



Comment board



*Director and Principal Consultant, **Kelvin Chan Keng Chuen**, Teian Consulting International Pte Ltd, Singapore.*

Resource Person, steering committee meeting on Basic and Advanced Training Courses on Productivity, 26–28 February, Japan.

“In the process of assisting industries or organizations, productivity practitioners (PPs) have to perform the roles of promoters, trainers,

and consultants in productivity. The position requires not only knowledge of productivity techniques such as 5S, total quality maintenance, just-in-time systems, Green Productivity, benchmarking, etc. but also ‘soft’ skills like training, consultancy, and promotion. The challenge for a training course on the Development of PPs is to equip participants with this breadth of knowledge within a narrow time frame. Therefore, members of the course steering committee deliberated on the development path for PPs, while streamlining the design and delivery of the current APO basic and advanced training courses for productivity specialists. In my opinion, both the basic and advanced courses must provide entry-level knowledge on productivity techniques and soft skills. Trainees must practice utilizing those before attending more advanced courses. The APO should standardize the training and adopt a more structured path for the development of PPs.”

*Senior Project Officer **Ma. Theresa Asuncion Agustin**, Development Academy of the Philippines.*

Participant, training course on the Food Safety Management Systems/ISO22000 for Food Processors, 18–22 February 2008, Republic of Korea.

“The course outlined the ISO22000 requirements and instilled the importance of adopting a food safety management system that enhances the competitive-

ness of SMEs in the food-processing sector. During the course I learned a great deal that will benefit my work in designing and implementing programs for SMEs. The resource persons were highly competent in delivering interesting, down-to-earth discussions on the interpretation of ISO22000 requirements. The group exercises and company visits were effective approaches to developing the skills for setting up a food safety management system and identifying compliance with ISO22000. Group activities also generated creative ideas, promoted camaraderie, and shared responsibility for team presentations of workshop outputs and plans of action. However, we missed the country paper presentations. They could have been squeezed in the action plan session. A trainers’ training is a good sequel to this course.”

*Managing Director **Siri Sayavong**, LTM Group, Lao Trademark Agency, Lao PDR.*

Participant, workshop on SME Development in the Mekong Region, 19–22 February 2008, Japan.

“The economy of Lao PDR is driven by SMEs, which account for 97% of industry. Therefore, the main objective of my participation in this workshop was to learn the key factors in successful SME development from the host and other participating countries. Each session of the workshop introduced me to new concepts and ideas that can be adapted to the practice of SME development. In particular, I found the lecture on the SWOT tools given by JPC-SED Consultant Teruhiko Mitsufuji both informative and useful. After thoroughly analyzing Lao PDR’s SMEs’ strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, we could then tailor strategic tools such as 5S and kaizen to improve their productivity and competitiveness. We are now planning to develop a manual for SWOT analysis, 5S, and kaizen, and criteria for management assessment, after which we will organize a training workshop to disseminate this manual.”