



## Productivity, sustainable growth, and inclusive development for the Asia-Pacific

**A**gainst the backdrop of Taipei 101, ministers and senior government officials, productivity experts, business leaders, and civil society representatives gathered at the International Conference on Productivity and Sustainable, Inclusive Development in the Asia-Pacific in Taipei, 9–10 August. The event was organized by the APO in collaboration with the China Productivity Center, with support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Economic Affairs, ROC.

His Excellency Vice President of the ROC Den-Yih Wu said in his keynote address that with the uncertainty of the global economy today, “This conference provides an excellent opportunity to focus on difficult issues and to devise an optimal platform to deal with the problems that lie ahead.” Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Yea-Ping Shih stated that, “We value our partnership with the APO, and the ROC will be more than happy to collaborate with APO members.”

The conference was part of activities marking the APO’s 50th anniversary. Notable international guests included Acer Inc. Chair and CEO J.T. Wang of the ROC, Keosan Co. Ltd. CEO Walter Kim of the ROK, and International Rice Research Institute Deputy-Director General Dr. V. Bruce J. Tolentino. Dr. Tolentino pointed out that, “The combined forces of continuing population growth, climate change, and resource scarcity demand heightened global attention to science and technology for agricultural productivity and food security. The APO is an important, consistent champion of inclusive development, particularly through its focus on productivity in all fields of human endeavor and its emphasis on cooperation for shared growth and development across Asia and the Pacific.” Participants from about 20 countries reviewed the past 50 years of productivity improvement efforts in the region and identified the major innovations and best practices. They also examined the strategic themes that the APO has focused or started to work on in recent years, such as Green Productivity, SME competitiveness, and innovation-led productivity growth.

Another feature of interest was a panel discussion with eminent Asian leaders from the government, business, and nongovernment sectors who shared their visions and views on the dynamics of future socioeconomic development in the Asia-Pacific region. APO Chair Azman Hashim urged government and business leaders “to encourage productivity consciousness to take root even at the village and rural community level,” and “look to the world to expand the APO membership base.” Vice Minister of Economic Affairs Tyzz-Jiun Duh hoped for joint innovation and sustainable development, where competition would be replaced by “cooperation to make the Asia-Pacific into the leading region for green competitiveness in the world.”

The experts produced a consolidated set of recommendations referred to as the Taipei Declaration to be submitted to the APO Governing Body and member governments. Vice President Wu added that, “This declaration will be a blessing to industries throughout the region and an important reference document for governments as they seek to draft policies to deal with a changing environment and new challenges.” The conference also unveiled an APO 50th anniversary commemorative publication featuring the productivity journey of its member economies and their accomplishments, challenges, and aspirations. APO Secretary-General Ryuichiro Yamazaki closed the conference by saying that he “...is confident that the publication will serve as a beacon to assist APO members navigate their course to attain sustainable, inclusive development.”



HE Vice President Den-Yih Wu of the ROC during his keynote speech. Photo courtesy of CPC.

September–October 2012  
Volume 42 Number 5  
ISSN: 1728-0834

### CONTENTS

- 2... p-Watch—a macro view
- 3... Developing a public-sector productivity framework
- 4... Green Productivity: The carbon footprint and LED lighting technology
- 5... APO-METI-JPC mission on the 3Rs
- 6... The ISO 9001 quality management system
- 6... Value addition to agricultural products
- 7... Photo news
- 7... APO/NPO update
- 7... Career opportunities at the APO
- 8... Bangladesh NPO teams with SR Asia-Bangladesh
- 8... SPRING’s Productivity Management Programme

The APO News is published bimonthly by the APO Secretariat. The online edition is available at: [www.apo-tokyo.org](http://www.apo-tokyo.org).

