



# APO *news*

## Harnessing social capital for community development

Rural communities in Asia tend to have strong community organizations based on trust among villagers, the so-called community force. The ICD Program of the APO has focused on mobilizing that community force for productivity enhancement and rural life improvement. However, the characteristics of Asian communities have been changing along with rapid economic growth in the region. Rural transformation can be seen in the form of outmigration to urban areas, diversification of agriculture and the introduction of nonagriculture activities in rural areas, and feminization and aging of the farming population, for example.



Deliberations on survey results in progress

To assess the impact of rural transformation and identify its implications for the future of the ICD Program, the Survey on Redesigning Integrated Community Development was carried out in 2004. The survey attempted to analyze the relationship between the strength of the community force such as unity, close human relationships, trust among villagers, etc. and the development performance of community people. Statistical analysis of social capital was performed.

The survey was conducted by national experts in the Republic of China, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. The 10 national experts, all of whom are researchers or community development specialists, selected study sites and conducted interviews with villagers based on the survey questionnaires. The questionnaires were modified from the standard format used for social capital research by the World Bank. The basic premise of this survey was that social capital affects welfare by facilitating collective actions.

The coverage of the survey differed among countries, from 60 households in six villages (Vietnam) to 540 households in 32 villages (Sri Lanka) based on the conditions and support in individual countries. In Thailand, the questionnaire survey was conducted in 1,504 villages, since the APO survey was incorporated as part of the National Rural Development Survey. Reflecting the diverse situations and policy emphasis in participating countries, selected issues and objectives varied greatly. However, some commonalities can be identified. First, all the countries were in the midst of transformations. Second, globalization and trade liberalization had

(Continued on page 5)

Volume 35 Number 6  
June 2005

**"Imagination is more important than knowledge. The important thing is to not stop questioning."**

**Albert Einstein**

### INSIDE

- 2.... p-Watch—USA
- 3.... p-TIPS
- 4.... APO publications online
- 4.... Common Sense Talk
- 5.... Outsourcing strategies for SMEs
- 6.... Web-based e-learning program on social accountability
- 6.... WIPO representatives visit APO Secretariat
- 7.... p-Experts
- 7.... APO/NPO Update
- 7.... Program calendar
- 8.... Fiji holds second Roundtable Conference on Productivity

Published monthly by  
**Asian Productivity Organization**  
Hirakawa-cho Dai-ichi Seimei Bldg. 2F  
1-2-10 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku  
Tokyo 102-0093, Japan  
Tel: (81-3) 5226-3920  
Fax: (81-3) 5226-3950  
e-Mail: apo@apo-tokyo.org  
Web site: www.apo-tokyo.org



Printed on Recycled Paper



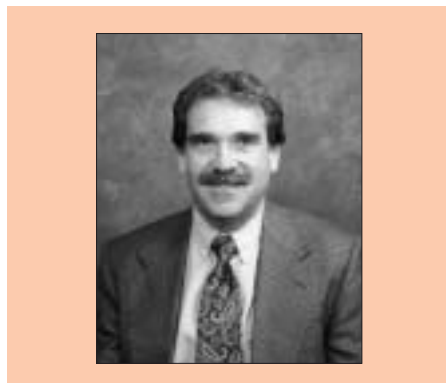
## The angst of ownership

**T**he USA is undergoing a profound change in how government, business, and workers relate to one another. This relational change has been dubbed the “ownership society.” The use of the word “ownership” is attractive in that it reflects a number of important American values. Ownership is the reward for commitment, sacrifice, intelligence, and diligence. There is, therefore, a great fund of goodwill generated by the concept of ownership among Americans.

Ownership, however, can be burdensome in troubled times. Ownership, in fact, can become downright disastrous if it results in isolation from the community in times of need. Americans learned during the Great Depression of the 1930s that going it alone without the support of a caring government can be devastating to workers and society in general. Americans decided at that time, under the leadership of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, that government, business, and the citizenry should undertake a tripartite effort to conquer “the nationwide frontier of insecurity, of human want and fear.”

