



APO NEWS

ISSN: 1728-0834

Volume 40 Number 10

October 2010



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New APO Secretary-General: Ryuichiro Yamazaki

On 16 September 2010, the Asian Productivity Organization welcomed Ryuichiro Yamazaki as its ninth Secretary-General. Yamazaki was elected unanimously at the 52nd APO Governing Body Meeting held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in April. He succeeds Shigeo Takenaka, who completed his term of office after serving for six years.

After retiring from a wide-ranging career in the Japanese Foreign Service in 2008 (*for details see the APO website: www.apo-tokyo.org*), Yamazaki had until recently held several nonpermanent positions such as Special Advisor to Nara prefecture, which is celebrating its 1300th anniversary this year since becoming the first capital of Japan; Senior Director of the Japan International Labour Foundation; and Visiting Professor at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University.



New APO Secretary-General Ryuichiro Yamazaki smiles at the Secretariat on his first day in office 16 September 2010. APO/SA

The *APO News* followed the new Secretary-General as he took office. On his first day, 16 September 2010, Yamazaki remarked: “As an ‘international civil servant,’ I intend to grasp the needs of the NPOs through close communication. I will then shape a consensus to prioritize the activities of the APO, thereby enhancing the confidence of all stakeholders, increasing cost-effectiveness and ultimately improving the credibility of the organization. These are my five “Cs”: *communication, consensus, confidence, cost-effectiveness, and credibility.*” Secretary-General Yamazaki continued, “I am overwhelmed by the diversity of APO projects that are planned and implemented by the three departments at the Secretariat of Industry, Agriculture, and Research & Planning.”

All smiles at his first gathering with APO staff, Yamazaki said that he was looking forward to creating a warm, cordial atmosphere at the Secretariat that can bring out the full potential of all the staff. “I would like to promote effective communication and consideration for others, by ‘putting oneself in the shoes of others’ from time to time, and encouraging good-natured humor at the workplace. The same goes for relationships with member country governments and NPOs.”

One week after taking office, Yamazaki was determined about what he sought to do at the Secretariat. “Amid serious global economic concerns, I seek to verify and assess on a yearly basis the cost-efficiency of APO projects ranging across various sectors such as industry, agriculture, services, and even the public sector. I would like to enhance the e-learning programs, as well as the Eco-products International Fair, with public seminars and other methods, executing follow-up evaluations, and making improvements as seen fit. I would also like to organize forums to examine new issues like climate change and its impact on productivity. As to the *APO Productivity Databook*, it would be useful to have experts analyze the overall demographic trends of respective countries in the midterm. I would also like to look at increasing opportunities for joint projects and events with other international organizations to enhance the economies of scale.”



Yamazaki gets to work at the Secretariat. APO/SA

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Productivity's new frontier

In today's global economy, there appears to be a point at which good old-fashioned productivity and the concomitant reduction in unit labor costs provide little solace to developed countries plagued by unacceptable levels of unemployment. The endless pursuit of low-cost labor has put severe pressure on the USA to target high-technology, knowledge-intensive industry as a way to keep its workers productively and profitably employed. The plan to accomplish this, however, runs contrary to the profit-maximization strategy of today's global companies. The question arises of whether profits through higher productivity in new-age manufacturing will be able to generate sufficient employment to revitalize the American economy.

As the manufacturing sector in the USA went through the "hollowing-out" phase, labor and unions protested loudly that this would certainly lead to a significant loss of jobs and wage erosion. To a degree they were correct, and today manufacturing represents just 10% of the US economy. Unions have also lost leverage in wage negotiations, resulting in a decline in real wages for American workers. To many observers, however, traditional manufacturing jobs needed to give way to higher-technology jobs and value-added manufacturing. The technology and dot.com revolutions made this a realistic goal. Despite the technology bust in the early 1990s and the dot.com bust in the early 2000s, the USA remained confident that American productivity, innovation, and creativity would lead to a revitalized manufacturing sector, more jobs, and higher wages, as well as provide a buffer to cheaper labor overseas.

