



APO *news*

Thailand hosts Eco-products International Fair 2005

On 6–8 October this year, the APO in collaboration with the Federation of Thai Industries (FTI) and the Thailand Productivity Institute (FTPI) organized the Eco-products International Fair (EPIF) 2005. More than 22,000 visitors thronged the IMPACT Exhibition Center in Bangkok, Thailand, to attend the EPIF 2005. This was the second such fair in Southeast Asia following the first EPIF held in Malaysia in 2004. The theme of the fair was “New Environmental Challenges for the Global Community.” The guest of honor and keynote speaker at the opening ceremony was the Thai Minister of Information and Communication Technology, Mr. Sora-at Klinpratoom.



Opening of the EPIF 2005. (L-R) Dr. Phanit Laosirirat, Executive Director, FTPI; Mr. Praphad; Minister Sora-at; Mr. Hirata; and Mr. Takenaka

A total of 226 booths showcasing eco-friendly products and services covering items ranging from consumer goods to materials for manufacturing were set up by exhibitors from Japan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Thailand. Fifty-six well-known exhibitors included Daikin, Ebara, Hitachi, Matsushita, Mitsubishi, Teijin, Toshiba, Toyota, Siam Cement Company, and others. The APO had a booth to promote its Green Productivity (GP) activities. This year the organizers sponsored an eco-product concept booth that had as its main attraction an “Eco-wish Tree” that drew crowds of all ages. Another crowd-pleaser was Honda’s humanoid robot ASIMO. The 120-cm robot performed “live” on stage for appreciative crowds several times daily during the EPIF 2005. The performances demonstrated the technological innovations that allow it to run at 3 km per hour, mimic the movements of a person, and dance rhythmically.

In addition to Minister Sora-at, speakers at the opening ceremony were FTI Chairman Praphad Phodhivorakhun, APO Secretary-General Shigeo Takenaka, and Parliamentary Secretary Koichi Hirata of the Japanese Ministry of Trade and Industry. Minister Sora-at, in his keynote address, said that advances are being made in green production processes, which are environmentally friendly and energy saving, and are now becoming more common in the global market. Thailand is committed to improving its products and services to join this environment-friendly trend as it will help Thai manufacturers to increase their competitiveness globally. Minister Sora-at also pointed out that the EPIF had not only given Thai manufacturers

(Continued on page 6)

Volume 35 Number 10
October 2005

“Simplicity involves two major processes: eliminating redundant elements and integrating things to make them flow.”

Ken Okuyama

INSIDE

- 2.... p-Watch—USA
- 3.... p-TIPS
- 4.... New APO publication
- 4.... Common Sense Talk
- 5.... The Baganuur experience: change management for productivity growth
- 5.... Meeting quality and safety standards for food
- 7.... p-Experts
- 7.... APO/NPO update
- 7.... Program calendar
- 8.... Participatory community development planning in the Mekong region

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



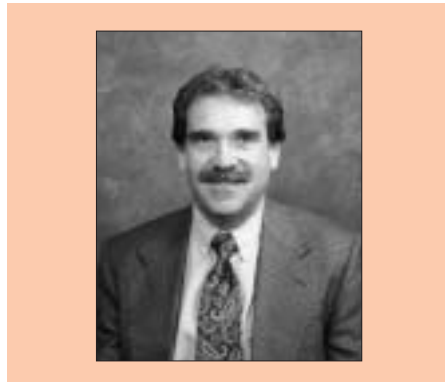
A philosophy of productivity

The most recent figures for productivity growth during the April–June period did not excite anyone at 1.8%, and unit labor costs rose an uncomfortable 4.2%, marking a five-year high. These figures broke the trend of higher productivity and lower labor costs in the USA. Certainly the ups and downs of productivity and unit labor costs deserve our attention (and I have dutifully reported these numbers in my earlier columns). It is difficult, however, to judge the strength and direction of productivity's benefits when statistics gyrate without a discernible and consistent pattern. Decade-long trends are informative, but these are more useful to the economic historian than to policymakers who are under constant pressure to boost economic growth and quality of life indicators quickly.

“Global competition continues to push productivity to the top of the US business agenda and has revitalized America’s efforts to develop and employ the latest and most effective productivity strategies.”

