



ASIAN PRODUCTIVITY ORGANIZATION

PROJECT NOTIFICATION

28 October 2014

- 1. Project Code** 14-RP-15-GE-RES-B
- 2. Title** Research on Benchmarking Indexes for SMEs
(Logistics Sector—Warehousing Subsector)
- 3. Timing and Duration** One year commencing from 15 December 2014
The coordination meeting will be held 3 – 5 March 2015
(three days) in Singapore.
- 4. Venue** Participating member countries
- 5. Number of Participating Countries** Six targeted member countries
Republic of China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia,
Singapore, and Thailand
- 6. Closing Date for Nominations** 15 December 2014
- 7. Objectives**
 - a. To define the research metrics with a set of key business performance indicators for benchmarking the performance of SMEs in the warehousing subsector;
 - b. To develop a database on the productivity performance of SMEs in the warehousing subsector;
 - c. To identify best practices and strategies to improve the productivity performance of SMEs in the warehousing subsector; and
 - d. To publish a report on cross-country analysis of the productivity performance and best practices of SMEs in the warehousing subsector in selected APO member countries.

8. Background

In APO member economies, SMEs are important as they are growth engines and stimulators of productivity enhancement and industrial development. To illustrate this, total factor productivity was found to be the highest in SMEs, especially among medium-sized firms. SMEs were also found to be actively engaged in acquiring and upgrading new technologies and sustaining their competitiveness in the international market. However, SMEs lack the knowledge to implement productivity initiatives to improve their performance. To help SMEs in member countries overcome this challenge and improve their productivity performance, it is necessary to provide them with benchmarking indicators against which they can compare their performance and strive to do better.

In 2012, the APO conducted research on benchmarking indexes for SMEs in the retail and food service sector, and then the food manufacturing sector in 2013 to create a set of benchmarking indexes and best practices in each sector for SMEs. As part of a continuous effort, in 2014 the research on benchmarking indexes for the logistics sector - warehousing subsector will be implemented to complete the global value chain benchmarking indexes for SMEs.

9. Scope and Methodology

Scope:

Coordination meeting of experts: A meeting will be held 3 – 5 March 2015 in Singapore. The tentative modules to be covered in this meeting are:

- a. Discussion and finalization of the methodology for data collection and compilation;
- b. Identification of relevant benchmarking indicators for the research; and
- c. Discussion of the feasibility of data collection in participating countries.

Conducting in-country research: Gathering and analyzing data under the guidance of the chief expert.

Methodology:

- a. Primary data collection through the use of questionnaires and secondary information collection by national experts under the guidance of the chief expert;
- b. Data gathering and analysis using quantitative and qualitative analyses; and
- c. Report submission by the chief expert.

Chief expert's tasks:

- a. Developing the guidelines and methodology for undertaking the research;
- b. Advising the national experts on conducting the research;
- c. Reviewing the initial drafts of the national experts' reports to ensure the quality of the work; and
- d. Preparing the final report and submitting it to the APO Secretariat by the deadline.

National experts' tasks:

- a. Undertaking the research at country level following the methodology and guidelines agreed upon in the coordination meeting;
- b. Writing the final report on the findings and analysis based on the data gathered;
- c. Submitting the report to the chief expert within the time frame and following the agreed format; and
- d. Cooperating with the chief expert to ensure the quality and consistency of the final report.

10. Qualifications of the National Experts

Present Position

Managers or officers from SME agencies and business associations directly involved in monitoring the performance of SMEs in warehousing subsector, managers of private enterprises in the field of warehousing involved in benchmarking activities in their organizations, or NPO managers/consultants engaged in benchmarking activities and familiar with productivity statistics and measurement for the logistics sector (warehousing subsector).

Experience	At least seven years of relevant work experience in the subject areas. Those with knowledge of and direct experience in the field of warehousing are encouraged to apply.
Education	University degree or above in economics, econometrics, or business management.
Language	Proficiency in written and spoken English is essential.
Health	Physically and mentally fit to commit him/herself to a one-year period of research.
Age	Candidates who fit the above profile are typically between 30 and 50 years of age.
Other	The ability to handle quantitative statistics and business data is an asset.

11. Qualifications of the Chief Expert

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

- a. Extensive knowledge of warehouse management key performance indexes;
- b. Excellent writing skills, with publications on key performance indexes in English as the final report will be written in English; and
- c. Strong commitment to undertake and complete the research project within the given time frame and producing the consolidated analysis of all national reports.

12. Financial Arrangements

To be borne by the experts or participating countries

Local implementation costs not covered by the APO.

To be borne by the APO

- a. Honoraria for the chief and national experts to be paid upon completion of the final research report;
- b. All assignment costs for the chief and national experts including daily subsistence allowances, miscellaneous expenses, and round-trip business-class international airfare by the most direct route between the international airport nearest to the experts' place of work and Singapore for attending the coordination meeting for the research; and
- c. Travel insurance coverage against accident and illness for the entire duration of the coordination meeting and travel.

13. Actions by Member Countries

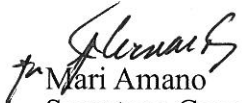
- a. Member countries included in the research are requested to submit appropriate nominations by 15 December 2014, in line with the provisions in section 10.
- b. Each nomination should be accompanied by the candidate's biodata on the standard APO form in duplicate along with a passport-sized photograph. In addition to the standard APO form, nominees should also prepare a list of publications, research,

and/or consulting projects they have undertaken in this field. A nomination lacking any of these documents will not be considered.

- c. The selection of national experts will be based strictly upon their professional qualifications and experience, academic background, and commitment to this research.

14. Work by National Experts

The detailed guidelines for the assignments will be provided by the chief expert.


Mari Amano
Secretary-General