The end result of that concerted effort was a society that accepted limits to unbridled capitalism for the greater good. In other words, ownership was a shared responsibility. Fast-forward to 2005 and you have the hottest political debate of the past 50 years. Will the institution of Social Security, upon which older working-class Americans have depended for their retirement-era livelihood, be incrementally discarded as a socialist anachronism? More importantly, how should working-class Americans view their relationship with government and business as the global economy strips away profit margins and shreds the traditional safety net? One news commentator bluntly stated that the USA’s core belief in the social contract and its faith in the private sector are now on trial. This rearrangement of how government relates to workers is, of course, not only a US problem. All countries and companies confront it as they position themselves to survive the intense pressures generated by global competition.

The concept of the ownership society is being translated by many as “You are on your own, for better or for worse.” There is no longer a partnership in



facing the vicissitudes of life that grew from the shared national experience of the Great Depression. How are Americans reacting to the ownership society? Despite the appeal of returning to their ideal of rugged individualism, Americans are skeptical, at best, of going it alone.

There are three signals that the ownership society proposition is on shaky ground. First, the traditional backup of union membership with union benefits is becoming an outdated option. Second, Americans are poor savers and already flirting with significant debt. Third, the size of the US current account deficit and the weakening value of the dollar are frightening domestic and international financial markets. These factors make the US economy vulnerable and jeopardize the security of the American worker who will be increasingly on his/her own in the new ownership society. Despite the worries, experts point to one development that has been the saving grace for the US economy over the past decade — increased productivity. Can productivity make the ownership society a viable option for the USA?

The most recent instance of union helplessness was the decision by the federal courts to allow United Airlines to dump its union pension obligations onto the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC), a government agency of last resort for pension defaults by the private sector. This will drastically reduce the amount of pension benefits each retired employee will receive, in some cases by as much as 80%. The US\$9.8 billion default by United Airlines

follows other recent defaults by companies in the steel and textile sectors. The PBGC itself is running a US\$23 billion deficit and faces the bleak prospect of playing backstop to a projected US\$450 billion pension shortfall. In addition, union membership in the USA has declined by 5% since President George W. Bush assumed office and over the past 20 years has dropped from about 20% to only 12%. Only 8% of the private sector is unionized. In addition, the decline in the number of “defined-benefit” pension plans tumbled from 112,000 in 1985 to about 45,000 today. Union pensions were at one time the financial backbone of the USA’s retired middle class. Union pensions plus Social Security benefits gave retired Americans a chance to live out their lives in dignity. Now they will “own” their retirement with scant help from either the private sector or government.

The propensity for Americans to spend rather than save is well documented, and that abysmal savings rate is not reassuring. The spendthrift behavior of US consumers has been made possible in part by a home-refinancing frenzy that has allowed them to live above their means, at least temporarily. In many locales, the value of homes has jumped more than 100% in the past five years, allowing more than US\$400 billion in refinancing cash to drop into the economy; that represents 25% of the USA’s economic growth since 2000. On average, each refinancing allowed the homeowner to reap about US\$27,000 in “free cash,” of which about US\$18,000 quickly found its way into the marketplace to boost consumer spending considerably. Looking down the road, however, the refinancing phenomenon is running out of steam. Estimates are that cash from refinancing will decline from US\$96 billion this year to US\$61 billion in 2006, a sizable drop from the US\$139 billion total in 2004. With home equity on the slide, many Americans have forfeited their one safeguard against financial calamity. Coupled with reductions in corporate pensions and Social Security benefits, increased mortgage debt represents an unwelcome challenge to the economic security of Americans.

Ownership conveys independence. Independence requires financial solvency. The huge and growing US trade deficit and indebtedness to foreign

investors give rise to questions concerning the concept of the USA as an ownership society. Even the housing refinancing boom has an element of dependency to it when you consider that approximately US\$500 billion of mortgage-denominated securities are foreign owned. While profits of US companies remain stagnant on the home front, profits from overseas markets are impressive. The current account deficit continues to set record highs despite the weakness of the dollar, causing many analysts to shake their heads in bewilderment. In 2004, the deficit was US\$665.9 billion, a 25% increase from 2003. US jobs, first routine tasks and then infotech positions, are also finding their way overseas. US firms will continue to increase their outsourcing; more than 90% of CEOs polled in Massachusetts would encourage Americans to accept outsourcing as a fact of life.

