

**INDUSTRY**

# Big Brothers lend helping hand to small operators

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The Industrial Promotion Department is helping small and medium-sized enterprises level up their business performance under the Big Brothers project, aiming to enable SMEs to cut costs and raise productivity.

The department is working with the private sector to help 20 participating SMEs, half from the food sector and the other half from plastics, upgrade their manufacturing operations.

The goal is to equip them with technology know-how to build "smart factories" and make the businesses more competitive with rivals in the market, department chief Nattapol Rangsitpol said yesterday.

"Only support from the government is not enough to help SMEs," he said. "Large companies need to cooperate, too."

His department is working with chemical maker Dow Thailand, the Plastics Institute of Thailand (PIT), the National Research Council of Thailand, and Thammasat and Kasetsart universities to drive Thai SMEs towards Industry 4.0, which emphasises advanced

technology and high-level services.

"Dow has supported the cooperation by giving 30-40 million baht since the government started the Big Brothers project," Mr Nattapol said, adding that other companies are providing aid as well.

This year, Dow is giving 5 million baht in aid and support for tech know-how.

The assistance corresponds with Dow's Sustainable Industry project, which has been carried out for nine years, said Chatchai Luanpolcharoenchai, president of Dow Thailand.

Dow earlier launched an Industry 4.0 handbook for the first time online to educate SMEs.

The guide teaches entrepreneurs how to increase production efficiency by using technology to reduce waste in the production process.

This will help SMEs better manage their manufacturing and make it more environmentally friendly by reducing emissions.

Dow for Sustainable Industry's goal is to cooperate with all parties in drawing up a master plan to promote business sustainability, eliminate waste and stop global warming.