Fast forward to 2010. Despite respectable productivity growth rates (3.9% for the year ended in June 2010), the country has failed to emerge from its recessionary mentality and high unemployment. Productivity increases, according to many observers, were simply the result of fewer workers doing more. The average workweek is now the longest in four years. This is not atypical during a recovery from a recession, but rather than being temporary, many fear that producing more with an overburdened workforce is becoming the new norm. Faith in high-tech, value-added manufacturing remains,



but this more sophisticated, knowledge-based production has not grown sufficiently to absorb workers cut loose by traditional manufacturing. Statistics tell us that productivity is moving ahead nicely, but the anticipated general improvement in a nation's quality of life (which is why we think so highly of productivity) is lacking, especially for the unemployed. Roughly half of the 15 million unemployed have been without work for more than six months. About 20% of American workers are either unemployed, underemployed, or have stopped looking for work. A record 40.8 million receive government-issued food stamps.

For the optimist there is no shortage of good ideas being floated to take advantage of the country's strong productivity record to bring unemployment down to a historically acceptable level of 4% to 6%. It would not surprise many that the catchwords giving rise to this optimism are innovation and creativity, which in "Washingtonese" translates into "green manufacturing" and "clean energy." A recent poll of CEOs with global operations gave more weight to innovation than the cost of labor as the key to manufacturing growth. In addition to the social good provided by these industries, one would expect job expansion, higher wages, and increased profitability.

The road leading to this economic nirvana, however, faces challenges and stiff competition from like-minded countries. A creative, well-trained, knowledgeable workforce is a key ingredient to

the new economy. This has always been a strength of the USA, but now there is some self-doubt. In a comprehensive article on innovation in *Newsweek* (9 July 2010), the authors cite research showing that innovation and creativity are not a function of IQ but reside in our creativity genes. Tests for creativity (not IQ) can be surprisingly predictive as to whom among the young will shine as innovators as adults. The unsettling news is that American children have scored steadily worse on creativity measurements since 1990, which happens to coincide with the US preoccupation with standardized testing as a means to improve education.

To emerge from the economic doldrums, the USA is betting heavily on electric cars, advanced battery designs, and solar and wind power, among other clean energy industries, and has earmarked roughly US\$70 billion to support clean energy initiatives. One goal is to increase its global market share in high-performance batteries from 2% to 20% by 2012. Groundbreaking in Detroit, Michigan (an area hit hard by the recession), promises state-of-the-art factories employing 2,000 workers producing solar panels and lithium-ion batteries. Credits are being given to consumers who purchase energy-saving products, for example, a US\$7,500 tax credit for buying an electric car. The government has allocated US\$2.4 billion for the electric car industry.

While many Americans feel confident in the promise of green technology, the statistics are not particularly comforting. Of the roughly 85,000 people involved in producing lithium batteries, only about 1,000 are in the USA. Asian companies have approximately 98% of the lithium-ion market. Foxconn, a Chinese supplier of technical ware to multinational companies, employs more workers than the combined workforce of its more famous customers like Apple, Dell, Microsoft, and Intel. As a share of GDP, US public energy R&D lags behind Japan, the Republic of Korea, France, and PR China. R&D spending in the USA as a percentage of sales finds energy last behind the pharmaceutical, aerospace, electronic, and automotive sectors.

Still, optimism reigns as the USA positions itself to serve a world besieged by constant and dramat-

ic technological change. The change is not a step-by-step phenomenon, but a holistic movement in the way we conceptualize, solve problems, and relate to one another. Consider the following changes over the past decade. In 2000, 12 billion e-mail messages and 400,000 text messages were sent. In 2010 (so far), 247 billion e-mail messages and 4.5 billion text messages made their way in cyberspace. There were no iTunes downloads in 2000. There were 10 billion in 2010. Google searches numbered 100 million in 2000 and 2 billion in 2010. Today, American office workers check their e-mail 30 to 40 times an hour. In a single month, a US teenager will send or receive on average over 2,000 text messages. And to keep up with today's deluge of data, supercomputers can process over a quadrillion calculations per second.

According to recent neurological research, these dramatic shifts in how we do business, communicate, and spend our leisure time requires the brain to "rewire." Applying old paradigms for improving productivity in these whirlwind times of change will fall short. As "older" Americans wring their hands over what to do about engaging the 15 million unemployed in productive work, young minds are taking a novel approach toward business creation and practices.