Asian Productivity Organization (APO)  
Hirakawa-cho Dai-ichi Seimei Building  
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](mailto:apo@apo-tokyo.org)



## Financial productivity: Convergence of financial and productivity analytics

In terms of productivity measurement, economic growth models relying on production functions with capital and labor as the key traditional variables have expanded to include variables representing innovation capacities, human capital features, technological capabilities, etc. These especially enable total factor productivity analysis. However, what about the productivity of finances per se, which are part of any economic activity? How do we carry out productivity assessments of financing such as public and private fund-based instruments, bonds, mutual funds, treasury bonds, sovereign funds, international finance, etc.? How could we converge financial and productivity analytics to comprehend the concept of financial productivity? In essence, a productivity-oriented assessment of financial instruments holds promise for a more positive orientation toward financing as differentiated from the risk- and return-oriented assessments that have been the most widespread framework and traditionally legitimate norm.

The development of financial analytics has advanced with wide-ranging innovations, as particularly witnessed in applications in the private sector over the past few decades through financial engineering processes. Recently, newer instruments have also emerged in the public finance arena as well. Along with those developments, a steady evolution of commodity markets has been witnessed. In banking, a universal banking system and development finance and its operations are recent innovations. The range and variety of instruments available, which include many more than can be listed here, add to the pros-



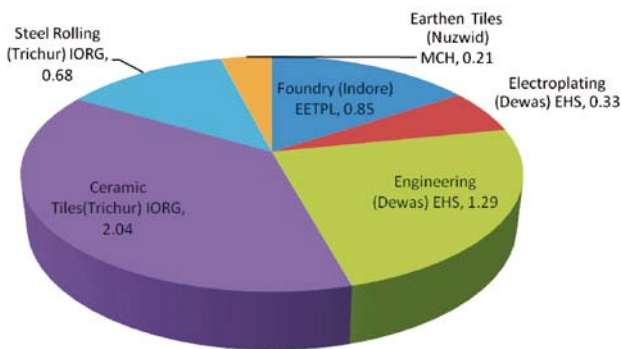
pects for additional productivity assessments to be conducted.

Financial productivity can be analyzed in numerous contexts, for example, as instrument applications at firm level or individual initiative level. Furthermore, it can be assessed by aggregating instruments that reflect financial productivity achievements at the organizational, interorganizational, national, and/or regional levels. Such analysis can be built upon and assessed in combined frameworks such as those featuring applications to purely financial components or material flows (converted into financial terms or not). Social components may even be introduced into the analytical matrix. A generic perspective of financial productivity could be viewed as a function of financial resources, material resources, and social resources with the appropriate conditionalities and caveats. There is scope for significant insights when

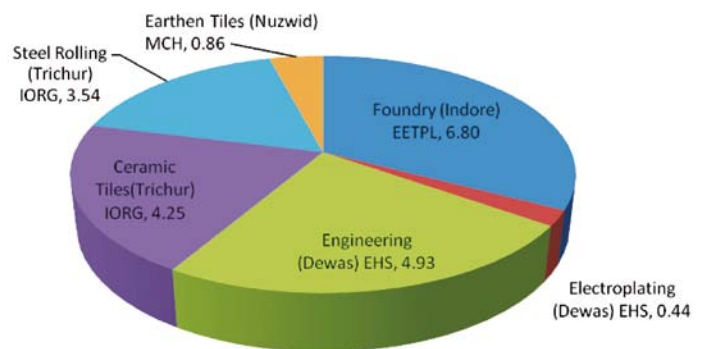
more financial productivity measures are added to the framework.

The applications of financial productivity measures can be presented with specific indications with additional thematic examples. These, for example, can be designed and applied for assessing public fund-related flows and applications. In the Indian context, thematic examples would include various plan and nonplan funds and their budgeted applications across various sectors of the economy. The financial productivity measures can be applied in assessing specific programs and projects by considering outputs and outcomes in first-order or higher-order terms such as multiplier effects achieved. An example of this in pie chart form is shown in Figures 1 and 2. These figures reflect a subset of examples from a waste minimization circle (WMC) project currently being carried out in India. This project aims to achieve higher resource efficiency in groups of manufacturing SMEs. Through strategic partnerships, it is planned to spread the waste minimization movement throughout all industrial sectors. The project has already resulted in the establishment of more than 150 WMCs, reached over 45 representative industrial sectors in about 60 industrial regions, and become a reference for new, improved program and project design. The implementation framework is also increasingly being tailored to the needs of individual enterprises.

