



PROJECT NOTIFICATION

PN Issue Date	14 January 2020
Project Code	20-RP-35-GE-RES-A
Title	Research on Digital Disruption: Policy Tasks and Responses by Governments
Timing and Duration	January–December 2020 (12 months)
Venue	APO Secretariat
Implementing Organizations	This project will be implemented by the APO Secretariat in consultation with member countries
Team of Experts	A team of individual and institutional experts working on a research collaboration platform
Closing Date for Nominations	N/A

1. Objectives

- a. To conduct macro analysis of digital technology adoption and explore related policies and regulations that will maximize the benefits for all APO member countries;
- b. To investigate current and evolving digital technologies and future opportunities, both economic and social;
- c. To analyze initiatives, policies, and regulations that will deliver benefits from technological advances while enhancing productivity, economic growth, and competitiveness in member economies; and
- d. To identify potential new policies and devise a digital technology framework approach for all member countries.

2. Background

The results of numerous research projects on drivers of productivity, economic growth, and competitiveness have been published. Some concluded that technological progress itself results in economic growth, and others suggested that the rate of technological change is more important. The dawn of the digital economy some two decades ago increased opportunities for firms to produce and provide goods and services more efficiently, resulting in significant positive impacts on productivity.

Many commentators believe that we are now at or nearing a tipping point with respect to the effects of new technologies on economic growth, productivity, competitiveness, and the future of society in general. If this is correct and countries fail to address the wave of digital technological change, then their socioeconomic development will slow significantly.

This research project aims to investigate the potential impact of key new technologies such as mobile networks and handsets, artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, etc. Although their impacts will vary and in some cases be country specific, common threads can be investigated, such as whether a country is developed, emerging, or developing and its current mix of industries. Other aspects should also be investigated, such as citizens' trust in technology, cyberlaws, and institutional readiness to accept change.

Gaining maximum benefit from new digital technologies requires positive policy and regulatory action to overcome reluctance by industries and citizens to embrace the associated transformations and to deal with roadblock issues such as trust and privacy. Some governments have taken positive steps to embrace the opportunities. Singapore developed a five-year digital strategic plan and has invested in a number of emerging technologies. India has a world-class IT industry and provides the necessary skills through educational initiatives at both at secondary and tertiary levels. Those two countries are at the forefront of IT skills, development, and best practices. Regulatory initiatives in Africa are contributing to the development of mobile networks, with major contributions to both economic growth through ecommerce and social development by bringing banking services to millions.

3. Scope and Methodology

Scope

Because of the multifaceted nature of the research topic as well as time and budget constraints, it is not feasible to investigate the key issues for all APO members. Three countries will therefore be selected for this research project, representing one developed, one emerging, and one developing economy. The final selection will be made after completion of the exploratory phase. In addition, research will be undertaken in an advanced country to help pinpoint key issues governments must address and to set reference points for the analyses.

The results will provide both a general picture of the types of policy and regulatory decisions to achieve the best results and focused solutions based on the development profile of targeted countries. The research will have certain limitations. First, gaining access to key decisionmakers in the government, business, and technology sectors for interviews and completion of questionnaires will be challenging. This will be overcome as far as possible by networking with

well-connected individuals in each country. Second, forecasting key breakthrough technologies and their likely impacts on an individual country, economic growth, productivity, and social benefits can only be broadly indicative because other policy factors will be critical.

Methodology

The research approach involves eight stages:

Stage 1: Finalizing the project outline and agreeing on details of the research among the parties involved.

Stage 2: Preliminary exploratory research

- A comprehensive literature review of global academic, industrial, and government research on the topic will be conducted.
- A limited number of key stakeholders will be interviewed, probably in some advanced countries because of the time constraints, to obtain their views on critical issues governments should address and their relative importance and value.
- For the three countries where the research will be performed, socioeconomic data will be collected including economic and productivity growth, analysis of main industries, etc.

Stage 3: Hypothesis generation

- A questionnaire will be developed to evaluate the relative importance of new technologies.
- Different policy and regulatory issues will be examined, such as ease of setting up a company, creating an adaptive environment, trade, R&D initiatives, business regulation, and education required.

Stage 4: Questionnaire distribution

- The research questionnaire will be designed to obtain experts' views of the relative importance of new technologies and proposed government policies and regulations.
- With the help of APO, the experts will approach potential government-sector questionnaire respondents in the member countries. The experts will approach industry and technical participants using their own methods and resources.
- The completed questionnaires will be analyzed using statistical packages, and scenarios will be created through cross-tabulations and other techniques.

Stage 5: Using results for organizational storytelling

- Following analysis of the questionnaire responses, influential, knowledgeable stakeholders will be interviewed to develop stories of both existing best practices and new initiatives to maximize the benefits of adopting new technology.

Stage 6: Draft report writing

Stage 7: Finalizing report

Experts' tasks:

- a. Assisting the APO in developing research guidelines and formulating the overall framework;
- b. Reviewing global and Asian experience of technology and government regulatory and policy approaches as preliminary research;
- c. Finalizing the research framework and methodology as well as the outline of the report structure and format with the APO;
- d. Conducting the research including data collection and analysis based on the agreed research framework/agenda;
- e. Coordinating with other experts working on the research collaboration platform;
- f. Preparing the final report and submitting it to the APO Secretariat by the deadline; and
- g. Providing guidelines for follow-up activities after research completion.

4. Qualifications of the chief expert

The APO will appoint one chief expert for this project to guide and work with the group of experts in undertaking the research. The APO-appointed chief expert must possess the following:

- a. Extensive knowledge of, research experience in, and professional contributions to public policy tools for dealing with technological advances and relevant issues, with publications in English on the topic;
- b. Experience in undertaking international research projects and dealing with interviewees from diverse national contexts;
- c. Excellent English writing and presentation skills, as the final report will be written in English;
- d. Access to an international network of experts in the subject area from the private sector, government, civil society, and academia; and
- e. Strong commitment to undertaking and completing the research project within the given time frame and producing the consolidated analytical report.

5. Financial Arrangements

To be met by the APO

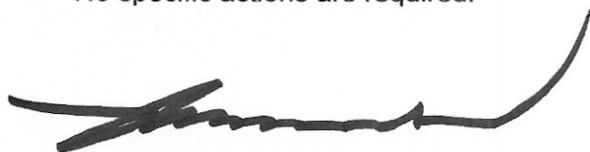
Full honoraria for the chief expert to be paid upon completion of the final research report.

To be met by experts

All implementation costs incurred by experts when conducting the research and related activities not covered by the honoraria.

6. Actions by Member Countries

No specific actions are required.



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Secretary-General