US workers might ask, "Ownership of what? Is there a silver lining to be found somewhere?" Well, things might become unhinged, the experts say, if rates of productivity increase were to recede or become negative as they did in the mid-1970s. But with productivity growth of 4.1% in 2004 and estimated long-term

growth of 2.6%, US business should regain its momentum as profits increase and inflation remains low. With a great deal of fanfare, productivity is being spotlighted as the protective shield of the ownership society. If President Bush hopes to strengthen the economy (50% of Americans now say the economy is worsening) and escape the legacy of presiding over a country with the greatest income inequality since the Great Depression, he had better hope that Americans are fully behind the most important productivity campaign in the past 50 years. ☞

*Michael Manson had a long and close association with the APO when he was the Assistant Director of the East-West Center's Institute of Economic Development and Politics in Honolulu. He helped to initiate a number of collaboration programs between the APO and the East-West Center. Manson also served in the Asian Development Bank, and was Director of Communications with the State of Hawaii's Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism. He is presently an educator, and a regular contributor to this column.*



## p-TIPS

In a special section entitled "Power at last: How the Internet means the consumer really is king (and queen)," the 2 April issue of *The Economist* singles out the mobile phone as the gadget to watch, now and in the future. Stroll through any market or mall and watch how people are accessing the Internet: examining T-shirts with one hand while text-messaging friends, checking their bank account, or catching up with cricket scores with the other; eating at a traditional stall while listening to downloaded music; or shopping for spices while confirming ticket reservations. Mobile phones are entertainment centers, bank branches, marketing tools, and brand builders. Raise the productivity of your enterprise by staying abreast of these innovations in mobile phone use.

- 1) High-quality video downloads. This looks like a winning application in places where long commutes on public transport are the norm; satellite radio may be more of a hit with Bangkok's drivers.
- 2) e-Mail is so last week. Text-messaging is more intimate and immediate (and avoids e-mail spam). New phones use voice recognition to convert speech into text.
- 3) Streamline retail operations. The handsets of customers at an experimental

## The gadget that ate all others (How mobile phones are changing the 'Net)

coffee bar in Seoul light up with menu choices, and they can order, pay electronically, and get receipts onscreen. Some boutiques already offer similar in-store services.

- 4) Payment centers. This summer Spain and then the remaining EU debuts Simpay, a service that allows all Web purchases to be put on the mobile bill. (Banks take note.)
- 5) Combining GPS with shopping. Supermarkets can provide information directly to handsets on precisely where an item is located and whether it is on special.
- 6) Marketing medium. Handsets must be "hugely respectful of users and their time" while providing desired information to niche groups.
- 7) Brand builders. As Samsung found, consumers figure that good phones equal good TVs and other appliances.
- 8) Trust consumer savvy. They understand technical specifications and how to use mobiles to best advantage. Offer customization and specialization (see 6 above) in mobile-based services.



## APO publications online



The APO has made a number of publications on which it holds the copyright available on its Web site ([www.apo-tokyo.org](http://www.apo-tokyo.org)) as e-books. The following is a list of e-publications on issues related to Green Productivity.

### Green Productivity

#### *GP Demonstration Projects in Asia 1995–1999*

Compilation of the success stories of the APO's GP demonstration projects implemented in the industrial sector in member countries during 1995–1999.

#### *International Symposium on GP in Industrial Estates in Penang*

Compilation of the proceedings of the international symposium on Management of Industrial Estates through GP in Penang, Malaysia, September 2000.

#### *Green Productivity Practices in Select Industry Sectors*

Report of the survey on GP practices in select industry sectors in APO member countries.

#### *Greening Supply Chains: Enhancing Competitiveness Through Green Productivity*

Proceedings of the forum on Enhancing Competitiveness through GP in the Republic of China, May 2000.

#### *Green Productivity: Integrated Community Development For Poverty Alleviation — APO Demonstration Projects in Vietnam*

Compilation of the success stories of the GP-Integrated Community Development Program for poverty alleviation demonstration projects implemented in 11 communities in Vietnam.

#### *Biogas: A GP Option for Community Development*

Practical manual for installing biogas reactors as a GP option in community development.

#### *Special Publication on the Occasion of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002*

The APO's special publication prepared for the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, 2002.

#### *Achieving Higher Productivity through GP*

Training manual on GP used by participants in GP-related workshops and programs by the APO and NPOs.

#### *A Measurement Guide to Green Productivity: 50 Powerful Tools to Grow Your Triple Bottomline*

Guide for businesspeople to improve profits while providing environmental benefits.

#### *Linking Green Productivity to Ecotourism: Experiences in the Asia-Pacific Region*

Compilation of information on eco-tourism in APO member countries.