The public and private financial components and their ratios within program applications can be analyzed in both joint and segregated financial productivity contexts. The ratios of public and private funds



**Figure 1.** Investment multipliers for selected WMCs as samples of specific sectors and regions.



**Figure 2.** Savings return ratios on public investments in sample WMCs in specific sectors and regions.

and their utilization via banking and development finance applications can give useful insights when assessing financial productivity. It should be noted that various environmental factors such as regulatory issues, monetary policy (including money supply aspects), the scarcity or abundance of resources, market structures, and transboundary elements affecting international trade and relations can also be made part of financial productivity analysis. When all of these elements are incorporated into a single framework to assess public finance and expenditures, it will have applications in the areas of corporate governance and administrative reforms.

It should also be noted that the responsibility for further development of the financial productivity analytical framework rests with the professionals in financial analytics and traditional practitioners of resource productivity analytics along with practitioners of socioeconomic analysis. The analysts would thus include economists, econometricians, social scientists, chartered accountants, chartered financial analysts and actuaries, cost-and-work accountants, and a wide range of professionals in various institutions, especially development finance institutions. The traditional analysts of resource productivity include auditors of the use of natural resources and other inputs at firm to national level. Cooperation and consultation between various groups of professionals will bridge and fill in the gaps in their specific analytical frameworks.

The APO and NPOs can play a significant role in encouraging such partnerships. This will result in the construction of a new range of financial productivity measures (for example, as featured in material flow cost accounting which is now being assessed in a variety of settings). Those new productivity measures will in turn contribute to the evolution of a broader analytical framework from a financial analysis perspective. Such initiatives will have wide-ranging applications and open up innovative dimensions of productivity analytics for individuals, enterprises, and institutions internationally. They will therefore be able to make better choices on the use of financial and material resources. The resulting financial productivity-related contributions will chart and shape national socioeconomic development pathways. 🔄

*Harsh Thukral is Deputy Director, National Cleaner Production Centre (instituted by UNIDO and UNEP), attached to the Environment Group, National Productivity Council, India, and has over 18 years of experience in promoting industrial productivity enhancement initiatives via green public-private partnerships addressing SMEs. Thukral has also worked to foster the exercise of institutional will and reforms to strengthen sustainable development processes while working in the public and private sectors. He is currently pursuing a Fellow Programme/PhD in Regional Development (Public Policy and Management Group), Indian Institute of Management Calcutta.*

## Developing a public-sector productivity framework

Improving public-sector productivity (PSP) means producing efficient performance out of limited government resources. Technically, it is represented by standardized efficiency (or output per unit of resource) × effectiveness (or quality output). Generally, it is about ensuring value for taxpayers' money since public resources largely come from taxes.

The APO started activities catering to the public sector from 2009 with the study meeting on Public-sector Productivity in the ROK and workshop on Benchmarking Service Quality in the Public Sector in Indonesia. An expert group met in February 2010 to identify areas of engagement and make recommendations for PSP improvement in the region. That meeting was followed by a study mission to the nonmember country Canada and subsequent study meeting on Innovation in Public-sector Service Delivery in November 2010 in Indonesia. A PSP Program framework was developed allowing the APO and NPOs to adopt a coordinated approach to promote innovation and productivity in the public sector in the short, medium, and long terms. A workshop to finalize the framework for PSP was held 2–6 July in Jakarta in association with the Directorate General of Organization Training and Productivity Development, Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration. Twenty-four public sector-related professionals, facilitated by four APO experts from Canada, the ROK, and Philippines, worked hard to develop the framework.