One such entrepreneur, Jason Fried of 37signals, suggests in his book *Rework* (one

of Amazon's top 10 bestsellers) that we begin with a new mindset. The book's chapter headings illustrate his point: Welcome Obscurity, Underdo Your Competition, ASAP Is Poison, Meetings Are Toxic, Focus on What Won't Change, and Send People Home at 5. One may find similar advice from the just released book titled *Marketing Lessons from the Grateful Dead* (a highly profitable American rock group of the 1960s–1990s). Again business is advised to shut out conventional wisdom, be transparent, and be personal and loyal to its audience (customers). This may explain why the hottest new job in corporate America is chief of social media, a job category that was just emerging five years ago. The new Ford Explorer was not introduced at an auto show, but to "Explorer Friends" over Facebook. If your Facebook and Twitter resumes are strong, you may want to apply; there are more social media positions to be filled than qualified applicants. It's the New Economy. It's productivity's new frontier. 🌀

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.

Development of rural areas and farms for tourism

Farms and rural areas are increasingly becoming the favorite destinations of tourists. This is due to the fact that people living in urban areas yearn for a quiet, calm, clean environment when they have a chance for rest and recreation. This growing trend offers opportunities for farmers and rural people to develop small-scale enterprises catering to the needs of tourists to generate additional income, while optimizing the benefits from the use of natural resource endowments and other local resources of the community. Such tourism efforts could also stimulate the development of farms not only for the production of food and various agroproducts but also adjunct enterprises that could generate employment opportunities and added income for farming households.

In many countries, farms have become an integral part of rural tourism destinations. For example, Italy is known for its *agro turismo* in addition to the attractions of rustic remnants of Roman grandeur. The development of interlinked enterprises also generates other benefits to rural communities such as better environmental and cultural awareness, preservation of cultural heritage sites, and agrobiological diversity. Few countries in Asia have tapped such opportunities despite the great potential.

In recognition of this untapped potential, the APO organized a training course on Planning and Management of Community-based Rural Tourism and Agrotourism Enterprises in Colombo, Sri Lanka, 10–17 August 2010. It was held in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture Development and Agrarian Services and the National Productivity Secretariat. The course was designed to address the needs of consultants to local entrepreneurs and government officials responsible for planning and manag-

ing rural tourism development through four modules: Concepts and principles of community-based rural tourism; planning the development of rural areas as tourism destinations; planning, development, and management of farms as tourism enterprises; and marketing and promotion



Participants observe the cleaning of newly harvested bananas during a "banana tour" offered as part of the agrotourism project of Pelwehera CIC Farm 14 August 2010. APO/Joselito Bernardo

of rural agrotourism products and packages. Twenty-one participants from 10 APO member countries completed the course. Three international experts from Hawaii, USA, the Netherlands, and Thailand served as resource persons. The selection of experts from different regions facilitated the sharing of best practices and models from around the world and confirmed the popularity of farm tourism in diverse cultures. Examples seen by participants in Sri Lanka were the Pelwehera CIC Farm and tourism enterprises near Sigiriya, a World Heritage Site in the central Matale district, which the participants evaluated onsite. They also visited the Agro Technology Park Gannoreva of the Department of Agriculture in Peradeniya, a sterling example of a technology park and community-based rural tourism model. 🌀



Productivity methodologies, tools, and techniques

Increasing productivity through reducing “seven wastes” in operations—Kelvin Chan

In this competitive market, companies need to look into many aspects and strategies in order to stay in business. Many companies often neglect basic issues and are faced with difficulties in improving or sustaining the productivity of their operations, especially during periods of rapid growth of the company. Studies have shown that companies could have saved millions of dollars if they had strategically made efforts to reduce waste found in all aspects of their operations.

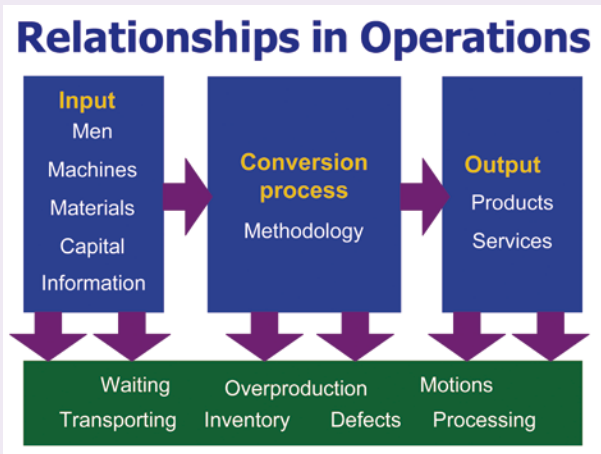


Figure. Ineffective management of the conversion process often results in different types of waste. *Source:* Teian Consulting International, Singapore.

