

People behind the scenes: Dr. Muhammad Saeed



Problems both large and small can occur at any time. They could arise from a lack of preparation or despite the closest attention to detail imaginable. This is often the case in APO projects involving many different international parties. The officer in charge may receive an apologetic e-mail message or phone call from the main speaker at the last minute delivering the news that he or she cannot attend for some unforeseeable reason. Sometimes the host country requests project postponement due to security threats or natural disasters. This can even happen once a project has started. Someone, usually meaning the officer in charge, must therefore step up and take charge on the front line to decide the best course of action after intense communication with all involved.

"It is certainly true that all the officers in our department try their best to find an ideal solution for each situation. However, Dr. Muhammad Saeed stands out as one who explores every avenue and spares no effort to implement the project as scheduled or find a conclusion satisfying everyone. His sincere, earnest personality and capacity to exercise good judgment in a flexible manner make things work," said a Secretariat staff member in the Agriculture Department, in which Program Officer Dr. Saeed works. Dr. Saeed is also an example of how to find the balance between work and happy family life with his sincerity, earnestness, thoughtfulness, and cooperative attitude.

In recent years, numerous in-house activities have been conducted at the Secretariat: setting up taskforces, internal presentations in connection with program improvement and performance enhancement, etc. These are occasions when all staff members are invited to discuss factors determining the success or failure of APO projects and exchange ideas for their improvement. On such occasions, we can always rely on Dr. Saeed to encourage his colleagues by sharing his mistakes or difficulties, making honest comments, and dispensing good advice. Dr. Saeed is also quick to respond to e-mail messages from staff seeking assistance. The APO News team is one of the beneficiaries of his cooperative nature. Despite the demands of his projects, he never forgets to take photos of the most interesting and exciting moments for the benefit of APO News readers.

One more thing that should be mentioned is Dr. Saeed's loving family. "I heard that his children always miss him during his frequent trips overseas," said one colleague, and those who know the family can testify to their closeness. This is likely the main source of the positive energy and happiness in his life. 