Policymakers need more than an array of statistical profiles to set in motion a viable productivity movement. They would benefit most from a philosophy of productivity that would carry them through short-term setbacks and guide them in meeting their nation's long-term economic aspirations. Can the US experience help others in formulating an effective productivity strategy? The answer is “perhaps.”

There is no centrally directed productivity movement in the USA. The American effort is primarily the ad hoc function of the private sector. The US government provided an initial push with the establishment of the land-grant college system in the mid-1800s. Those colleges acted as the tech-



nical centers for agriculture and mechanical engineering. They continue to serve about 20% of the college population with 70% of the cost paid by the government. Government support for business, however, has always been a contentious issue and concerns over productivity and increased use of technology have traditionally fallen to the entrepreneur. The US government was viewed as incapable of keeping up with the dynamism of the private sector. As long as technical progress and economic growth were sailing smoothly, the government was viewed as a well-intentioned bystander. The Great Depression of the early 1930s nudged Americans closer to government dependence, but the government was still considered to be the provider of last resort.

Therefore it is not surprising that support and expertise for the US productivity movement have remained primarily in the private-sector domain. More recently, universities have tried to increase their relevance to business and to the productivity effort, but government-supported universities have been challenged in these efforts by the private sector, which objects to this government-subsidized competition. The nongovernmental productivity movement in the USA is multifaceted and responds to market incentives. Its expertise is available to those firms willing to shoulder the considerable cost of hiring consultants and devote valuable time to mastering current productivity techniques. Most efforts by US productivity centers today are committed to reinforcing Six Sigma principles and lean

enterprises, in other words, reducing defects, increasing quality, reducing costs, and serving the customer more efficiently. Global competition continues to push productivity to the top of the US business agenda and has revitalized America's efforts to develop and employ the latest and most effective productivity strategies.

America's enviable productivity record is, therefore, not so much the result of a well-formulated, government-led effort, but the result of a shared set of values inherent in the business and economic mindset. Those shared values constitute a philosophy that benefits productivity and when combined with productivity techniques such as lean enterprises and Six Sigma can generate solid productivity growth. What might be these “softer” components of the USA's successful productivity performance?

America’s enviable productivity record is, therefore, not so much the result of a well-formulated, government-led effort, but the result of a shared set of values inherent in the business and economic mindset.

First is social openness. The more open a society is, the more impressive will be the rewards of productivity. This openness depends on gender equality, social mobility, and universal education. The human resources required to carry the burden of productivity efforts must also be productivity's primary beneficiary. Second is society's respect for and commitment to education and training. The US educational system has a strong democratic tradition and distributes rewards for meritorious effort regardless of social standing. Third is the relative honesty and transparency in business/government relations. Collusion between government and busi-

ness at the expense of efficiency stifles free markets and competition and can be a significant obstacle to the expression of the human spirit and creativity so necessary to productivity. Fourth is a strong legal framework for business transactions. This framework provides consistency and predictability, allowing business to focus on what it does best, i.e., production and service.

Fifth is the admiration of those who take risks and spearhead innovation. The folk heroes of American business are the innovators who saw opportunity despite tremendous odds. Thinking big and overcoming obstacles on the way to financial success became the ethos of the American business community. The universal appeal of rewarding risk takers brought to the USA some of the world's best talents. Sixth is a global perspective. Walt Disney was ahead of his time with his vision of "It's a Small, Small World." The opening of Disneyland in Hong Kong this September underscores the wide acceptance of global partnerships. Japanese terms and concepts can be found throughout the productivity literature. Teams of consultants from Europe, Asia, and the USA jet from country to country spreading the lessons of productivity. The US business community and universities have shown the capacity to transcend national boundaries, creating a comfortable and collegial atmosphere for creative minds.