A simple, proven technique known as “seven wastes” developed by the famous Toyota Motor of Japan has been used by many companies all over the world to improve the productivity of their operations (Figure). This technique is based on the “non-cost principle” that emphasizes reducing costs to achieve higher productivity for a company:

Conventional approach: $\text{Cost} + \text{Profit} = \text{Price}$

Non-cost principle approach: $\text{Price} - \text{Cost} = \text{Profit}$

In the conventional approach, we set the price of products or services by adding the cost of production to the desired profit. If the cost increases, we must increase the price to achieve the desired profit, and this makes us less competitive. However, in the non-cost principle approach, the price is treated as an independent variable. Unless there is a monopoly, the price is beyond the control of the company and is determined by market forces. Thus, the higher the cost, the lower the profits. As such, the only way to secure sales and at the same time increase profit is to reduce the waste in operations. Waste is defined as any activity that does not add value to the product or service.

The fundamental philosophy is the thorough elimination of the seven types of waste found in operations. Many refer to the technique as a “system to squeeze water from a dry towel.” The seven wastes are comprehensive and comprise wastes in waiting, transporting, processing, inventory, motions, defects, and overproduction (Table).

This may sound very manufacturing oriented, but over the years many service-sector

companies have adapted the concept in their operations to help them improve productivity and profitability.

Table. Definitions of the seven wastes.

Source: Teian Consulting International, Singapore.

Type of waste	Definition
Waiting	Resources waiting during operations
Transporting	Moving materials unnecessarily in the workplace
Processing	Waste inherent in the process or design itself
Inventory	Keeping high inventory or work in process
Motions	Unnecessary movements of workers during operations
Defects	Producing defective parts or poor service
Overproduction	Producing more than necessary

For example, in a restaurant, the management found that there was waste in motions where employees had to search for items each time they served customers. The searching motion resulted in man-hours wasted and also caused delays in serving customers. Upon realizing this problem, the company introduced a visual management system to arrange items in fixed locations. The standardization of the system helped in eliminating motion waste, thereby allowing employees to serve more customers over the same period of time.

In another case, the poor purchasing policy of an SME electrical contractor resulted in inventory waste, causing other issues like extra manpower needed to handle the stock of raw materials and extra warehousing space needed for storage. At the end of a project, the contractor needed to bring three lorry loads of leftover raw materials back to the warehouse. To address this problem, the company started to purchase its raw materials in smaller lots and reordering only when all raw materials were used up. With this new purchasing policy, the leftover materials at project sites are now reduced to just three small cardboard boxes each time. The improvement helped the company reduce its warehousing space by 50%, resulting in decreases in its property rental cost, manpower, and inventory carrying cost, achieving a total savings of US\$35,000 per year.

The seven wastes technique is a good framework to help companies identify opportunities for elimination of waste in operations. The technique can be implemented either as a driver or as a tool. The former requires companies to set up a company-wide organization to manage the program and to set waste elimination objectives for deployment throughout the organization. When used as a tool, it complements other productivity improvement programs like lean management, 5S, quality circles, Green Productivity, etc. Both approaches require strong commitment and leadership from the top management and a structured implementation process so that improvement initiatives can be coordinated and sustained.



Contributed by Director and Principal Consultant Kelvin Chan, Teian Consulting International Pte Ltd, Singapore, resource speaker for the APO training course on the Development of Productivity Practitioners: Basic Program.

