


# Cultivating productivity practitioners in Africa

**W**ith interest in productivity surging globally, the APO has expanded its efforts to reach the world. For example, the African Program launched in 2006 has successfully transferred expertise in productivity promotion, improvement, and measurement to the six countries of the Pan African Productivity Association (PAPA) with special funding from the Government of Japan. Recognizing the APO's success in this area, outcome documents from the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), which was held in Yokohama in 2008, designated the APO as the implementing organization responsible for promoting productivity in Africa. TICAD was launched by Japan in 1993 to promote high-level policy dialogue between African leaders and development partners.

As a continuation of such efforts, the second Basic Training Course for Productivity Practitioners (BCPP) was held in South Africa, 10 November–5 December 2008, in collaboration with Productivity SA and the PAPA Secretariat. The first BCPP was held in July 2007, and PAPA requested another. The course strengthens the institutional capacity of PAPA members by developing participant competency in promoting and applying basic productivity and quality (P&Q) techniques in organizations and industries. Twenty-five participants from five PAPA nations attended the four-week course. “I never imagined the course could be so rich in content, intensive in its course work, and challenging for management consultancy at the enterprise level,” said Vijayelaksme Goorah of the NPCC, Mauritius. At the end of the course, she had the “confidence to advocate

for productivity enthusiastically.” The course utilized a learning-by-doing approach. Four APO-deputed experts ensured the translation of key concepts into practical skills.

The highlight of the program was a two-day in-plant diagnosis exercise. Participants produced a business analysis report on the assigned company with recommendations

based on their newly acquired P&Q expertise. PAPA board members and CEO and executive managers of the model companies were impressed by the technical proficiency of the participants' presentations. “It is not only the knowledge gained but also the personal growth and development achieved in the course of spending four weeks of intensive training,” commented Sipho Praise-God Nkosi of Productivity SA. Dr. Nasir Olaitan Raji-Mustapha of the NPC Nigeria praised the course as the best productivity training experienced in his 14 years in productivity circles. He said that the course had increased the number of productivity practitioners in Nigeria and would lead to further increases as BCPP trainees carried out training in turn. 



*Participant's self-interview during the icebreaking session*