Productivity is greater than the sum of its parts. No doubt the parts are important, but it is the holistic nature of productivity and the resulting synergy that give productivity the ability to improve our lives and reward our labor. The components of productivity—social openness, hard work, educational opportunity, government transparency, legal certainty, innovation, and a global outlook—are not unique to any one country. They do require, however, continued recognition and nurturing. In this respect, the APO and the NPOs have served the Asia-Pacific region admirably. 🌀

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

Finding the middle ground (Marketing in an age of mass affluence)

Entrepreneurs and marketing consultants are scratching their heads. How can demand be created when the necessities are available to most and discerning middle-class consumers have access to more product information than ever? Noting that "luxury or lavish goods are being rejected outright," Paul Nunes and Brian Johnson advocate "seizing the middle ground" and attempting to capture what they refer to as "the moneyed masses" who commute, prepare meals, clean house, and do laundry. In *Mass Affluence: 7 New Rules of Marketing to Today's Consumer* (Harvard Business School Press, 2004) they offer seven tips for creating new customer value while filling market niches.

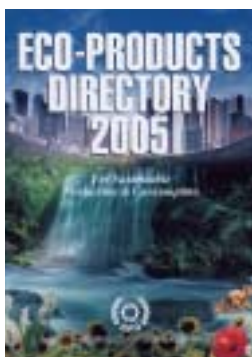
- 1) Seize the new middle ground. Urban life has room for products that aren't revolutionary but make life more convenient. Individually wrapped cleaning wipes, prewashed and mixed salads, and delivery services are examples.
- 2) Treat some customers more equal than others. Coupons, point cards, and other perks reward repeat customers. They can also create synergies. Sporting goods stores may give coupons for restaurants, and vice versa, to favored clients.
- 3) Find an occasional use. The moneyed masses may spend on items used

sporadically. Remember those enormous pots Grandma used only at Diwali or New Year? Translate the concept into "guest" china, specialized sports shoes, or a dedicated omelet pan (the male cooking boom has been a boon, report kitchenware purveyors).

- 4) Introduce a new math of ownership. Time-shares are old news. Expand the new math into flexible payment plans, innovative leasing, and shorter ownership cycles (but disposables must show environmental respect).
- 5) Grow the return on consumption. Present today's handcrafted items as tomorrow's heirlooms. Alternatively, show how your product or service can increase customers' productivity today and tomorrow.
- 6) Think globally, retail locally. Asian shopping hubs are in city centers, not the suburbs. Smaller store formats with specialized ranges attract customers who know what they want. Store-in-store formats (e.g., coffee bars in bookstores) are another possible growth area.
- 7) Become apropos of everyone. Put your marketing efforts where life puts bottlenecks: in high-rise elevators, at supermarket checkouts, on commuter trains. When temporarily captive, people are desperate for distraction and receptive to informative messages.



New APO publication



ECO-PRODUCTS DIRECTORY 2005

APO 319 pp. October 2005 ISBN: 92-833-2361-0

Greening supply chains has become one of the key areas of the APO's Green Productivity (GP) Program. The APO's commitment to greening supply chains in the Asia-Pacific region started to take shape with the establishment of the GP Advisory Committee in 2003, consisting of representatives of leading Japanese companies with world-leading expertise in environmental management. The committee, which is expected to advise and support the APO in implementing GP-related activities, identified the compilation of an eco-products database as one of its core activities.

With help from the GP Advisory Committee, the APO published the first edition of its *Eco-products Directory* in 2004 and launched the publication at the first Eco-products International Fair held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in September that year. The APO then continued to pursue its commitment to greening supply chains and published the new edition of the *Eco-products Directory* in October 2005.

In addition to environment-conscious products, the new edition contains the descriptions of environment-friendly services. In all, the new edition describes 568 eco-friendly products and services divided into the four categories of:

- (1) **eco-materials** (81 items) such as metals, polymers, natural materials, etc.;
- (2) **eco-components** (39 items) such as construction components, electrical and electronic components, semiconductor manufacturing devices, machine and automobile parts, etc.;
- (3) **eco-products** (432 items) such as home electronic appliances, automobiles, office appliances, information technology equipment, fabric products, etc.; and
- (4) **eco-services** (16 items) such as maintenance, recycling, and leasing services, etc.

This publication should be useful for those who are interested gaining knowledge of environment-conscious products and expanding green markets in Asia and beyond.

Eco-Products Directory 2005 is a free publication but postage will be charged for shipment.