Public-sector productivity Canadian style

The APO organized a study mission on public-sector productivity to Canada to benchmark against its public-sector innovation excellence framework and practices including relevant federal and local government policies, 23–27 August 2010. The mission was attended by 12 participants from seven member countries including NPO heads from the Philippines, Thailand, and Malaysia. Canada was chosen as the benchmark because its model is considered a prime example of a well-planned, evolving public-sector modernization initiative emulated by many other countries. In recognition of its achievements, Canada received the UN Government Innovation Award 2005, which has inspired more governments to follow its lead. For the APO, this mission represented a continued collaboration with the Canadian government to support public sector-related initiatives which began in 2009 with the study meeting on Public-sector Productivity in the Republic of Korea and Workshop on Benchmarking Service Quality in the Public Sector in Indonesia. The APO also organized an expert group meeting in February 2010 to identify areas for public-sector productivity improvement in the region. That meeting identified four major players, central government, local governments, public-service agencies, and public enterprises, with huge potential to enhance productivity. This study mission to Canada was a follow-up endeavor covering all four major players and will serve as a significant source of information in setting the APO's future strategy to promote public-sector productivity and innovation, in addition to helping participating member countries to strengthen their own public services. One of the participants contributed the article below.

First, I would like to congratulate the APO on its successful study mission to Canada. It was a productive experience with the effective facilitation of APO Program Officer K.D. Bhardwaj and Resource Person Richard Clarke, Director of Transformation, Innovation, and Excellence, Modernization Division, Ontario Ministry of Government Services, who did a great job of making our stay absolutely hassle free. I also appreciate their goodwill and friendliness.

Actually, the information offered was a bit too much given the limited time of one week. The schedule, although tight, covered helpful topics. Notable among them were the Management Accountability Framework, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's balanced scorecard application and its impact on citizens and stakeholders, Service Canada and its concept of single-window service delivery, and especially the City of Ottawa-Citizen's Access Initiatives. The latter two are best practice policies we can adopt in the Philippines at the national and local government levels. The Philippines already has in place, although to a limited extent, shared services or one-stop services. I believe that we can enhance these after learning the beneficial features of Canada's model of enhanced citizens' access programs.

Another valuable take-home point was the public sector service value chain (PSSVC), as discussed by Senior Advisor Brian Marson of the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. It brings to the fore the important bidirectional relationships between employees/staff and satisfaction with public service, public trust, and confidence in public institutions. It was explained how the PSSVC significantly increased public approval of and satisfaction ratings for government services. The presentation on the PSSVC also touched on expectations of timely service in routine transactions in Canadian public services such as:

- Five to nine minutes, the maximum time to wait in any government office;
- Two people, the maximum number a citizen should have to deal with to receive the desired service at an office; and
- 30 seconds, an acceptable time to wait on hold on the phone before speaking to a person.

I was also inspired by the incisive presentation of former Administrator of the Ontario Restructuring Secretariat Art Daniels on Ontario's public service modernization journey. He clearly characterized the evolution of public-service reforms in Ontario from the period of a highly regulatory administrative regimen in 1945 to leading and managing, to transformation, and finally to leading collaboration today and into the future as Ontario's public-service reform initiatives continue. It would be useful to compare the evolution of our own public service development and reforms with those of Ontario's, see where the differences lie, and decide what adjustments are needed to hasten reform.

I would like to stress that the chosen topics were all interesting examples of best practices and readily applicable in APO member countries, which are in varying stages of public service reform. Finally, I suggest a study mission to one or more APO member countries in the future. Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines could host missions. Noteworthy best practices in providing quality public service abound in many APO members. Inter-Asia-Pacific learning opportunities and exchanges of best practices should be facilitated by the APO. 🌀

*Contributed by Francisco T. Duque III, MD, MSc
Chairman, Civil Service Commission, Republic of the Philippines*



*Francisco Duque III (2nd row, 3rd/L), Civil Service Commission, Philippines, with fellow participants during their mission to Canada 25 August 2010
Photo courtesy of Canada School of Public Service*

New APO Secretary-General: Ryuichiro Yamazaki (Continued from page 1)



"With the cooperation of member governments, NPOs, relevant international organizations, and various stakeholders, I am determined to promote a wide-ranging productivity movement across the Asia-Pacific. I would especially like to boost syner-

gistic collaborations with NPOs and assist them in their mission to act as the apex spearheads of their nationwide productivity movements. This is crucial for each member country, as well as for the APO region as a whole. As said by Benjamin Franklin during other extremely difficult economic times, 'Unless we all hang together, we will surely all hang separately,'" Yamazaki concluded with a smile.