The APO PSP Program addresses vital elements that NPOs consider the most urgent and relevant to enhance productivity in the sector throughout the region. Five thematic priority areas were identified: service quality; innovation leadership; e-government; regulatory reform; and citizen-centered services. To sustain productivity enhancement in the public sector in these areas, com-

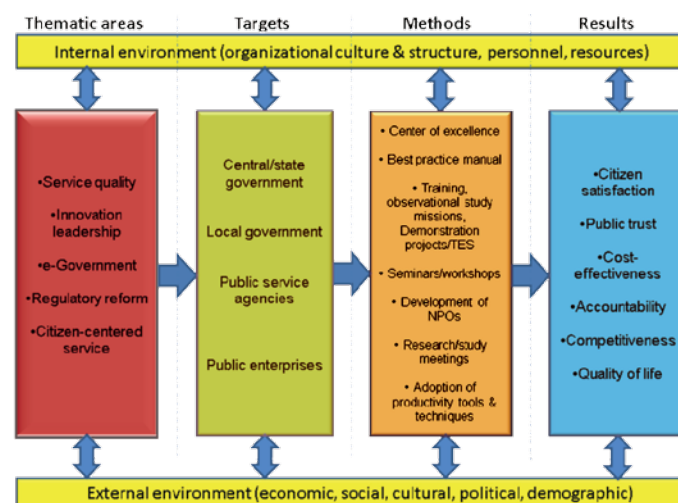


Figure 1. The APO PSP Program framework.

plementary efforts are necessary to strengthen the capacity of NPOs. The PSP framework also endeavors to look at the three levels of capacity development, institutional, organizational, and individual, and focuses on two sides of PSP: for the public sector to provide an environment that is conducive to improving the quality of life of citizens and productivity of businesses; and improving productivity in the sector itself. The PSP Program framework will ensure that the APO's efforts in this field will promote productivity and quality approaches that will raise the quality of public-sector governance and public service delivery, making the most of scarce resources. 🔄

# Green Productivity: The carbon footprint and LED lighting technology

**E**stimates suggest that almost half of our carbon footprint is due to electricity and 17% is due to lighting alone. We depend on electricity to meet several of our daily requirements. Electricity can be produced by coal, gas, or nuclear plants or by renewable sources like geothermal, hydro, solar, and wind power. The carbon footprint of a household or person is directly correlated with the amount of electricity consumed and its source. Table 1 shows the grams of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent produced when 1 KWh of electricity is produced from different sources. Most of the electricity is produced by fossil fuel-burning plants, and once the losses in transmission and distribution are accounted for it is estimated that each KWh of electricity that a household consumes releases 830 g of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents in the air.

**Table 1.** Grams of CO<sub>2</sub> produced when generating 1 KWh of electricity by source.

Source	Grams of CO <sub>2</sub> produced
Coal	955
Oil	893
Natural gas	650
Nuclear energy	60
Hydropower	15
Solar energy	40

## Save electricity: Reduce carbon emissions

Since almost 830 g of carbon equivalents are released in the consumption of 1 KWh of electricity, it follows that carbon emissions can be reduced if electricity consumption is reduced. Replacing an old refrigerator, installing movement sensors, and unplugging instruments when not in use are some methods we may employ depending on the availability of time and monetary resources. However, there is one investment in energy-saving instruments which is certain to generate a handsome return.

## Replace incandescent bulbs with LED lighting

LED lamps and tubes not only consume a fraction of the energy consumed by incandescent bulbs, they have the double benefit of lasting almost forever and containing no mercury. By doing nothing except installing LEDs in the home, it is possible to reduce your carbon footprint by a whopping 6 tons per year. To put it in perspective, this saving of 6 tons is equivalent

to reducing gasoline consumption by 700 gallons. The added benefit is that LED lights give at least 10 years of hassle-free service. Some people criticize LED lighting for being expensive but cost-benefit analysis shows that LED lamps deliver a minimum of 6% annual return in running costs alone (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Comparative advantages of LED over incandescent lighting.

	Incandescent	LED
Power consumption (W)	50	6
KWh (units of electricity used/hour)	0.05	0.006
Hours of operation/day	10	10
Carbon emissions (tons)/year/lamp	0.152083	0.01825
Reduction in carbon footprint (tons/lamp)		0.133833
Lighting carbon emission (tons)/year/household	6.84375	0.82125
Reduction in carbon footprint (tons)		6.0225

## Why carbon footprints?

Thinking about carbon footprints is a simple way of thinking about ways to reduce environmental pollution, which is one of the main pillars of Green Productivity (GP). By reducing our carbon footprints, each one of us can contribute to making the earth a safer, better place to live.