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

COMMON SENSE TALK



"The first wealth is health."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Simplicity involves two major processes: eliminating redundant elements and integrating things to make them flow."

Ken Okuyama

"Whether you're rich or whether you're poor, everybody wants a bargain."

John R. McMillin

"The very process of writing a list clarifies and focuses the mind."

Anthony Bourdain

"Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal."

Henry Ford

"Spoon feeding in the long run teaches us nothing but the shape of the spoon."

E.M. Forster

"If man is to survive, he will have learned to take a delight in the essential differences between men and between cultures. He will learn that differences in ideas and attitudes are a delight, part of life's exciting variety, not something to fear."

Gene Roddenberry

"I always read the last page of a book first so that if I die before I finish, I'll know how it turned out."

Nora Ephron

"You're not a real manager unless you've been sacked."

Malcolm Allison

The Baganuur experience: change management for productivity growth

Mongolia's National Productivity and Development Center (NPDC) has a history of creating demonstration companies. In 2004 it used change management concepts to create a demonstration company in the broad field of performance improvement. The goal was not to showcase specific productivity tools or techniques or to resolve a particular problem, but to achieve sustainable improvements in the performance of an entire organization to achieve its long-term vision.

Baganuur, a coal mine serving central Mongolia, was the focus of an APO/NPDC initiative to change the way it functioned both in terms of what it did and how it did them. Initial orientation sessions were conducted to ensure that all employees appreciated what lay ahead. During the next phase, a shared vision for Baganuur was crafted and a strategy developed by the change management group (CMG) orchestrating the effort. Under a steering council comprised of executives, board members, and union representatives, the CMG developed action plans and breathed life into the strategy. In the final phase, an integrated planning system was developed incorporating a performance measurement system linked to the company's vision and strategy. Fundamentally changing the way an organization functions demands more than implementing a few steps or introducing productivity techniques. Lasting change takes place in the affective domain of feeling and emotion, rather than in the cognitive domain of thinking. Both intellectual and emotional acceptance was necessary; hearts and minds had to be won.

The sociotechnical nature of the exercise was reflected in the project logo symbolizing the tripartite (APO/NPDC/Baganuur) effort, Maslow's ascending levels of human satisfaction, role of all resources (labor, materials, capital), and progress toward the vision. The CMG identified seven key strategic leverage areas (KLAs) and prepared action plans for each. Then task forces composed of more than 150 employees from all levels in Baganuur were formed to carry them out.

Baganuur told its own story to 13 international and 13 local participants in an APO workshop held in Ulaanbaatar, 30 August–2 September. The CMG described the progress of three KLAs epitomizing the project: human resources development and occupational health and safety (HRD), communication, and measurement. The HRD strategy integrated surveys, training, job grading, and targeted introduction of 5S, kaizen suggestion schemes, and quality control circles. The combined impact resulted in noticeable improvements in working conditions, reduced waste, reduced accidents and machine downtime, and raised productivity.



The communication strategy provided timely information to all on changes occurring and results achieved through radio and video presentations, in-house journals, and colorful posters. The CEO was instrumental in calling regular all-hands meetings. The measurement team designed a performance measurement system to track the effects of strategies being implemented, ensuring that progress toward the company vision was really being made.

Success in such a complex project depends on many factors, but perhaps the most important is the commitment of the CEO and company leadership. This was present in Baganuur. It is clear that the project is delivering results as profitability has climbed, costs have fallen, workplaces are cleaner and safer, and motivation is high as the company moves toward its vision of excellence and market supremacy. The danger now lies in imagining that the job is done before the more productive behaviors are deeply embedded in the organizational culture. ☺

Contributed by John Parsons and Byambaa Uranchimeg

Meeting quality and safety standards for food

Food safety and quality are vital concerns in agriculture and food trade. Consumers are now more conscious of the quality and safety of the food they buy and demand more assurances from agribusiness and food companies. Maintaining high standards of food quality and safety is therefore an essential strategy of many food-processing and -exporting companies. Companies that have adopted rigorous food safety and quality standards as core values enjoy high levels of consumer confidence, strong brand recognition, and sales in major global markets.

