

Asian Productivity Organization

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PROJECT NOTIFICATION

25 November 2011

1. **Project Code:** 12-IN-01-GE-OSM-C
2. **Project Title:** Individual-country Observational Study Missions
3. **Duration:** Up to one week (five working days) per mission
4. **Venue:** Member countries
5. **Implementing Organizations:** NPOs in host member countries
6. **Number of Participants:** Approximately 10 (preferably minimum six, maximum 12) per mission.
7. **Closing Date for Preliminary Applications:** 31 March 2012
8. **Objective:** To provide opportunities for professionals/managers/entrepreneurs from an individual member country or NPO to study, discuss, and observe recent developments and best practices in specific areas of interest by visiting another country(ies).
9. **Background:**

Under the Individual-country Observational Study Mission (I-OSM) Program, a member country can send a mission(s) to one or more other member countries to study and observe recent developments and best practices in a particular area of interest relevant to its needs for productivity promotion. This program addresses individual member country needs in the pursuit of productivity enhancement.

In 2011, five study missions were carried out on the export promotion of agrifood products, enterprise innovation, business excellence, organic and natural farming, cost management, and knowledge management benefiting 63 professionals from five member countries. All missions were appreciated by participants, indicating the effectiveness of this program, which is also corroborated by the extent of capacity building in diverse subject areas under the I-OSM Program.

In 2011, the Republic of China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand hosted I-OSMs from other member economies. To strengthen the I-OSM Program and promote productivity partnerships among member economies, all NPOs are encouraged to host one or more missions in 2012 depending upon the relevance of subject areas and

allocation of resources. NPOs sending a mission(s) are requested to report in detail on follow-up actions including report preparation by mission members and relevant postmission activities.

10. Scope and Methodology:

Subject Areas for Study Missions

The sending countries may propose the subject area(s) for study missions according to their needs. However, the host countries may also propose subject areas or fields of study for missions that they are prepared to receive. The subject areas may cover the latest developments in the industry, service, and agriculture sectors; technology and management fields; and productivity-, environment-, energy-, and quality-related issues.

Methodology

Orientation sessions on general aspects of the subject area, study visits to appropriate organizations including private enterprises and governmental agencies, interactive discussions, report preparation, and evaluation.

11. Composition of Missions:

(a) As stated under section 6 above, each I-OSM is to consist of approximately 10 members (preferably a minimum of six and a maximum of 12). They can be drawn from NPO staff, top or middle managers/leaders of industry, the public sector, the service sector, and trade union leaders and should have more or less homogeneous backgrounds and experience in the selected subject area.

(b) Each study mission will comprise members drawn from several organizations, to the extent possible, involved in the subject area so that the benefits may be widely shared within the country.

(c) Mission members should preferably be between 25 and 55 years of age.

(d) A mission leader must be appointed, and the concerned NPO must notify the APO in advance of the name of the mission leader to facilitate project implementation.

(e) Mission members must be physically and mentally fit to attend an intensive program, which entails strenuous travel and several plant/field visits. (It is therefore recommended that member countries refrain from nominating candidates suffering from or likely to suffer from physical and mental strain or who have any serious health conditions.)

12. Financial Arrangements

(a) To be borne/provided by the host country:

i) Logistic support for organizing the mission.

ii) Any other expenses not borne by the APO and participating countries.

(b) To be borne by participants or participating countries

- i) Round-trip international travel fare between the member country and venue(s) of study.
- ii) Per diem allowances for all mission members and accommodation for additional members (if there are more than six) during the official period of the mission.
- iii) The participants' travel insurance premium against illness or injury, personal risk, and life covering the countries to be visited for the entire duration of the project and travel.

(c) To be borne by the APO

- i) Accommodation expenses for mission members up to a maximum of six for up to six days.
- ii) Transportation and interpretation expenses, if applicable, at the venue of the mission.

13. Actions by Member Countries

(a) Preliminary Application

Member countries that intend to send study missions in 2012 must send their requests to the APO in writing **by 31 March 2012**, indicating the following:

- i) Title and subject area to be studied, objective(s) of the mission, and scope of study with as much specific information as possible; and
- ii) Suggested country/countries for observational study (due to the difficulty in coordinating programs, the number of countries to be visited by one mission cannot exceed two).

Upon receipt of the above requests, the APO will liaise with the proposed host country/countries on the possibility of organizing the I-OSM, adhering as closely as possible to the nature of the request. The Secretariat will then inform the concerned country of the outcome of the request. It must be emphasized that the acceptance of the request is subject to the convenience of the proposed host country/countries.

(b) Formal Application

After being notified by the APO of the possibility of acceptance by the proposed host country/countries, the sending country should then proceed to make a formal application to the APO. The following documents and details must be sent with the application:

- i) I-OSM Application Form (attached) to be completed. *Provision of information on a piecemeal basis will not be acceptable as this causes a great deal of inconvenience to the APO and the host country/countries.*
- ii) Completed APO biodata forms (attached) for I-OSM members.
- iii) Name of the mission leader.

iv) Medical certificate indicating the physical and mental fitness of each member to attend the I-OSM for the entire period as stated in paragraph 11 (e) above.