Yamazaki makes a point as he speaks to Secretariat staff 16 September 2010. APO/SA

New Secretary-General Yamazaki takes the helm at an important juncture in the history of the APO as it prepares for its Golden Jubilee in 2011. 🌀

Training auditors/lead auditors in ISO22000:2005

Food safety crises and food scandals worldwide in recent years have heightened consumers' food safety awareness and caused public distrust of increasingly complex global food production and trading systems. Consumers are also becoming more sensitive to production processes and practices throughout the supply chain, demanding quality and safety assurances with reliable information. Food safety assurance is equally important for the food industry. A foodborne disease incident can be devastating for any organization that supplies food to the advanced markets. A food safety recall can be costly or result in the closing of a food enterprise. Food safety management systems (FSMS) are therefore becoming critical for food enterprises to enhance their share in the increasingly competitive global food market. In response, agribusinesses and food companies are putting in place FSMS such as ISO22000:2005, which incorporates all HACCP requirements in addition to the requirements of ISO9001.

Implementation of a modern FSMS is, however, always challenging. The verification and auditing of an FSMS are even more difficult. Implementation, verification, validation, and auditing of FSMS require qualified food safety experts and auditors. The APO organized several courses over the past four years, training around 875 stakeholders in ISO22000. In addition, about 70 ISO22000 auditors/lead auditors were trained in courses meeting International Registry of Certified Auditor requirements. The latest training course on ISO22000:2005 for auditors/lead auditors was held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, 23–28 August 2010, in collaboration with the Korea Productivity Center (KPC). Sixteen participants from 14 member countries attended.



Participants from IR Iran, Bangladesh, and Thailand (L-R) exchange ideas to devise the best strategy to conduct an effective audit of the Food Safety Management System ISO22000 during the training course in Seoul. Photo courtesy of Dr. Soheyl Eskandari Gharabaghlu

Secretariat Senior Program Officer Muhammad Saeed observed, “The success of the course was due largely to the competent, experienced resource persons, interactive participants, excellent physical and logistics arrangements, and effective training methodology.” For participant Dr. P. Senthil Kumar of India, the exercises and mock auditing were the most impressive features of the course. According to Dr. Chen Min-Hung of the Republic of China, the realistic role playing led by resource persons Howie Ng Ha Wai and Yong Kok Seng was valuable. Resource person Ng, Director, Hong Kong Veritas Limited, commented, “The KPC really did a professional job with the physical arrangements and logistics. The set-up of the venue and quality of course materials exceeded our needs and expectations.”

Seizing the day: EPIF preponed

The 7th Eco-products International Fair (EPIF 2011) in New Delhi, first scheduled for 3–6 March 2011, has been preponed to 10–12 February 2011 at the request of the host country India. The request for the preponement reached the APO Secretariat in mid-August 2010. The Government of India asked for consideration of the preponement when the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) became a coorganizer of the EPIF 2011. The CII will hold another fair in February 2011, the International Technology and Engineering Fair (IETF) at Pragati Maidan, the same venue arranged for the EPIF 2011.

The APO, in cooperation with all concerned in India, including the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, National Productivity Council of India, and CII analyzed the likely impacts of the proposed preponement to February 2011. After additional careful analyses of the pros and cons of the revised timing of the EPIF 2011, the APO Secretariat reported the Indian request to the Green Productivity Advisory Committee (GPAC) for its support at the 21st EPIF Preparatory Committee Meeting held in Tokyo on 8 September 2010.

EPIF Preparatory Committee Chairperson Takashi Yamagishi first explained the background and main reason why the Government of India suggested the preponement of the fair, which was greater multiplier effects generated by holding it in parallel with the IETF. The APO Secretariat reported on its coordination efforts with stakeholders in India and options that the GPAC could consider. The meeting agreed in principle to the preponement, stressing that India and the APO Secretariat should work as hard as possible to make the necessary preparations within the limited remaining time. The meeting suggested a clear demarcation between the IETF so that the objective of



GPAC members hold the 21st EPIF Preparatory Committee Meeting at the Secretariat on 8 September 2010. APO/Yoko Fujimoto

the EPIF 2011, i.e., disseminating the concept of GP in the Asia-Pacific region while enhancing environmental awareness and green purchasing among consumers, would not be diluted. The meeting also welcomed the participation of the Indian business sector in organizing the EPIF 2011, which will create multiplier effects in a country like India, which has been growing rapidly on the economic front but needs urgent action to counter serious environmental issues to sustain its development.

