

APO to Develop Model NPOs

The development of the national productivity organizations (NPOs) of its member countries has long been a major thrust area of the APO. A host of special activities was organized under the Development of NPOs (DON) program to build their service capacity and their professional capability to drive the productivity movement in their respective countries. These include country-specific roundtable conferences, workshops on development of productivity specialists, deputations of experts to strengthen NPOs' services, and workshops on enhancing NPOs' core competence. In January this year, the APO introduced yet another DON activity. This time it is meant specially for the further development of the NPOs of the following ten APO member countries: Bangladesh, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam.

Under this new activity, called the Member Country Support Program, two NPOs will be selected each time to receive special assistance from the APO and the Japan Productivity Center for Socio-Economic Development (JPC-SED) for the upgrading of their functions and capabilities. This undertaking will be for two years, during which time the participating NPOs will be guided to become model NPOs. The APO is expected to announce the names of the first two NPOs chosen to pioneer the program in early March.

The modus operandi of the program is quite simple. In consultation with the JPC-SED, which is also the implementing agency of the program, a detailed work plan will be developed for the two selected NPOs. Experts will then be dispatched under the APO Technical Expert Services (TES) program to help identify the priority areas of the NPOs that require special assistance, to train the NPOs' facilitators, trainers, and consultants in these priority areas, and to provide advisory support in projects undertaken by the NPOs that attempt to apply the lessons learned in the training sessions, including checking on their progress. The two participating NPOs will each depute a study mission to Japan to understudy the JPC-SED model. Upon the conclusion of the two-year undertaking, the experiences and lessons gained by the two NPOs, which are then considered model examples, will be documented for dissemination to other NPOs for their benefit and learning.

As part of the Member Country Support Program, the JPC-SED will conduct three training courses in Japan for the ten countries for which this program was designed. The course syllabus will cover subjects like Value-added Analysis and Corporate Management for SMEs, Quality Management of the NPOs' Services, and HRD for Stable Labor-Management Cooperation.