

Expanding the productivity network



(L-R) APO Secretary-General Mari Amano and CIRDAP Director-General Dr. Cecep Effendi shake hands after the MOU signing.

Regional partners in integrated rural development

A memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the APO and Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) was drafted, and CIRDAP Director-General Dr. Cecep Effendi visited the APO Secretariat to meet Secretary-General Mari Amano to sign the document officially. CIRDAP, an intergovernmental organization based in Dhaka, Bangladesh, was established in 1979 to promote integrated rural development in the Asia-Pacific region. The three-year MOU will not only serve as a framework to implement a series of collaborative programs for both organizations but also pave the way to building a solid new relationship based on shared interests, missions, and goals to achieve regional sustainable development.

Preparations are underway for four projects to be cohosted this year by the APO and CIRDAP under the framework of this MOU and implemented in cooperation with NPOs, starting with a course on organic agroindustry development leadership to be held in Bangladesh in May. Others will be a workshop on agricultural insurance systems, a productivity training course targeting women in micro and small agrifood-processing businesses, and a regional conference to discuss the greening of food supply chains.

Director-General Effendi noted that the MOU was significant for his organization, offering benefits such as attracting more international participants through the APO network and creating more opportunities to share CIRDAP's own local expertise and hospitality with the region. 🌐

Assisting productivity efforts in Colombia

Discussions are underway between the APO and Science and Technology Centre of Antioquia (Centro de Ciencia y Tecnología de Antioquia; CTA) on plans for assisting the city of Medellín, Colombia, in its local and national efforts to promote productivity and innovation based on an MOU signed in December 2015.

"Since 2012, the CTA has been implementing Enplanta, a program supported by the local government of Medellín focusing on transferring best practices of productivity improvement to local businesses. The productivity movement will soon extend beyond the Antioquia region, as a tripartite agreement between the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Mayor of Medellín, and CTA will soon be signed with the objective of promoting productivity and building competitiveness on a national level. With such developments, the MOU is crucial for us, as this is a challenge for which the APO's support, experience, and capabilities will



CTA Assistant Director and Director of the Productivity Line Arboleda Palacio (R) with Embassy of Colombia in Japan Communications Attaché Paula Esguerra (L) and Economic Development of Antioquia Province Secretary Tomás Cipriano Mejía (C).

be very important,” noted CTA Assistant Director and Director of the Productivity Line Jaime Arboleda Palacio.

The CTA is a private law and not-for-profit corporation established in 1989 by the Government of Antioquia, business representatives, and universities to support the economic and social development of the region. In recent years, in cooperation with the Mayor’s Office of Medellín through its International Cooperation Agency, as well as the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, the CTA has been mandated to develop a framework to contribute to national

development through the enhancement of productivity.

The parties met in August last year at the APO Secretariat to discuss how the CTA could benefit from the APO’s experience and expertise in the area of productivity promotion. The MOU sets out the general scope for cooperative activities and exchanges between the two organizations on various subject areas, including training and capacity building of productivity practitioners, Green Productivity, and productivity measurement. 🌀