

# Developing productivity practitioners

In 1996, the APO started the training course on the Development of Productivity Practitioners. The main objective was to assist NPOs in member countries in developing a pool of fully qualified productivity practitioners to act as trainers, consultants, and promoters.

The annual project has two stages, the basic and advanced courses. The basic one provides newly recruited NPO staff with fundamental knowledge of productivity-related matters. The advanced one augments the basic course with updated methodology and techniques for productivity enhancement. The framework for these courses was improved and standardized by a committee of experts in February 2008.

“In addition to the standardization of the syllabus of the basic and advanced courses, the committee deliberations led to the adoption of a common framework for the development of productivity practitioners and incorporation of the six core competencies of the APO’s productivity education, training, and accredited learning systems or PETALS project. The new syllabus for both courses is flexible and can be adapted to any situation and requirements of the host country,” said Director and Principal Consultant Kelvin Chan, Teian Consulting International Pte Ltd, Singapore, the cochair of the committee.

Last year, the APO organized three pilot in-country training programs to train more member country practitioners. This was in addition to the regular basic and advanced training courses held in the Philippines in October and in Malaysia in November, respectively. These training courses introduced participants to various productivity concepts and techniques, providing in-depth knowledge of and skills in productivity improvement activities and problem solving. Practitioners must be able to diagnose an organization’s current productivity performance, create solutions for improvement, and implement them. Practitioners must also be able to deliver and disseminate productivity enhancement knowledge effectively. Therefore, they must have excellent presentation, com-



*Committee members discussing new training framework*

munication, interpersonal, and management skills. These skills play a vital role in the development of productivity practitioners. The training curriculum is carefully designed to cover all the necessary areas. The basic course teaches fundamental techniques such as productivity measurement and data analysis, employee suggestion schemes, 5S, quality control circles, and ISO standards. The advanced course supplements this with more difficult material such as Six Sigma, lean production systems, the balanced scorecard, and knowledge management.

“The training course is very effective in supporting member country efforts to enhance the capacity of NPOs. It equips their productivity practitioners with productivity concepts, tools, and approaches,” commented Expert Battileg, NPDC Mongolia, after completing the advanced course held in 2008. She had previously completed the basic course in 2007.

Given the growing interest in developing qualified practitioners in member countries, efforts to improve this training course will continue in 2009. In this context, the *APO News* will introduce a new column from the February issue to introduce major productivity tools and techniques taught in the courses. Course trainers will be invited to contribute, and it is hoped that the monthly update on productivity tools and techniques will be of use for the productivity endeavors of all readers of the *APO News*. 