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Accelerate transformation initiatives for productivity gains: APO Secretary-General

APO's 59th Workshop Meeting of Heads of National Productivity Organizations concluded in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

The annual strategic planning meeting reviewed the biennial program plan for 2019–2020.

Yogyakarta: Countries in the Asia and Pacific region, particularly Asian Productivity Organization (APO) members, need to accelerate their transformation initiatives and approaches to improve productivity, said Secretary-General Dr. Santhi Kanoktanaporn at the 59th Workshop Meeting of Heads of NPOs (WSM) in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Emphasizing that transformation is a journey, Dr. Santhi said, “We are not going to achieve all the key transformations overnight but will do so progressively in collaboration with member governments, which also need to play their part to ensure success.”

The WSM is the annual strategic planning meeting where APO member countries deliberate on the biennial program plan and review initiatives to ensure that they respond effectively to the requirements of their economies. The WSM 2018 agenda included presentation on the impact evaluation study of 2016 and 2017 programs and reports on new initiatives proposed by the Secretariat.

The Secretary-General also announced that the Secretariat was working to implement the Specific National Program and hoped that it would become the primary vehicle for the APO to co-create national productivity initiatives aligned with the specific needs of member governments.

The Secretariat was working toward establishing an Accreditation Body Council comprising eminent representatives of member governments, academic institutions, and industry bodies, reported Dr. Santhi. “This initiative will support member governments in developing new productivity knowledge and enhance the APO’s standing as a leading productivity organization worldwide,” he stated.



APO Secretary-General Dr. Santhi Kanoktanaporn addressing the 59th Workshop Meeting of Heads of NPOs in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

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During the three-day meeting from 2 to 4 October 2018, representatives of 19 APO member countries reviewed proposed programs for the 2019–2020 biennium. The proposed programs are aligned with the key business transformations introduced after a review of the Roadmap to Achieve the APO Vision 2020. New project proposals by the delegates were also discussed at the WSM.

The WSM was attended by NPO representatives, agriculture delegates, and advisers from 19 APO members, along with observers from international partner organizations. The 59th WSM concluded with the adoption of new initiatives and programs focusing on making the industry, agriculture, service, and public sectors in APO member countries more responsive, smarter, and future-ready.

In his closing statement, the Secretary-General stressed that the emergence of Industry 4.0 had made it imperative for economies to become proactive and avoid the business-as-usual approach. “We must adopt modern business management techniques and tools such as design thinking, multi-collaboration, and intra-entrepreneurship, as well as develop contextual awareness to anticipate the trends and disruptive technologies that will shape the future of our member economies,” Dr. Santhi said.

The WSM 2018 Chair and APO Alternate Director for Indonesia Kunjung Masehat stated that the key business transformation initiative was important and the decision of the APO to venture into new areas against the backdrop of Industry 4.0 was timely. “We have witnessed the most advanced innovations in science and engineering across the Asia-Pacific, and these technologies undergird industrial digitalization beneficial to APO member countries with technologies such as cognitive computing, visual analytics, additive manufacturing, industrial cyber-physical systems, and human–computer interaction,” he noted.

The WSM Chair also reiterated that the APO Secretariat would continue to refine and adjust endorsed projects and activities to strengthen existing smart transformation and capacity development initiatives. “I am confident that the APO can address productivity challenges posed by disruptive technologies and meet the needs and expectations of member countries, while aligning activities with the strategic objectives of the APO Vision 2020 and remaining future oriented,” he concluded.

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About the APO (www.apo-tokyo.org)

The Asian Productivity Organization (APO) is an intergovernmental organization committed to improving productivity in the Asia-Pacific region. Established in 1961, the APO contributes to the sustainable socioeconomic development of the region through policy advisory services, acting as a think tank, and undertaking smart initiatives in the industry, agriculture, service, and public sectors. The APO is shaping the future of the region by assisting member economies in formulating national strategies for enhanced productivity and through a range of institutional capacity-building efforts, including research and centers of excellence in member countries.