Meeting stringent international food safety standards remains a formidable challenge to most developing APO member countries as they seek to expand agricultural and food exports. The APO organized a multi-country study mission in the Philippines, 20–26 August, to bring together experts, researchers, policymakers, extension workers, and entrepreneurs from the public and private sectors to compare current food quality and safety standards in Japan, North America, and the EU with those in developing member countries. Two international experts from Japan and Canada discussed recent developments in standards, and an expert from the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, Bangkok, described the Codex Alimentarius and its implications for developing countries.

During the workshop session, the participants pointed out the common issue of multiple agencies involved in setting standards in member countries, resulting in weak coordination and additional burdens on SMEs trying to penetrate export markets. In most member countries, there is no legislation mandating the adoption of



Touring a unique computer-controlled lettuce farm

HACCP principles in the standard-setting process. The workshop groups agreed that developing countries should be compliant with ISO22000.

The study mission provided participants the opportunity to learn from the best practices of Philippine agribusiness and food companies that compete in global markets, with products ranging from processed mango juice, to fresh and frozen seafood, to processed meat products. Four local resource persons from the Nutrilicious Food Corporation, Seachamp International Export Corporation, and San Miguel Purefoods Company highlighted the best management practices of their respective firms in food quality and safety management. The participants' knowledge was reinforced by visits to the food-processing plants of Nestle Philippines, Lipa City; meat-processing plant of Purefoods Hormel Company, Dasmarias; and Basic Necessity Inc., Silang. ☺

along with other international enterprises an opportunity to showcase their eco-products but also created an opportunity for the exchange of product knowledge and technologies that will help protect the environment and save valuable energy. He expressed the hope that the EPIF 2005 would help raise environmental awareness among the general Thai public and pave the way to gaining their support for eco-products.

Praphad recognized the need for Thai industries to join hands with others to minimize the negative effects on the environment of business activities and felt that their participation in the EPIF 2005 demonstrated their commitments to this. Parliamentary Secretary Hirata in his address mentioned that it was very important that consumers and all stakeholders have access to adequate information and knowledge of products on the market, as well as a forum to exchange information and knowledge on related environmental issues. Hirata further pledged that Japan would continue to cooperate with other countries to disseminate environmentally friendly and energy-saving know-how and technologies developed by Japanese industry for sustainable development and would support the APO in its productivity enhancement and GP endeavors in Asia and the Pacific. Secretary-General Takenaka mentioned that in order to protect the environment we need to promote eco-innovations at every level, including technical, policy management, and individual lifestyle levels, and disseminate such innovations swiftly in society. He expressed the hope that the Asian-Pacific region would see accelerating trends in GP, eco-design, and eco-products through such annual eco-product fairs organized by the APO in collaboration with its partners.



Scene at the fair

to provide opportunities for business matchmaking and networking in eco-product-related business. Around 100 participants attended the conference, including 35 overseas participants from 15 APO member countries. On the first day the resource speakers and their topics were: Koichi Hirata, “Policies for Economic Growth and Preservation of the Environment”; Kenichi Azuma, Vice President, Mitsubishi Electric Corporation of Japan, “Successful Case in the Global Promotion of Eco-products—Experiences of Mitsubishi Electric Corporation”; Dr. Chaiyod Bunyagidj, Vice President, Thailand Environment Institute, “Key Success Factors and Barriers in the Implementation of Green Purchasing and Eco-products”; and Datuk Mustafa Mansur, President of the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers, “Importance of Awareness on Eco-products for Global Competitiveness.”




Prof. Yamamoto (L) presenting the directory to Minister Sora-at

The opening day of the fair also saw the launching of the seminal APO publication *Eco-products Directory 2005*. Professor Yamamoto of the University of Tokyo and a Vice Chairman of the APO GP Advisory Committee presented the first copy of the new volume to Minister Sora-at.