#### *Green Productivity Training Manual*

Comprehensive training manual on GP which also provides step-by-step methodology for entrepreneurs to tackle environmental issues and problems.

#### *Survey of Green Purchasing and Procurement*

Detailed survey in 2003 of green purchasing and procuring activities in Japan, Republic of China, Republic of Korea, and Malaysia.

For order and inquiry on APO publications and videos, please contact the Information and Public Relations Department, 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) 5226-3927, Fax: (81-3) 5226-3957, e-Mail: [ipr@apo-tokyo.org](mailto:ipr@apo-tokyo.org)

## COMMON SENSE TALK



“Imagination is more important than knowledge. The important thing is to not stop questioning.”

*Albert Einstein*

“Without the vision of a goal, a man cannot manage his own life, much less the lives of others.”

*Genghis Khan*

“The reason people blame things on the previous generations is that there's only one other choice.”

*Doug Larson*

“You don't need all the glory. If you let others take the credit, it makes them feel like they're part of something special.”

*Ralph Roberts*

“Don't look too far ahead. Focus on what you're doing right now.”

*Kent Tippy*

“What you need is a fundamental humility — the belief that you can learn from anyone.”

*Clayton Christensen*

“One must be frank to be relevant.”

*Corazon Aquino*

“A turtle travels only when it sticks its neck out.”

*Korean proverb*

“Striving for success without hard work is like trying to harvest when you haven't planted.”

*David Bly*

# Outsourcing strategies for SMEs

Although outsourcing has been a part of business for centuries, the recent trend of globalization and emergence of information technology have caused industries to revisit this issue with a fresh perspective. During the past two decades, many industries changed their manufacturing structure as a strategic response to the globalization of markets and consequent increase in competition. For many companies, the key to successful restructuring has been to focus on core competencies or strategically important activities and to withdraw from noncore functions. This approach led to the mushrooming of outsourcing options. Now more companies are pursuing outsourcing strategies, and not only have the frequency and volume of outsourcing transactions increased but also the terms and forms of outsourcing have matured. Outsourcing has become a crucial part of supply chains.

Outsourcing is a viable proposition for companies that lack the expertise and infrastructure to manage all functions and activities in-house. By outsourcing, companies can focus on core competencies and leave the management of outsourced products or services to others. Although outsourcing is mainly practiced by multinational corporations, SMEs are also involved. SMEs are the most valuable part of supply chains, and their role is interesting in this aspect. They are the major beneficiaries of outsourcing but at the same time, outsourcing as a strategy could also enable them to be more competitive in markets. While the lack of manpower and the need to focus on core competency are key reasons for outsourcing, it also enables companies to save on costs. Moreover, with outsourcing companies can take advantage of the latest technologies while avoiding the high costs associated with installing, maintaining, and upgrading machinery, equipment, and systems. Taking into consideration the importance of outsourcing for SMEs, the APO held a seminar on Outsourcing Strategies for SMEs, 12–15 April, in Seoul.



Participants in the seminar

The seminar was attended by 18 participants from 14 APO member countries. The participants heard presentations on: Outsourcing as a competitive tool for SMEs; Guidelines for successful outsourcing; Evolving competition: Implications for SMEs; Strategic importance of outsourcing; Outsourcing and supplier network development; Outsourcing to support manpower flexibility, with reference to automobile industries in the Republic of Korea; New trends in IT outsourcing for SMEs: Web services; and Knowledge management: Outsourcing implications.

The country papers presented by the participants reviewed the current status of outsourcing in the region in general and by SMEs in particular. The implications of outsourcing strategies for the performance of participants' enterprises with respect to productivity and profitability and problems associated with outsourcing were examined. For firsthand information sharing in the host country, the participants visited Daiwoo Incheon Motor. 🌐

## Harnessing social capital

(Continued from page 1)

directly or indirectly, had significant impacts on rural socioeconomies. Third, these changes presented both opportunities and threats for local people. Fourth, all the country studies therefore focused on the dual goals of growth and equity. Finally, how to exploit the emerging opportunities but not decrease social equity or degrade the natural environment was the main question.