## Reduce the carbon footprint: Follow the 3Rs

There are many ways in which the carbon footprint may be reduced: eat fewer animal products; fly less often; drive fewer miles in fuel-efficient vehicles, and preferably in a car pool; buy fewer clothes; install energy-efficient equipment; and many others. Remember the 3Rs (reduce, reuse, and recycle), which are an important component of GP tools and techniques.

## Case study

As an APO-certified productivity specialist and GP practitioner, I have recently completed a pilot activity retrofitting/replacing 200 conventional electromagnetic 54-W tube lights with 18-W SMD LED-based tube lights in the National Energy Conservation Center (ENERCON) (Figure). This project was a trendsetter for all other government buildings in Pakistan.

This not only has reduced energy consumption by 1000 KWh/month but also, due to increased luminosity levels, improved workplace productivity. Lighting is arguably the most vital component when measuring workplace productivity. Improper lighting can lead to eyestrain, headaches, sore necks as a result of craning, nausea, double vision, itching/burning eyes, and fatigue that can in turn lead to low employee morale and an unhealthy work environment. The total factor productivity tool under the umbrella of GP is thus also being practiced in this case.



*As Pakistan's first APO-certified trainer on GP and energy efficiency, Asad Mahmood has vast experience in the field of energy, along with excellent analytical, communication, and presentation skills. He is also knowledgeable on renewable energy technologies. Mahmood is currently working with ENERCON and is a member of the Technical Committee of the World Energy Council. He has conducted more than 200 energy audits and initial energy assessments in various sectors. His energy efficiency activities resulted in reductions of about 10–15 MW of connected load.*



Figure. Sample ENERCON poster.

## APO-METI-JPC host mission on the 3Rs

**T**he APO, in collaboration with the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) and Japan Productivity Center (JPC), hosted a multicountry observational study mission on the 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle) in Tokyo from 24 to 27 July. Eighteen delegates who mostly had SME backgrounds and wanted to adopt the 3Rs in their business operations participated in this interactive mission.

The concept of the 3Rs is being emphasized worldwide as an easy, effective way to protect our environment by minimizing resources and waste. Also, responding to the current global financial scenario, the mission highlighted the importance of the efficient, effective use of available resources, especially energy, to increase the competitiveness of businesses, in particular SMEs. Experts providing inputs included representatives of Tottori University of Environmental Studies, METI, and the UN Centre for Regional Development who introduced approaches, applications, management techniques, and technology related to the 3Rs in the workplace from the local Japanese and regional perspectives.

Chief Expert Professor Masaru Tanaka, Director of the Sustainability Research Institute, Tottori University of Environmental Studies, pointed out that, “Participants learned how to reduce the consumption of material and energy resources in the manufacturing, distribution, consumption, and waste management stages. For individuals, this know-how can be applied to all aspects of life. For companies, 3R applications mean decreased expenditures on material, energy, and waste disposal, with concomitant improvements in public image, operational efficiency, and competitiveness. For countries,

the 3Rs contribute to employment by raising productivity and the international competitiveness of products and services.”

The study mission examined various facets of the 3Rs including best practices in Japan, the 3Rs as an environmental management tool, and energy efficiency in Japan, focusing on building the capacity of SMEs to adopt their own 3R initiatives. The participants also drafted plans to reduce waste, recycle when possible, and reuse waste in their own organizations, leading to possible new business opportunities and increased competitiveness in private enterprises. The plans were forwarded to their organizational heads, along with requests for cooperation and assistance in putting the plans into practice. Four site visits were organized to complement the expert presentations and give new ideas: Hallo Mart Co., Ltd. (visualized management of energy efficiency and energy-efficient stores); Toyo Seikan Kaisha, Ltd. (energy saving in the production process and introduction of recyclable materials); Winroader Co., Ltd. (communication of unnecessary/unwanted goods); and Hotel New Otani (hybrid recycling and energy-saving hotel).