Running parallel to the fair were three series of events, popularly known as “tracks,” with the first being the APO track, the second the Thai track, and the third the “other” track. A three-day International Conference on Eco-products for Competitiveness in Global Markets was organized on the APO track. The objectives of the conference were to create greater awareness among the business community in particular and the public in general of the importance of eco-products in achieving sustainable production and consumption; to share the experiences and practices of companies and governments in reducing, recycling, and reusing (3R initiatives), greening of supply chains, and green procurement; and

The second day of the conference focused on 3R initiatives. Professor Ryoichi Yamamoto spoke on “Establishment of a Sustainable Society through Sound Material Cycles: Institutional Framework and Technical Capacity”; Dr. Yasuhiko Hotta, Policy Analyst, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Japan, on “Japan’s 3R Initiatives: Experiences and Success Stories”; Mary Jane C. Ortega, City Mayor, City Government of San Fernando, the Philippines, on “Key Issues and Challenges in Managing Waste in the Context of the 3 Rs”; Augustine Koh, Director, Environment Department, APO, on “The APO’s Experiences in 3R Implementation”; Somthai Wongcharoen, Wongpanit Garbage Recycle Separation Plant, Thailand, on “3R Cases in Thailand”; and Saburo Kato, Special Advisor to the Mayor of Kawasaki City, Japan, on “3R Experiences in Japan.”

On the third day, a special thematic session on “Environmentally Sustainable Industrial Development and the Concept of Eco-towns in the Asia-Pacific Region” was held. The event was coordinated by the United Nations Environment Programme and Global Environment Centre Foundation. The presentations were followed by a panel discussion, where delegates representing a number of cities of Asia and the Pacific shared their visions of what eco-towns might be and their experiences in trying to create them.

The Thai track and other track covered a series of parallel events during the three days of the EPIF 2005. The events on the Thai track targeted Thai professionals, with topics ranging from eco-design to innovative waste treatment systems to green energy. The other track hosted events organized by the International Green Purchasing Network (IGPN) among others. Included in the discussions were involving youth in green purchasing, eco- and agro-tourism, and eco-material development. Taking advantage of the fair, the IGPN held its first governing body meeting in Bangkok while members of its network attended the EPIF. 



p-Experts deputed by the APO

BANGLADESH

Mr. Shawkat Ali Ferdousi, Canada, was deputed as expert under the special program for Agricultural Productivity Enhancement in Asian Least Developed Countries, 5–10 September 2005.

Mr. Yasuhiko Inoue, Director, International Department, Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development, was deputed as member of the advisory mission under the special program for Agricultural Productivity Enhancement in Asian Least Developed Countries, 7–9 September 2005.

CAMBODIA and LAO PDR

Mr. Shigeki Tsuchiya, Counsellor, International Department, Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development, was deputed as expert under the special program for Agricultural Productivity Enhancement in Asian Least Developed Countries, 26 September–6 October 2005.

REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Mr. Christopher Tan, Vice President, Regional Cash Process Management Unit, Regional Processing Center, Asia Pacific in Citigroup, Singapore, was deputed as resource person for the National Industrial Competitiveness and International Benchmarking project, “Global Practice Workshop II” under Strengthening NPO Services, 28–29 September 2005.

FIJI

Dr. James Chen, Associate Professor, Department of Industrial Engineering, Chung Yuan University, Republic of China, was deputed as expert for the training course on Warehouse Management, 5–9 September 2005.

INDIA

Dr. Tsutomu Nishida, Research Officer (Marine Fisheries Resources), National Research Institute of Far Seas Fisheries, Fisheries Research Agency, Japan, and **Dr. Chang Kwei Lin**, Consultant, Thailand, were deputed as resource persons for the seminar on Inland Fisheries Management, 21–26 September 2005.

NEPAL

Mr. Yasuhiko Inoue, Director, International Department, Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development, was deputed as member of the advisory mission under the special program for Agricultural Productivity Enhancement in Asian Least Developed Countries, 3–5 September 2005.

APO/NPO update

New APO Director for Japan

Mr. Tadao Chino, Advisor, Nomura Research Institute, Ltd., was appointed as the new APO Director for Japan, w.e.f. 30 August 2005.

New e-mail address for National Productivity Unit, Cambodia

e-Mail address: npccam@yahoo.com

PAKISTAN

Dr. Tay Joo Hwa, Head, Division of Environmental and Water Resources Engineering, School of Civil and Structural Engineering, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, and **Dr. Suporn Koottatep**, Associate Professor, Department of Environmental Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Chiang Mai University, Thailand, were deputed as resource persons in Reviewing the Green Productivity Demonstration Project Proposal on the Tannery Industry, 19–22 September 2005.