To provide adequate lead time for preparation, the documents above must reach the APO at least one month prior to the implementation of the mission.

14. Acceptance of the Mission

(a) A letter of acceptance (LA) for the group will be issued by the APO to the sending country *only upon receipt of the full details of all mission members.*

(b) A request for a change in mission members after the issuance of the LA is to be avoided. *Under no circumstances will such a request be accepted if it fails to reach the Secretariat at least one week prior to the commencement date of the mission.*

(c) The sending country must obtain the prior consent of the APO and the host country/countries if it wants to increase the number of mission members to more than previously specified by the host country, as recipient organizations may have finalized the physical arrangements and be unable to accept additional members.

15. Program and Itinerary

(a) Upon receipt of the mission details, the host country will prepare the program and forward the program itinerary to reach the APO at least two weeks before the mission commencement date. *Plants/offices/facilities selected for visits should to the extent possible be in a similar field of business as represented by mission members.*

(b) The APO will send the program details including the itinerary prepared by the host country two weeks before the commencement date of the project to the sending country for review. The sending country may suggest changes in the program but these must be made known to the APO *no later than one week prior to the start of the mission*, otherwise the program and itinerary will be regarded as finalized. Requests to revise the finalized program after the mission's arrival in the host country will not be accepted. The above timetable is contingent upon the receipt of documents specified in paragraph 13 above.

(c) The timing of the project and the program are to be strictly adhered to by all parties concerned. The sending country must under no circumstances postpone or cancel the mission without prior agreement in writing from the APO. *In the past, postponement or cancellation in the advanced stage of preparations caused a great deal of embarrassment on the part of the host countries and is to be avoided at all costs in the future. In case of a cancellation by the requesting NPO after the issuance of the LA(s) to mission members, the concerned NPO is requested to bear all the costs associated with the cancellation.*

16. Predeparture Preparations

(a) Orientation by NPO/Liaison Officers

It is strongly recommended that the NPO or liaison officer of the sending member country organize a meeting for mission members before their departure to provide them with an understanding of the role and activities of the APO (by screening the APO video), scope of the project, and what is expected of the mission during the visit to the host country and after

completion of the mission. Such a meeting will also allow mission members to become acquainted before arrival in the host country and enhance mutual understanding among them concerning the knowledge gap and problems faced in their organizations.

(b) Insurance Coverage

All mission members must be fully covered by travel insurance against accident, illness, and hospitalization for a principal sum of at least US\$10,000.00 or more for the entire duration of the I-OSM. Such insurance coverage must be valid in the host country/countries. If for some reason any mission member is unable to secure the insurance coverage in advance, he/she is required to obtain it in the host country at his/her own expense at start of the mission. Neither the APO nor the implementing organization(s) in the host country/countries will be liable for any eventuality affecting mission members as a result of accident or illness during the study mission.

If the study mission is implemented in Japan, all mission members must be fully insured in Japan, regardless of any insurance coverage obtained in their own country, against accident and illness (including hospitalization) for:

- accidental death and dismemberment for up to ¥4,000,000,
- medical expenses for accident for up to ¥4,000,000, and
- medical expenses for illness manifested for the first time for up to ¥4,000,000

for the entire duration of the project. The APO will secure this travel insurance on behalf of mission members in Japan from the day before the project commencement until the day after project completion. Each member must pay the premium himself/herself out of the per diem allowance provided. Self-financed members must make the above payment directly to the APO.

(c) Hotel Reservations

The implementing organization(s) in the host country/countries will make suitable hotel reservations in close consultation with the APO Secretariat. All members will be accommodated in the same hotel to facilitate local travel arrangements. Mission members may, however, suggest to the APO well in advance the type of hotel and details of the rooms desired. If mission members prefer to make their own arrangements, they may do so but they must be accommodated at the same hotel.

17. Implementation

(a) *Arrival at the Venue(s)*

Members of study missions will make group flight reservations as far as practicable and inform both the APO and the implementing organization(s) of their flight number and arrival time and date at least one week in advance. Any members who are unable to accompany the group during the travel must make their own arrangements to join the group.

(b) *Group Movement*

Mission members are required to move as a group during the I-OSM, and the implementing organization(s) will not be responsible for meeting personal requests. No mission members can withdraw from the I-OSM during its implementation without the written approval of the APO.

18. Evaluation

Within one month after the completion, the mission is required to prepare the **final evaluation report** on the project, particularly on the extent to which the objective(s) of the mission was met. The report should be submitted to the APO through the NPO of the sending country. The submission of this report will be taken into consideration when the APO makes any decision on individual-country programs for the NPO concerned.

19. Other Conditions

Other conditions of participation are given in the "Guide for Participants," which is available on the APO website and from APO Liaison Officers or NPOs of sending countries.

20. Host Countries

Member countries may each host one or more missions during 2012. NPOs are encouraged to express their intentions to host missions as soon as possible for effective planning. When such offers to host missions are received by the APO Secretariat, all other member countries will be informed.



Ryuichiro Yamazaki
Secretary-General