*Participants touring the power generation facility/integrated energy management system of Hotel New Otani.*

## The ISO 9001 quality management system

An effective quality management system (QMS) can help any organization to improve its quality approach and productivity regardless of area of operations, size, or whether it is in the private or public sector. ISO 9001:2008 is the standard among the ISO 9000 family which provides specific requirements for a QMS, and organizations can be certified for it by a third party. The APO has been organizing various projects focusing on quality management and quality awards to help industries and organizations incorporate their criteria in business activities.

In 2011, the APO revised its three strategic directions, one of which is strengthening SMEs. An ISO 9001-based QMS can help SMEs develop products that are globally acceptable in terms of quality in a cost-effective manner, allowing them to be more competitive. Therefore, the APO decided to renew its focus on ISO 9001 and organized a five-day intensive training course for NPO and industry professionals in Nadi in association with the National Training and Productivity Center, Fiji National University, 16–20 July. The course was attended by 27 participants from 14 member economies.

The course covered QMS scope, application, normative reference, management responsibility, resource management, measurement, analysis, improvement, certification, and accreditation. On the first morning, participants completed a questionnaire assessing their understanding of ISO 9001. After five days of interactive sessions and group exercises to fill their knowledge gaps, an exam was given on

the final day to determine how much was learned. An observational visit was made to Punja & Sons Ltd, an SME that produces laundry and bath soap, on day 3 to illustrate practical applications of a QMS and examine related documentation. Participants were asked to develop a QMS for a hypothetical industry on day 4. Day 5 was filled with thought-provoking group presentations facilitated and reviewed by the APO experts from Singapore and Malaysia before the exam.

Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations, and Employment Jone Usamate distributed certificates to all successful participants while appreciating the individual voluntary commitments to follow-up actions made by them. The course received wide media coverage on national TV and in newspapers. “This course helped me to improve my understanding of QMS with clear examples on specific points,” said Wanwisa Prasattammarn, a quality assurance officer from Thailand. Mongolian participant Uranchimeg was confident that she would be able to provide consultancy to SMEs in her country after the course. 🌐



Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Jone Usamate distributing certificates to successful participants.

## Value addition to agricultural products for new markets

“Value addition” to agricultural products refers to processes such as cleaning, sorting, grading, packing, processing, packaging, and branding. Ready-to-eat salad mixes, presliced vegetables, and partially prepared frozen meat and fish dishes are current popular examples of value-added agricultural products. Value addition can also involve product differentiation: food grown and processed organically; regionally branded food; antibiotic-free meat; and specific certification. On-farm value-adding activities can increase the income of farming households, while off-farm ones can create allied enterprises with employment opportunities. However, the key objective is to attract consumers willing to pay premium prices for such products.

The APO organized a training course on Value Addition to Agricultural Products for Greater Access to New Markets in Manila, 9–14 July. Twenty-one participants from 12 countries along with two overseas and two local resource persons attended. The course aimed to illustrate the concepts of and approaches to value addition to agricultural products, analyze market opportunities, and share strategies for wider acceptance of agricultural and food products in international markets.

Managing Director Taneo Moriyama of Insight Inc., a Japan-based consulting firm, noted that increasingly fast-paced lifestyles in urban areas of growth-leading economies create demand for more value-added products as exemplified by convenience food. Currently, microwaveable frozen food is a mainstream item in Japanese supermarkets and convenience stores, a trend also observed in other countries. He also pointed to the rise in consumer demand for functional food

among the health-conscious and aging populations.

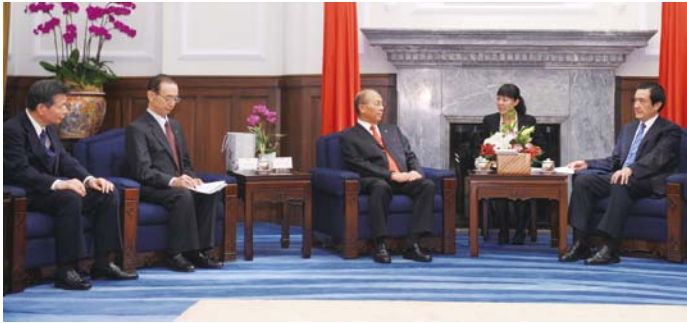
International resource person Dr. Navam S. Hettiarachchy, IFT Fellow, Department of Food Science and Institute of Food Science and Engineering, University of Arkansas, USA, concurred, explaining that people are increasingly health conscious and opting for healthy food, functional food, and nutraceuticals. The trend creates opportunities for agribusinesses and entrepreneurs in the food industry. Both resource persons advised that those planning to offer value-added products should target specific consumer groups and their health and convenience needs.

