



Asian Productivity Organization (APO)
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Press Release

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Japan to share SME innovation with Myanmar

TOKYO—About 35 government officials, SME owners and top managers, and academics involved in SME development planning, training, and consultancy are scheduled to convene in Tokyo, 7–11 September 2015. The Workshop on SME Innovation and Quality Management for Myanmar to Increase Productivity is organized by the Asian Productivity Organization (APO), and supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan.

In Myanmar, SMEs comprise about 90% of total enterprises, and about 70% of the total workforce is employed by them. Although SMEs dominate every sector of the economy, more supportive policy measures are needed. SMEs in Myanmar tend to have relatively low productivity, face shortages of capital, rely on older technology, and need better market access. SMEs are important to the country because they produce basic goods and services as well as items for export, helping to create a middle class and alleviate poverty.

Experts from Japan will lead discussions on various aspects of innovation and quality management in the SME sector, along with policies, best practices, and technologies that can contribute to increasing productivity in Myanmar. Workshop attendees will visit leading Japanese companies including Toyota Motor Co. and PEERS Co., Ltd., which exemplify best practices in these areas.

The overall objective of the workshop is to support productivity increases in Myanmar's SMEs by introducing Japanese business models, best practices, and current technologies while identifying possible future collaborative opportunities between SMEs in the two countries.

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About the APO

The Asian Productivity Organization (APO) is the sole nonprofit international organization in the Asia-Pacific devoted to productivity enhancement. Established in 1961 as a regional intergovernmental organization, the APO contributes to the sustainable socioeconomic development of the Asia-Pacific through productivity enhancement. The current membership comprises 20 economies. Three strategic directions guide the APO: strengthen NPOs and promote the development of SMEs and communities; catalyze innovation-led productivity growth; and promote Green Productivity. The main activities of the APO are capacity building of institutions and human resources development.