The 21st EPIF Preparatory Committee meeting concluded with GPAC members expressing the hope that the EPIF 2011 would be a success and that the host country would turn the preponed dates of 10–12 February 2011 into a mutual advantage for all involved.

Program calendar

December

Japan

Multicountry Observational Study Mission on Modern Food Safety Management Systems, 7–14 December 2010.

► Objectives: To enhance understanding of modern food safety management systems (FSMS), learn about food traceability, and share the experiences of Japan and other Asian countries in ISO22000, HACCP, food traceability systems, etc.

► Participants: Mid- to senior-level managers of food enterprises, officers of food industry SMEs, NPO consultants, government officials, and academics involved in FSMS.

Republic of Korea

Study Meeting on Customer Relationship Management, 6–9 December 2010.

► Objectives: To understand key customer relationship management (CRM) concepts, receive updates on current trends and applications of CRM tools and techniques by world-class businesses, and recommend strategies to increase adoption of these tools and techniques by SMEs.

► Participants: Senior managers of business corporations, or senior researchers and academics, all of whom must have professional knowledge of or be directly involved in CRM research, consultancy, or implementation.

Lao PDR

Workshop on Promotion of the One Village, One Product Model as a Regional and Rural Development Strategy, 6–10 December 2010.

► Objectives: To review the present status of the One Village, One Product (OVOP) movement in member countries and identify critical areas for improvement, enhance knowledge and skills in the development of strategic management systems for OVOP, and formulate action plans for mainstreaming OVOP on the regional and rural development agendas of member countries.

► Participants: NPO staff, officials and administrators of national and local governments, representatives of community producers' associations, or SME representatives directly involved in planning, implementing, and/or managing OVOP and related programs.

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

APO/NPO Update

New APO Alternate Director for Pakistan

Mr. Ghulam Nabi Mangrio, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Production, Pakistan, was appointed new APO Alternate Director for Pakistan, w.e.f. 20 September 2010.

Erratum: In the Program calendar on page 7 of the September 2010 issue, the correct duration of the Mission to a Nonmember Country on GLOBALGAP for Greater Market Access for Agrifood Products is 25–29 October 2010.



New APO publications



PRACTICAL KM GUIDE FOR SME OWNERS/MANAGERS

APO 86 pp. September 2010
ISBN: 92-833-2410-2 (print edition)
ISBN: 92-833-7096-1 (e-edition)



KM: CASE STUDIES FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (Japanese version)

APO 82 pp. September 2010
ISBN: 92-833-2409-9 (print edition)
ISBN: 92-833-7095-3 (e-edition)

KPC signs multilateral MOU

During the week of 2 August, utilizing the APO BCBN Program, APO Chair Dr. Dong-kyu Choi, Korea Productivity Center (KPC) Chairman and CEO, signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Vietnam Productivity Centre, SME Promotion and Development Office of Lao PDR, and Thailand Productivity Institute (FTPI). This MOU is intended to strengthen the collaborative working relationship among the organizations for the enhancement of their national productivity movements.



(L-R) APO Chair and KPC Chairman Dr. Dong-kyu Choi; Dr. Witoon Simachokedee, APO Director for Thailand, and FTPI Executive Director Dr. Phanit Laosirirat smile at the signing ceremony in Bangkok 6 August 2010. Photo courtesy of KPC

The MOU states that each organization will cooperate in the following areas:

- Development of human resources and joint training projects;
- Exchange of productivity-related best practices, benchmarking, knowledge and tools, and information on productivity enhancement at the industrial level; and
- Development of joint projects in productivity research, development, and promotion.

During the meeting with government officers, executives of productivity organizations, and consultants from each country, Dr. Choi stated that the Republic of Korea's experiences in economic and productivity development and the KPC's expertise in training, consulting, the National Customer Satisfaction Index, Dow Jones Sustainability Index Korea, and other business practices will be shared among the partners. "This joint framework holds great promise for member countries to enhance productivity in the Asia-Pacific region and develop more proactive relations with nonmember countries. The KPC expects to share the Republic of Korea's productivity and economic development and related experiences with the Pan African Productivity Association and Productivity Centre of Kenya by signing memoranda of understanding," said Dr. Choi.