During the course sessions, participants examined various value-adding processes and techniques for fruit and vegetables, grains, and meat and fish products. They also discussed how such products could penetrate overseas markets like Japan. The Vitarich Corporation, a company engaged in processing pangasius fish into finished food products, hosted a site visit. Participants were also introduced to the operations of three small farmers of pangasius fish and a small enterprise that fillets the fish, all in Bulacan province. 🌐



Small farmers harvesting pangasius fish in Bulacan, Philippines, for subsequent value-added processing by SMEs.

## Photo news



APO Chair Azman Hashim (center) paying a courtesy visit on President Ying-jeou Ma (R) of the ROC on 8 August, accompanied by JPC President Masayoshi Matsukawa (L) and APO Secretary-General Ryuichiro Yamazaki (2nd L). Photo courtesy of ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



Unveiling the Taipei Declaration at the International Conference on Productivity and Sustainable, Inclusive Development in the Asia-Pacific, 9-10 August, ROC. Photo courtesy of CPC.



APO Secretary-General Ryuichiro Yamazaki (center) with delegates from Tunisia accompanied by representatives from the JPC, JICA, and APO Secretariat, 5 July.



Jumping for joy. Participants celebrating successful completion of the training course on the ISO 9001 Quality Management System on the beach in Nadi, Fiji, 20 July.

## APO/NPO Update

### Republic of China

#### New APO Alternate Director

Name: Dr. Chuan-Neng Lin

Designation: Director General, Department of Industrial Technology, Ministry of Economic Affairs

Effective date: 4 June 2012

### Malaysia

#### New direct phone number of APO Liaison Officer for Malaysia

Phone: 60-3-7951-2444 (ext. no.: 444)

### Sri Lanka

#### New APO Director

Name: Mr. Udaya Ranjith Seneveratne

Designation: Secretary, Ministry of Productivity Promotion

Effective date: 17 July 2012

## Career opportunities at the APO

The APO Secretariat is seeking highly qualified Program Officers in its Research and Planning and Industry Departments. Candidates must have demonstrated competency in a similar role or field, have a strong sense of responsibility as well as a comprehensive strategic viewpoint, and be enthusiastic about improving productivity in the Asia-Pacific region. We welcome those with experience in the productivity movement who enjoy working with various nationalities from different cultural backgrounds. Candidates must be citizens of APO member countries.

Interested candidates are requested to visit the APO website at [www.apo-tokyo.org/wp/news/recruitment-announcement.html](http://www.apo-tokyo.org/wp/news/recruitment-announcement.html) for detailed information on the positions open, as well as instructions on how to apply. Applications must reach the APO Secretariat by **21 September 2012** via postal mail or e-mail. Only those who are shortlisted will be contacted. Application documents will not be returned.

For general inquiries, please contact:

C. Sakaguchi (Ms.)/Y. Yamashita (Ms.)

Administration & Finance Department

Asian Productivity Organization

Hirakawa-cho Dai-ichi Seimei Building

1-2-10 Hirakawa-cho

Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0093

Phone: 81-3-5226-3923

Fax: 81-3-5226-3950



## Bangladesh NPO teams with SR Asia-Bangladesh in national seminar

**T**he NPO of Bangladesh has been actively participating in the APO's e-learning courses since 2006 and they have been extremely beneficial to Bangladeshi participants. One such participant was Sumaya Rashid, who completed an e-learning course with the APO and went on to establish SR Asia-Bangladesh. The NPO of Bangladesh was pleased to collaborate with it to organize a national seminar on Creating Buy-in for Socially Responsible Products and Services in Bangladesh for Sustainability on 17 May in Dhaka.

