowledge Management, 19–21 March 2008, Philippines.

New APO chair and vice chairs

The 50th Session of the APO Governing Body elected APO Director for the Islamic Republic of Iran Mohsen Haji Mirzaie as APO Chair for 2008–2009 and APO Alternate Director for Japan Masato Watanabe and APO Director for the Republic of Korea Sung-Ki Bae as the First and Second Vice Chairs, respectively.



(L–R): Bae, Watanabe, Mirzaie

APO/NPO update

New address and phone/fax numbers of NPO for Mongolia

The address and phone/fax numbers of the NPO for Mongolia were changed to:
National Productivity and Development Center
Room 102&103, 1st Floor, Central Cultural Palace
Sukhbaatar Sq. 3, Ulaanbaatar-11
Tel: 976-11-326-115 Fax: 976-11-329-799

— Thailand's philosophy of the sufficiency economy — for sustainable enterprises

An important function of the APO is identifying new methods of productivity improvement and disseminating them to member countries. A recent example was the APO and Thailand Productivity Institute (FTPI) seminar on the Global View and Applications of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) toward Sustainable Enterprises, in Bangkok, 12–16 February. The seminar, with 25 APO participants from 12 member countries in the audience of more than 100, began with an open forum featuring various international and local dignitaries including senior government officials, representatives of the private sector, and economists.

The SEP was formulated by His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand, a dedicated development expert. His Majesty questioned the sole focus on economic growth and suggested an alternative, human-centered development approach enabling individuals to achieve an appropriate balance in their endeavors. The SEP acknowledges that a measure of self-reliance is needed to operate effectively in the globalized market. It is based on the three key concepts of moderation, reasonableness, and self-immunity pursued following the two underlying principles of knowledge/wisdom and ethics, which involve virtue and integrity. The SEP achieved global recognition when H.M. King Bhumibol received the 2007 UNDP Lifetime Achievement Award for his contributions to efforts to alleviate poverty and social inequality in Thailand.

In his opening remarks at the seminar, APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka introduced the broad spectrum of creative productivity models that APO projects have disseminated, including practical Japanese tools such as 5S, kaizen, and the community-based One Village, One Product (OVOP) movement. Other models included Thailand's One Tambon, One Product (OTOP) movement (an adaptation of OVOP), Korea's New Community Development (*Saemaul Undong*), Indonesia's groundbreaking microfinance system, and Bangladesh's Nobel Prize-winning Grameen Bank. "The sufficiency economy concept caught our attention after Thai participants in various APO projects referred to it during discussion sessions. It is interesting for me to learn that the concept is broader and applicable at any level from individuals, communities, and enterprises to the management of the national economy," stated Secretary-General Takenaka.

Keynote speaker Secretary General Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, Association of South-east Asian Nations, suggested that the SEP could serve as a coping mechanism for the harsh realities of globalization since, "Globalization offers no defenses, no protection or guarantees for anyone anymore. Everyone is equally exposed and everything is at risk." Dr. Pitsuwan added that the world was in desperate need of alternative, sustainable solutions that deliver social security, especially developing nations struggling to balance immediate needs and future nation-building agendas.

The SEP is increasingly accepted by the Thai corporate world. An early adopter was the Siam Cement Group, the recipient of H.M. the King's Trophy for Best Practice of the Sufficiency Economy in Large Enterprises category in 2007. During the Asian financial crisis, the group devised a survival strategy for reform centered on the SEP which averted possible business closure by harnessing the ingenuity, resourcefulness, and self-sufficiency of its employees.



Siam Cement Group executives (R) explaining production facilities

For the FTPI, the seminar provided an opportunity to share the best practices of the SEP in action in its OTOP outreach programs. The FTPI is conducting need assessment for OTOP cluster management and designing a quality management framework based on the SEP. It expects that the SEP will become the foundation for developing human resources holistically throughout the Asia-Pacific. 🌐

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