THE PHILIPPINES

Mr. Shaik Abdul Khader, India, and **Dr. Yue-Shan Chang**, Director, Department of Finance, National Sun Yat-Sen University, Republic of China, were deputed as experts for the seminar on Enhancing Capacities of Composite Teams in the Rationalization Plans of Government-owned and -controlled Corporations, 12–16 September 2005.

SINGAPORE

Mr. Shinji Kaburagi, Advisor, Corporate Finance Department, Japan Bank for International Cooperation, **Mr. Byungkoo Choi**, Deputy Director, Technology Appraisal Planning Department, Korea Technology Credit Guarantee Fund, and **Dr. Jimmy Yang-Tzong Tsay**, Professor, National Taiwan University, were deputed as resource persons for the study meeting on SME Financing, 27–29 September 2005 and for the seminar on Financing Avenues for SME, 30 September 2005.

SRI LANKA

Mr. Mah Lok Abdullah, Principal Consultant, Railer Management Services, Malaysia, **Dr. Payaman J. Simanjuntak**, Senior Adviser to the Minister and Vice-Chairman, National Productivity Council, Indonesia, **Mr. S. Thiagarajan**, Director, Ong Teng Cheong Institute of Labour Studies, Singapore, and **Mr. Sankarabramanian Guruswami**, Executive Director (Personnel), National Mineral Development Corporation Limited, India, were deputed as resource persons for the forum on Labor-Management Cooperation: Productivity-linked Wage Systems, 12–15 (Mr. Abdullah) and 12–16 September 2005, respectively.

Dr. Mushtaq Ahmad Gill, Director General Agriculture (Water Management), Pakistan, and **Dr. Intizar Hussain**, Senior Economist, International Water Management Institute, Sri Lanka, were deputed as resource persons for the study meeting on the Management of Large-scale Surface Irrigation Systems for Better Conservation and Use of Water Resources, 12–17 September 2005.

THAILAND

Mr. Junn John Chanoki, Head of Research, Food and Agribusiness Japan, Robobank Nederland Tokyo Branch, **Ms. Gill Ereaud**, Linguistic Landscapes, UK, and **Mr. Andrew Shepherd**, Senior Marketing Economist, Agricultural Support Systems Division, Agriculture Department, Food and Agriculture Organization, Italy, were deputed as resource persons for the seminar on Strengthening of Market Research for Development of Agricultural Export Markets, 26–30 September 2005.

Program calendar

Indonesia

Workshop on Green Productivity for Green and Productive Tourism, 12–16 December 2005.

Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Vietnam

Distance Learning-based Seminar on Total Quality Management, 19–22 December 2005.

Japan

Study Meeting on Productivity Management in Public Services, 17–20 October 2005.

Republic of Korea

Study Meeting on the WTO-Doha Development Agenda: Implications of the Emerging Agreements in the Negotiations on Agriculture, 22–25 November 2005.

Pakistan

Coordination Meeting for Survey on Entrepreneur Development for Competitive SMEs, 28–29 November 2005.

The Philippines

Workshop on Green Productivity and Solid Waste Management, 21–25 November 2005.

Singapore

Forum on Global Opportunities in Environmental Sustainability, 7–9 November 2005.

Forum on Development of NPOs: Think Tank Role, 28–30 November 2005.

Thailand

Working Party Meeting on Integrated Community Development Program for the Mekong Region: “One Village, One Product” Movement in CLMV Countries, 19–24 December 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.

VIETNAM

Mr. A.K. Asthana, Director, Energy Management Division, National Productivity Council, India, and **Mr. Chirasak Boonrowd**, Deputy Executive Director, Energy Conservation Center of Thailand, were deputed as resource persons for the workshop on Green Productivity for Energy Efficiency, 12–16 September, and the former for the GPDP on Energy Efficiency Enhancement for Sao Vang Rubber Company, 17–21 September 2005.