The seminar was attended by senior representatives and policymakers from government, a previous government secretary, professionals, corporate leaders, academics, research scholars, and representatives of civil society organizations and international agencies including UNDP and CARE Bangladesh. It was supported by the APO, NPO of Bangladesh, SR Asia, UNDP, CARE Bangladesh, Somra-MBL Ltd., CARA BD, ATN Bangla, Bangladesh Protidin, and Total Compliance.

Many facets of socially responsible buying within organizations were addressed based on a study of 35 buying processes in 10 organizations and an in-depth examination of 21 of those processes. The findings of the study suggest that the presence of skillful policy entrepreneurs, who possess many characteristics of business entrepreneurs but invest their resources in instituting new organizational policies, and the organizational context within which

policy entrepreneurs operate and the society they serve heavily influence the success of socially responsible buying initiatives.

The experts in this seminar deliberated on how corporate strategy and a guiding framework were necessary to offer socially responsible products and services for sustainable businesses.

It also set the future agenda for SR Asia-Bangladesh to promote social responsibility, establish relationships in trade facilitation and development within the region and beyond Asia, promote socially responsible products, link them to sustainability, and create a knowledge pool and repository for the future. The NPO of Bangladesh will continue to support the cause of sustainable development by encouraging socially responsible practices among enterprises nationwide.

For more details of the seminar and its proceedings, feel free to contact Sumaya Rashid, Country Director, SR Asia-Bangladesh at [sumaya@sr-asia.org](mailto:sumaya@sr-asia.org) or [srasia.bd@gmail.com](mailto:srasia.bd@gmail.com). *Contributed by NPO Bangladesh.*



*APO Alternate Director Dr. Md. Nazrul Islam (3rd L) with speakers. Photo courtesy of the NPO Bangladesh.*



## SPRING's Productivity Management Programme

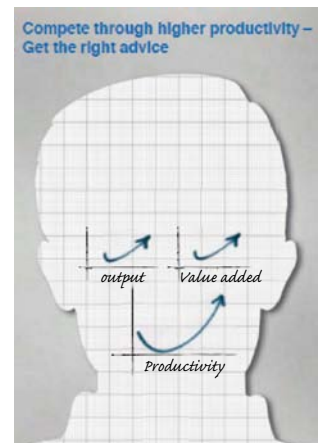
**I**n October 2010, SPRING launched the Productivity Management Programme (PMP) to help SMEs diagnose their productivity performance and get advice on how they can make improvements. To reach out to as many SMEs as possible, SPRING supported five Enterprise Development Centres (EDCs) to administer the PMP. With funding from SPRING to hire qualified productivity advisers, the EDCs have been able to organize workshops, conduct advisory sessions, and undertake assessments. These services are offered free to all SMEs.

The workshops are conducted by productivity advisers monthly at the EDCs to educate SMEs on what productivity is, why it is important, and what they can do to improve it. The EDCs also share the relevant government assistance programs that SMEs can tap to finance their productivity projects. The advisory sessions are conducted on a one-on-one basis between a representative from the SME and a productivity advisor from the EDC. The objective of the advisory session is to provide SMEs with advice on the broad areas that they can address to improve productivity.

To assist SMEs in identifying specific areas of weakness and pinpointing

areas for improvement, SPRING launched the Integrated Management of Productivity Activities (IMPACT) assessment tool in September 2010. The EDCs use this tool to assist SMEs in diagnosing their productivity performance and gaps over a two-day period. At the end of the IMPACT exercise, a productivity roadmap is created for each SME.

Together, these three services of the PMP have assisted more than 6,000 SMEs to date. For details on how the PMP benefited Freshening Industries, go to the APO website at [www.apo-tokyo.org/wp/news/spring%e2%80%99s-productivity-management-programme.html](http://www.apo-tokyo.org/wp/news/spring%e2%80%99s-productivity-management-programme.html). *Contributed by SPRING Singapore.*



*Promotional poster for EDC advisory services. Courtesy of SPRING Singapore.*