

# KM outreach through an e-course

**K**nowledge has become a key driver conferring a competitive advantage, along with productivity, quality, and innovation. Recognizing the vital importance of knowledge management (KM) to member countries, in 2008 the APO formed an expert group to develop an APO KM framework suitable for SMEs. Following the acceptance of the framework, another expert group was established to develop the KM training curriculum that formed the basis for the e-learning course on KM Concepts and Practices.

The course, conducted through the World Bank's Global Distance Learning Network, expands the opportunities for member countries to develop their KM capacities. It was held in three phases during February and March for 15 member countries. "The course was targeted at a wider audience already involved in KM. In total, a record 359 nominations were received from the targeted countries, of which 310 successfully passed the exam and completed the requirements of the course," reported Secretariat Research and Planning Program Officer Kamlesh Prakash. He added that blended courses involving e-learning and traditional follow-up projects were innovative, efficient, and had wide outreach.

The course was structured in four modules covering KM theory, practices, and

examples to familiarize participants with the APO KM framework, implementation approach, and methods, tools, and techniques. The main faculty from Japan, Singapore, and the Philippines made interactive presentations involving exercises and case studies of KM. "Knowledge management is the discipline of enabling individuals, teams, and entire organizations to create, share, and apply knowledge to better achieve their objectives," explained Senior Consultant Naoki Ogiwara, Knowledge Dynamics Initiatives, Fuji Xerox Co., Ltd., Japan. In his presentation, Ogiwara also introduced 20 essential KM tools and techniques including brainstorming, expert locator, storytelling, document libraries, blogs, social network services, and knowledge cafés, which are "simple, practical, easy to use, and extremely powerful."

Director Praba Nair, KDi Asia, Singapore, emphasized the importance of people in KM summarizing the entire course: "To change the way we work, we need to challenge the technology, reinvent processes, and expand connections. The leverage here is people. Knowledge begins with people and ends with people." APO efforts to promote KM and offer the methodology to practice it will continue in a face-to-face follow-up training course scheduled for May. New KM publications now in progress will emphasize practical use of KM, especially in the SME context. 