The KPC previously pioneered in concluding MOU for international productivity enhancement with the Japan Productivity Center and SPRING Singapore. It also engaged in innovative intergovernmental programs with Indonesia, the Republic of Kazakhstan, and Tunisia and participated in the Knowledge Sharing Program promoted by the Korean government.

Contributed by Jun-Ho Kim, APO Liaison Officer for ROK, KPC



Taking training to the people

The Government of Fiji became a member of the APO on 1 January 1984 to take advantage of the large pool of knowledge on productivity that had developed within member countries to assist in socioeconomic development of other members through mutual cooperation. Currently, Minister for Labour, Industrial Relations and Productivity Filipe Bole oversees the Training and Productivity Authority of Fiji (TPAF), with the ministry's Permanent Secretary Taito Waqa acting as NPO Head and APO Director for Fiji. A Productivity Charter for the country was developed in August 1995 and approved by the Cabinet. This policy document for the government was developed by a roundtable conference of social partners representing government, employers, and employees with high-level APO-sponsored consultants in attendance as facilitators.

The TPAF's mission is to "work in the national interest, develop human capital, facilitate productivity improvement, and assist organizations to raise their performance." The offices are housed in pastel green buildings located in a quiet environment approximately eight kilometers outside the city of Suva, surrounded by beautiful natural greenery. The TPAF staff number approximately 200.

Fiji has benefited the most from APO membership in terms of human resources development. Numerous Fijians representing government and the private sector have attended APO projects. One advantage of the TPAF is its qualified people specializing in diverse areas, with a wealth of experience and excellent teamwork. The national levy and grant system,

proactive branding, and ISO9000 certification have given the TPAF a competitive advantage in terms of access to resources. The courses offered by Fiji's NPO are nationally and internationally recognized.

Flexibility in developing training allows it to target different markets throughout the country. The unofficial TPAF motto is "we take training to the people." At present, courses are mainly focused on industry, and there is thus an opportunity to develop more agriculture-oriented training projects, noted NPO Head Waqa.

A regular TPAF task is the publication of an annual *Training Handbook*. The handbooks outline the training programs offered and serve as tools to market the TPAF to potential clients. The *Training Handbook* is sent to all employers in the country, and the feedback received has been positive.


Looking to the future, NPO Head Waqa said that the goal was to "enhance capacity building and improve our service delivery. The main focus is our vision and mission and to live our values, i.e., customers first, information sharing and communication, integrity, teamwork, innovation, and empowerment." 



Photo courtesy of TPAF

People behind the scenes: Hiroshi Shirane

My name is Hiroshi Shirane and I am a senior at Keio University in Tokyo, majoring in economic measurement and modeling. I am a student of Professor Koji Nomura, who is the manager of the APO Productivity Database project (PDB). His research team meticulously examines the data collected from APO member countries and constructs the long-term harmonized productivity database that is comparable among countries. Since I am very interested in the field, I applied for a part-time job to assist in data examination. My main role is helping Professor Nomura to collect and examine the data for one element of the APO Productivity Database project, the Asian Quarterly Growth Map, which can be accessed on the APO website.

Following Professor Nomura's instructions, I collect quarterly GDP growth data from the official government statistical office websites of APO member countries and others in the rest of the world. Not many know that definitions of quarterly GDP can be different among countries. If we try to compare quarterly economic growth among different countries based on different definitions, the results will be misleading. In the APO's Asian Quarterly Growth Map, however, the data have been reconciled so

that they can be compared among countries. I believe that the world map of quarterly GDP growth is valuable for those working in various fields who wish to understand the short-term trends in economic growth in a single country or multiple countries. Visualizing other types of economic and productivity indicators with a similar user-friendly design and functions would be a good idea for the future.

In this project, I work with other tenured researchers and the APO officer, while receiving helpful advice from Professor Nomura. It is tough to do both the APO work and my course work at the same time. But this is a valuable experience for me, and I am inspired by working with professionals and being given challenging tasks. I wish that I had been involved in the APO Productivity Database project much earlier. After gaining this type of experience while working on the Asian Quarterly Growth Map, I hope to contribute to society by working productively in the field of economic measurement when I leave university. 