Survey findings were presented and debated in a symposium held at National Chung Hsing University in Tai Chung, ROC, 25–29 April. Fifteen participants from 15 member countries attended. The results of the survey showed that the degree of the community force such as unity and mutual trust in a community and its development performance had positive correlations to some extent. Other interesting findings were that:

1) Participating in functional organizations positively affects agricultural production and innovative farming activities. Participating in bureaucratic organizations negatively affects agricultural productivity. Participation in communal organizations negatively affects health status, but positively affects income, while involvement in NGOs negatively affects income. This may indicate that

the poorer and/or weaker sections of a community tend to depend more on communal organizations and NGOs or that NGOs focus on the poor.

- 2) Sharing public goods positively affects income. Trust in bureaucratic organizations positively affects health status and household expenditure. Trust in government officials positively affects project participation. Trust in one's neighbors has positive effects on reducing conflict.
- 3) Aggregate social capital positively affects income among the lower-income population but negatively affects it among the upper-income population. Participation in functional organizations has a clear-cut positive impact on productive activities in general. However, the impact of social or cultural gatherings was unclear from the survey results.
- 4) Bonding, bridging, and linking forms of social capital were confirmed to have a positive effect on welfare enhancement. It appears that traditional forms of social capital do not have a positive impact (or have a negative impact) on the upper-income population in a market-oriented economy, suggesting a need to create new forms of social capital responding to changes in development levels. 🌐

# — Web-based e-learning program on — social accountability

**T**he APO has been trying to harness information and communications technologies (ICT) for developing human resources in member countries, and a number of ICT-based activities have been initiated. In 2004, the APO organized its first Web-based e-learning program on ISO9001:2000 QMS: A Paradigm Shift. The program was not only cost-effective but also highly evaluated by participants. Encouraged by the results of that endeavor, this year a number of e-learning projects are scheduled. The key advantage of e-learning is that it can be carried out by anyone, anywhere, at any time so long as the person has a computer with Internet access. The multiplier effect that this methodology generates is tremendous. It makes training more cost-effective and productive.

In April, the APO organized a Web-based e-learning training course on Social Accountability. The topic was selected because there is growing interest worldwide in the codes of conduct and social responsibilities of corporations. The course was designed to create awareness and understanding of the Social Accountability SA8000 system and standards and its importance in enhancing corporate social responsibility and productivity in member countries.

For this course, the APO utilized its three Internet-based platforms, the APOnet, APO e-Forum, and APO e-Learning Portal. Twenty participants from 10 coun-

tries enrolled in the course conducted by a resource person from Australia and moderated by the APO Secretariat from Tokyo. The resource person uploaded the first set of reading materials onto a dedicated site on the APOnet on the first day of the training course. Participants were issued identification numbers and passwords allowing them to enter the site and access the materials. They were given a few days to study the materials and to submit questions, comments, and suggestions on the APO e-Forum. At the end of the session, participants were asked to complete an assignment. This marked the end of the first module. This same pattern was repeated for the second to the fifth modules. During the course, three live sessions were conducted using the APO e-Learning Portal. The resource person made live presentations from Australia while participants monitored them from their home countries over the Internet. A few participants could not attend the live sessions for technical reasons such as lack of a computer with audio capability, inability to log onto the Internet for a long period, etc. On the final day of the course, a formal examination was conducted. The examination was sent to participants at an agreed time convenient to each and they were given a fixed time to complete it. They were then graded on the results. Another Web-based e-learning course is scheduled this year on Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems, 19 August–1 September. ☺

## WIPO representatives visit APO Secretariat

Representatives from the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), based in Geneva, visited the APO Secretariat on Monday, 25 April, and made a courtesy call on Secretary-General Takenaka. WIPO staff Guriqbal Singh Jaiya, Director SMEs Division, Mansur Raza, Deputy Director, and Masashi Nemoto, Program Officer, both from the Economic Development Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, also made a presentation on intellectual property and the work of WIPO to Secretariat staff and held meetings with departmental Directors to discuss possible avenues for cooperation in the activities of the two organizations.



Jaiya making his presentation

## Fiji holds ..... (Continued from page 8)

action plans to promote productivity within their organizations and society at large; foster a favorable employment relations climate; and break down barriers that hinder productivity growth. Under the education and training initiatives, the parties agreed to “pursue the training of productivity specialists vigorously,” including those enrolled in technical and vocational education. In addition, the partners agreed to explore the need to link wage systems with performance and productivity in ways that will ensure a fair distribution of the gains from higher productivity. As Minister Zinck noted in his address, “At the end of the day, it is what happens in each enterprise, in each government department, in each trade union or NGO, in each training institution, in each village, and in each school that will determine the productivity growth of the nation as a whole.”

