

ASSOCIATION OF DEVELOPMENT FINANCING INSTITUTIONS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (ADFIAP)



YOU MUST KNOW BY NOW THAT HQ EMEA HAS A SISTER MAGAZINE BASED IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC: HQ ASIA-PACIFIC (OR HAP). WHEN WE RECEIVED A VERY POSITIVE FEEDBACK ON HAP FROM OCTAVIO B. PERALTA, ADFIAP SECRETARY GENERAL, WE WERE THRILLED, ESPECIALLY WHEN HE SAID: 'THANK YOU FOR SENDING ME THE SECOND EDITION OF HAP WHICH I READ WITH KEEN INTEREST. I CONGRATULATE YOU FOR COMING TO ASIA AND FOR HAVING A PUBLICATION FOR ASSOCIATIONS LIKE US AND FOR ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES LIKE ME. YOU ARE RIGHT IN MENTIONING THAT MANY COUNTRIES IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION HAVE A THRIVING ASSOCIATION SECTOR AND THAT THESE ASSOCIATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO ECONOMIC GROWTH.' SO WE TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO INTERVIEW HIM ABOUT HIS ASSOCIATION - AND WE WERE NOT DISAPPOINTED IN HIS ANSWERS, WHICH COULD BE OF USE FOR MANY EMEA-BASED ASSOCIATIONS!

HQ: Could you briefly present ADFIAP?

Octavio B. Peralta: A non-stock, not-for-profit international organization based in Manila, Philippines, ADFIAP is the regional network and forum for development banks, or more broadly, development finance institutions (DFIs) in Asia and the Pacific. Its mission is to advance sustainable development in the region through its members. Founded in 1976, ADFIAP has presently 117 members in 42 countries and territories. The Asian Development Bank, under whose auspices ADFIAP was established, is a Special Member. ADFIAP is also a founding member and currently the Secretariat of the World Federation of Development Financing Institutions that comprises 328 development banks in 154 countries in

Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Middle East.

HQ: What is the association community in Manila and the Philippines like?

Octavio B. Peralta: The association community in the Philippines, like in the whole Asia-Pacific region, is very much active and thriving. Business associations here, in general, consist of chambers of commerce, professional societies and trade groups. They are usually non-stock, non-profit and non-governmental organizations required by law to register with an appropriate regulatory body, e.g., the Securities and Exchange Commission, as in the Philippines.

Like any interest-oriented groups, these associations are governed by volunteer but elected members in the Board and operationally-managed by professionals. Business associations are thus considered 'small democracies' in a sense that they practice elections, equality and free enterprise, among others. Their existence and work also contribute to other societal organizations in terms of economic benefits, product performance and safety standards, continuing education, public information, professional ethics, community service, etc.

HQ: What kind of challenges has the association overcome in recent years?

Octavio B. Peralta: Generally speaking,

HISTORY OF ADFIAP ANNUAL MEETINGS

2010 - Vancouver, Canada
2009 - Muscat, Oman
2008 - Tehran, Iran
2007 - Hanoi, Vietnam
2006 - Colombo, Sri Lanka
2005 - Nadi, Fiji
2004 - Almaty, Kazakhstan
2003 - Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
2002 - Beijing, China
2001 - Tokyo, Japan
2000 - Kathmandu, Nepal

while associations are growing in numbers, the challenges are also multiple. These challenges are mainly in the general areas of governance and management and also on specific issues like sustainability in the context of financial and human resources on one hand and, on the other, on continued search for relevance and meaningful innovation to adapt to the ever-changing environment.

In terms of governance, there is still a big gap to fill in building capacities of associations to 'modernize' their governance policies and practices to a level that is on a par with international governance standards and conventions. In this regard, ADFIAP will soon be part of a global initiative on adopting a set of association governance principles. There is also need to re-equip association executives and managers in new business management tools in marketing, branding, finance and personnel development.

While associations are 'non-profit' entities, the issue and meaning of profits take a different dimension. Since associations are not legally allowed to distribute dividends to its members for their investments like 'for-profit' institutions, sustainable and viable associations nonetheless need to bring in more revenues than they spend and use these 'balance' financial resources to expand their services and operations for the benefit of their constituencies. This sustainability and viability issue is always a challenge to strug-

gling associations coupled with maintaining constant relevance and innovation.

HQ: What kind of events do you organize?

Octavio B. Peralta: ADFIAP organizes regular conferences, meetings, seminars, study tours and credentialing programs for members, partners and even non-members that are interested in the development banking field. There are three key business units in the ADFIAP Secretariat, namely, the Institute of Development Finance (IDF) which is the professional training and career development unit; the ADFIAP Consulting (AC) which provides business advisory, mentoring and coaching services; and the ADFIAP Responsible Citizenship (ARC) Institute that acts as the outreach and CSR unit. The support units of ADFIAP consist of the Membership and Events Team that manages two annual big events - the Annual General Meeting usually held in April/May and the Chief Executive Officers (CEO) Forum held in October/November and the Knowledge Man-

tion of ADFIAP's two big annual events. Since ADFIAP has member-institutions in 42 countries and territories in the region, the Board requests for volunteers to be hosts for these events from among themselves and the other members. The 'country hosts' see these events as bringing into their countries economic and professional development benefits. For 34 years, the annual general meeting has rotated in 27 countries, with Manila hosting the most at 5. For smaller events, the ADFIAP Secretariat through its business units decide the training venue based on the participant's needs as well as the business unit's own judgment as to where the best learning impact can be derived for the participants.

HQ: How would you summarize new trends in the association congress world?

Octavio B. Peralta: Attendees to congresses are more and more demanding in terms of expectations on innovative experiences that they want to be provided by the organizers

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agement Team that handles both printed and Internet-based knowledge resources of the Association.

Our big events are usually only for 150 to 200 delegates. Seminars and other training events are usually for smaller groups of from 10 to 50 participants. Most often, 5-star hotels are needed and have the capacity and facilities to service these events.

HQ: What is the association's decision process concerning the organization of an event?

Octavio B. Peralta: The Board of Directors drives the decision process for the organiza-

as well as by the events venue. In addition, value for money seems to be the prevailing mood of delegates especially in this challenging economic situation. Being 'responsible' in the context of having an event which has a good impact to the community as well as an environmentally-friendly one is also a noticeable trend. Use of the latest technology that facilitates learning, networking and navigating effortless through the event is also important.

www.adfiap.org