

Facilitation for community development

People's participation is indispensable in community development. To facilitate this, it is important to establish a good rapport among local people who are the main actors in development, experts with professional knowledge, and government officials responsible for managing development resources. Facilitation has been regarded as a key in blending the knowledge and expertise of government, NGOs, and community members by establishing cooperation and improving coordination among them. Facilitation techniques have also been applied in business management, city planning, and adult education and to support team-building and problem-solving processes in private enterprises. In the training course on Facilitation for Community Development, organized by the APO in cooperation with the Ministry of Provincial Development and Training and Productivity Authority of Fiji in Nadi and Nadave, 10–17 November, with 27 participants from 15 member countries in attendance, experts underlined the importance of “appreciative inquiry” to search for positive aspects during the change process instead of problem solving to correct negatives.

The training course was conducted through learning by doing, active participation, role playing, facilitation in action, etc., with the resource persons and participants working as a team. At the final stage of the training course, a participatory writing workshop (PWW) was organized to document the points learned from the resource papers, country papers, and field visits. During the short period of the PWW, the participants produced a resource book on facilitation. It will be useful for organizers, moderators, and facilitators who want to enliven their own training courses and for those conducting management training to widen



Villagers explaining participatory plans

their repertoire. (For information on an APO video on PWWs, contact agr@apo-tokyo.org.)

Fiji is a unique example of participatory community development, since it has been declared a government policy and is being introduced nationwide. Project sites of rural community development in Namatakura and Molitua villages were utilized as learning venues in the training course. 🌀