The Productivity Charter heralds a new direction for Fiji’s productivity endeavors. The APO deputed four resource speakers to the roundtable conference: Koh Kasuga, Special Advisor, Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development; S. Thiagarajan, Singapore National Trades Union Congress, Nik Zainah, Director General, National Productivity Corporation of Malaysia; and R.C. Monga, productivity and management consultant from India. Kamlesh Prakash, Industry Department, represented the APO Secretary-General at the conference. ☺



# p-Experts deputed by the APO

## REPUBLIC OF CHINA

**Dr. Doo Yong Park**, Hansung University, Republic of Korea, **Datuk Dr. Soh Chai Hock**, Director, Proton Edar Sdn. Bhd., Malaysia, and **Mr. Anik Ajmera** Counsellor-Environment, Confederation of Indian Industry, India Habitat Centre, India, were deputed to serve as resource persons for the Workshop on Green Productivity (GP) and Occupational, Environmental Health and Safety (OEHS), 9–13 May 2005.

**Dr. Paul S. Teng**, Professor and Head, Natural Science & Science Education AG, National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, **Dr. Sung Ho Son**, Professor, Dong Yang University and President, in VitroSys Inc., Republic of Korea, and **Dr. William P. Pilacinski**, Regulatory Liaison, Asia-Pacific Region, Biotech Regulatory Affairs, Monsanto Company, USA, were deputed as resource persons for the Multi-country Study Mission on Business Potential for Agricultural Biotechnology Products, 23–28 May 2005.

## FIJI

**Ms. Nik Zainiah Nik Abd. Rahman**, Director-General, National Productivity Corporation, Malaysia, was deputed to the second Roundtable Conference on Productivity, 6–8 April 2005.

## JAPAN

**Sr. Mary Jean Ryan**, FSM, President/CEO, and **Mrs. Paula Friedman**, Corporate Vice President, both SSM Health Care, USA, were deputed as experts to conduct the Seminar on Experience Sharing on the Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award, 14–15 March 2005.

## APO/NPO update

### New APO Alternate Director/NPO Head for Sri Lanka

Mr. D.L. Kumaradasa, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Labour Relations and Foreign Employment, was appointed as the new APO Alternate Director and Head of the NPO for Sri Lanka, w.e.f. 19 May 2005, in place of Mr. M.A.R.D Jayatilake.

## REPUBLIC OF KOREA

**Mr. Benedict Thomas Anandam**, Principal, Strategic Performance Consultancy, Australia, and **Mr. R.C. Monga**, Productivity Management Consultant, India, were deputed as resource persons for the Symposium on the Role of Knowledge Technologists, 24–27 May 2005.

## LAOS

**Dr. Sugumaran Muniretnam**, Manager, Quality Management System, National Productivity Corporation, Malaysia, and **Mr. Yasuhiko Iwaoka**, Senior Consultant, Iwaoka R&C, Japan, were deputed as resource speakers and to conduct sessions and facilitate discussions for the Training Course on 5S and Kaizen for the Government Sector, 23–27 and 24–25 May 2005, respectively.

## PHILIPPINES

**Sr. Mary Jean Ryan**, FSM, President/CEO, and **Mrs. Paula Friedman**, Corporate Vice President, both SSM Health Care, USA, were deputed as experts to conduct the Forum on Leadership Toward Performance Excellence in the Health Care Sector, 21–22 March 2005.

**Mr. Bruce Searles**, Managing Partner, Benchmarking Partnerships, Australia, was deputed as resource person for the Project on Strengthening NPO Services: Benchmarking for Best Practice Exchange Network, 22–26 May 2005.

## SRI LANKA

**Mr. Hiroshi Iwayama**, President/CEO, RIIM Chu-San-Ren, Inc., Japan, was deputed as expert to conduct seminars/workshops on Japanese-style Management, 2–14 May 2005.

**Mr. Haridas Nayar**, International Development Management Consultant, Malaysia, and **Mr. Mandar Parasnis**, Environmental Management Consultant, India, were deputed as resource persons for the Review of the Green Productivity Demonstration Project Proposal, 30 May–3 June 2005.