Participatory community development planning in the Mekong region

Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam are relatively new APO members, and these three countries plus Myanmar, the so-called CLMV countries, recently joined ASEAN and have been making development efforts and liberalizing their economies. However, the CLMV countries still lag behind compared with the original ASEAN members in many respects. In particular, rural populations suffer rather than benefit from rapid penetration of market forces into rural areas. It is therefore important to support rural community development efforts to bridge the gaps, unify ASEAN, and integrate East Asian economies.

This was reasoning behind the development of the Human Resource Development Program on Participatory Project Cycle Management for CLMV Countries in the Mekong Region (training course on PPCM) jointly organized by the ASEAN Foundation and APO, 8–20 August in Lao PDR. A total of 20 participants (five from each country) attended the program. The training course on PPCM consisted of two days of classroom sessions in Vientiane, nine days of fieldwork in a village, and two days of summing-up sessions after returning to Vientiane. The fieldwork, forming the main part of the course, was the practical implementation of PPCM, which was developed under the APO's Integrated Community Development Program.

The first presentations introduced the “One Tambon, One Product (OTOP)” movement and “Thai Business Initiatives of Rural Development (TBIRD)” of the Population and Community Development Association (PDA) of Thailand, and the “One Village, One Product (OVOP)” movement of Japan as the best practices of rural community development in the region. The OTOP movement is a coordinated effort between the government and private sector to improve the quality of local products and to market them, including in overseas markets. The OVOP movement in Japan, on the other hand, emphasizes the discovery and utilization of local resources and the revitalization of rural communities. The PDA, a prominent Thai NGO, promotes investment by private businesses in rural areas through TBIRD, contributing significantly to employment generation and improvement of living standards. The success of TBIRD shows that an NGO that establishes good rapport with rural people through long-term efforts in rural community development can play the role of an investment coordinator/consultant linking private businesses and communities.

The country paper presentations showed that the CLMV countries have been struggling to formulate effective rural community development policies that mobilize limited development resources efficiently even in a policy environment that remains highly centralized. The training course on PPCM offered a new concept of rural community development which mobilizes the participation of all stakeholders.

The nine days of fieldwork were in Longken village, Kao Udong district, located about 100 km northwest of Vientiane. Kao Udong, which has large rice fields irrigated by the Nam Ngun Dam, can be classified as a typical rural Laotian district. On the first day of the field visit, the participants visited the Kao Udong District Office to receive a briefing on the general characteristics of the district. Then the participants made daily visits to Longken village. During the first visit, time was spent on introductions and greetings, listening to villagers' histories, and explaining the objectives of the visits, instead of immediately starting data



Debating the result of situational analysis

collection. This more relaxed first contact helped to minimize anxieties and establish a good rapport between the participants and villagers. The intensive situational analysis was conducted after the second day, during which participants tried to focus more on the advantages, success stories, and potential rather than the problems and difficulties of the village. Participatory rural appraisal tools, such as village mapping, timelines, seasonal calendars, and vision drawing, were utilized in the situational analysis. Villagers were encouraged to express their own opinions and desires, and the participants tried to facilitate the process without manipulating their initiatives.

Data collected through interactions with villagers were recorded and processed by the participants in a classroom, and the processed information was presented to the villagers for verification the following day. In the latter part of the fieldwork, the participants and villagers deliberated the future development directions based on the results of the situational analysis. Discussions first tended to center on how to obtain outside support, but gradually changed to how villagers could take the initiative and seek collaboration with organizations such as ministries, local government units, and others. A number of Longken village needs were identified through the discussions. On the final day of the fieldwork, the village development plan prepared through the joint efforts of villagers and training course participants was presented and discussed. The governor of Kao Udong District attended the village meeting and promised that the district office would monitor and support the implementation of the plan.

After returning to Vientiane, the participants discussed how to adopt the skills and experiences of the PPCM training course in their own workplaces. Those from Cambodia prepared a plan to initiate agro-processing activities in rural areas in collaboration with the APO Agriculture Productivity Enhancement Program. The participants from Lao PDR proposed supporting the development plan of Longken village and infusing OVOP in it. Myanmar participants opted to start small, such as with workplace improvement through kaizen, due to the difficult situation in the country. The participants from Vietnam presented an idea to organize a national PPCM training course as a part of the university curriculum, since most were from universities. ☺