## THAILAND

**Sr. Mary Jean Ryan**, FSM, President/CEO, and **Mrs. Paula Friedman**, Corporate Vice President, both SSM Health Care, USA, were deputed as experts to the Thailand Quality Award Winner Conference 2005, 17–18 March 2005.

## Program calendar

### Republic of China

Workshop on Green Productivity for Hazardous Waste Management, 17–20 October 2005.

### Japan

Training Course on Strategic Management Consultancy for Productivity Improvement, 5–16 September 2005.

### Mongolia

Workshop on Enhancing NPOs' Core Competence: Productivity Showcases and Demonstration Companies, 30 August–2 September 2005.

### Philippines

Symposium on Core Competence Management in SMEs: Creating Needs for Consumers, 2–5 August 2005.

Multi-country Study Mission on Best Practices for Meeting Food Quality and Safety Standards, 22–26 August 2005.

### Sri Lanka

Forum on Labor-Management Cooperation: Productivity-linked Wage Systems, 12–16 September 2005.

*Kindly contact your NPO for details of the above activities, including eligibility for participation. If you need the address of your NPO, it is available from the APO Web site at [www.apo-tokyo.org](http://www.apo-tokyo.org).*



# Fiji holds second Roundtable Conference on Productivity

After Fiji's first Roundtable Conference on Productivity in August 1995, its productivity movement has continued to evolve. In 2003, the NPO was repositioned as the Training and Productivity Authority of Fiji (TPAF) and another national productivity awareness campaign was launched by the Prime Minister. Recognizing that the achievement of a better quality of life is dependent on the continuing improvement of productivity and quality in the workplace and in communities, and mindful of changes in the global economy, the TPAF convened a second Roundtable Conference on Productivity in Suva, 6–8 April 2005, to give the productivity movement in the country new strategic directions.

Attended by 10 representatives each from unions, employers, and the government and by delegates representing nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), media, academics, and more than 100 observers, the conference was opened by Minister for Labour, Industrial Relations and Productivity Kenneth Zinck. In his inaugural address, Minister Zinck reminded the delegates that "Productivity is everybody's business, not just that of the TPAF or that of any specific social partner." He went on to define productivity as "doing more with what we already have" and cited the audiovisual sector, agriculture, and information technology as areas that "represent opportunities for using our resources in smarter ways."

Minister Zinck also urged conference delegates not to ignore those engaged in the informal sector, in which a significant percentage of Fiji's population makes its living. Methods to increase their productivity and well-being would also greatly benefit the entire economy, he added.

The main purposes of the second roundtable conference were to review the old charter signed in 1995 and draft a new Productivity Charter for Fiji. After discussion, the delegates agreed on the contents of a new charter, which was approved at the end of the three-day session. The new charter is to be officially signed by Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase along with the other social partners at a special event in June.

The new slogan agreed upon for Fiji's productivity movement is "A better quality of life through innovation and creativity," while the new guiding prin-



Roundtable conference participants with Minister Zinck (seventh from left)

ciple of "enhancement of mutual trust, respect, and transparency among all stakeholders," was adopted. Other guiding principles of Fiji's productivity movement include enhancement of economic opportunities and the promotion of employment security, fair distribution of gains, sustainability, relevant education and training, flexibility and adaptability, and ownership of the movement by all. With these as the basis for future actions, the roundtable conference recommended specific programs of action for the TPAF, government, and all social partners.

Among the recommendations for the TPAF were strengthening the promotion of productivity and quality and promotion of its role as the NPO of Fiji; adoption of Green Productivity initiatives, including benchmarking and the fostering of model plants that others could emulate; undertaking research to contribute to policy formulation; and promoting a national culture of innovation and creativity in its training activities. It was agreed that the TPAF required adequate funding to fulfill its role as the country's NPO. The government, on the other hand, must take the lead in nurturing a productivity culture by giving tangible support to the NPO through the provision of adequate resources, by supporting awareness initiatives at all levels, and especially by providing national leadership in the development of productivity and quality processes within the public sector. The government was also encouraged to identify productivity targets in the public-sector strategic plan, facilitate the introduction of technology in all sectors of the economy, and promote the importance of quality and of adhering to international standards in the provision of goods and services. It was agreed that the prime minister will continue to lead the national awareness campaign.

Under the new Productivity Charter, all social partners pledge to create and support an environment conducive to productivity practices; develop annual

*(Continued on page 6)*