



ASIAN PRODUCTIVITY ORGANIZATION

PROJECT NOTIFICATION

16 July 2015

1. **Project Code** 15-IN-44-GE-OSM-B
2. **Title** Multicountry Observational Study Mission on SME Development
3. **Timing and Duration** 30 November–4 December 2015 (five days)
4. **Venue** Colombo, Sri Lanka
5. **Implementing Organization** National Productivity Secretariat (NPS)
Address: 10th Floor, Sethsiripaya 2nd Stage
Baththaramulla, Sri Lanka
Phone: 94-11-2186026
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e-Mail: nposlanka@gmail.com
6. **Number of Overseas Participants,** Up to 18 qualified participants from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, IR Iran, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. However, other member countries with special interest in this project may nominate candidates upon consultation with the APO Secretariat.
7. **Number of Local Participants** Up to six qualified participants
8. **Closing Date for Nominations** 14 September 2015
9. **Objectives**
 - a. To learn and apply productivity tools and techniques for SMEs;
 - b. To visit SMEs to examine and adopt their best practices that enhance productivity, quality, and profitability through various techniques and methodologies; and
 - c. To develop action plans for SME development in participating countries.

10. Background

SMEs play an important role in the economies of most countries in the Asia-Pacific region, not only because of their sheer numbers but also the variety of their activities. SMEs have been forced to move beyond the philosophy of continuous improvement and adopt more radical, innovative ideas to upgrade and transform due to severe competition in the global business environment and technological complexity. The lack of knowledge of advanced management practices, weak technical capabilities, and limited access to external assistance are their critical common factors and should be closely examined for future development.

In September 2014, a similar program was held in the Republic of China (ROC) with successful results. It created awareness among participants through learning from the best practices in

utilizing productivity improvement tools and techniques. Besides learning from the lectures and exchanging views with resource speakers and other participants, they also had the opportunity to visit several excellent SMEs in ROC. Overall, the participants who attended the program gained an understanding of their roles and responsibilities in developing productivity measures through their action plans.

This observational study mission is being organized again, this time in Sri Lanka, to provide an opportunity for NPO trainers/consultants and SME owners and top managers to examine productivity enhancement and management improvement techniques adopted by SMEs in that country. The participants will learn actual applications of productivity and quality improvement tools and techniques practiced by SMEs.

At the end of this study mission, the participants are expected to prepare action plans based on what they have learned and observed. The plans will be shared with NPOs, and participants will be requested to submit progress reports on action plan implementation six months after completion of the study mission.

11. Scope and Methodology

Scope:

- a. SME development measures, the roles of consultants and NPOs, and self-improvement efforts by enterprises;
- b. Management philosophy and strategies of top SME managers seeking to increase productivity and competitiveness; and
- c. Practical productivity improvement tools and techniques for SMEs

Methodology:

Lectures, presentations, company visits, and interactive discussions.

The tentative program of the program is given below:

Date/Time	Activity
Sun., 29 Nov. 2015	Arrival of participants in Colombo
Mon., 30 Nov.	Opening session Presentation of resource papers
Tue., 1 Dec.	Presentation of resource papers Presentation of country papers
Wed., 2 Dec.	Field visits to relevant SMEs
Thu., 3 Dec.	Field visits to relevant SMEs Group exercise
Fri., 4 Dec.	Presentation of group discussion output Program evaluation by participants, resource persons, and implementing organization
Sat., 5 Dec.	Summing-up and closing session Departure of participants

12. Qualifications of Candidates

The participants are expected to possess the following qualifications:

Present Position	NPO trainers or consultants and SME owners and top managers.
	Participants are expected to disseminate and practice the lessons learned from the study mission.

Experience	At least three years of experience in the position described above.
Education	University degree or equivalent qualification from a recognized university/institution.
Language	All proceedings of the project are conducted in English, and participants are frequently required to make oral and written presentations. They must therefore be proficient in spoken and written English. Those who are not proficient in English will not be accepted.
Health	Physically and mentally fit to attend an intensive project requiring participants to complete a number of individual and group activities and strenuous fieldwork. It is therefore recommended that member countries do not nominate candidates likely to suffer from physical and mental stress.
Age	Candidates who fit the above profile are typically between 35 and 50 years of age.
APO Certificate	Participants are required to attend the entire program to receive the APO certificate of attendance.

13. Financial Arrangements

To be borne by participants or participating countries

For participants from profit-making organizations, except for SMEs, from APO member countries other than Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Lao PDR, Mongolia, and Nepal:

- a. Round-trip international airfare between the member country and Colombo; and
- b. Participating Country Expenses at US\$50.00 per participant, payable to the APO in convertible currency.

For all participants

- a. Participants' insurance premiums: All participants should be fully insured against accident and illness (including hospitalization and death) for a principal sum equivalent to US\$10,000.00 for the entire duration of the project and travel, and must submit to the APO Secretariat a copy of the comprehensive travel insurance certificate before participation. Such insurance should be valid in the host country. This insurance requirement is in addition to existing government insurance coverage in some member countries. If any participant is unable to insure himself/herself as stipulated above, he/she should secure this insurance in the host country at the commencement of the project and pay the premium himself/herself, if necessary, from the per diem allowance provided. Neither the APO nor the implementing organizations will be responsible for any eventuality arising from accident or illness.
- b. All expenses related to visa fees and airport taxes.
- c. Any expenses incurred by participants for stopovers on the way to and from the project venue as well as for extra stay at the project venue before and/or after the official project period because of early arrival or late departure, for example, due to either limited available flights or any other reason.

To be borne by the host country

- a. Per diem allowances and hotel accommodation for up to 18 overseas participants for up to six days at the rate to be specified later.
- b. All local implementation costs.

To be borne by the APO

- a. All assignment costs of overseas resource persons.
- b. Round-trip economy-class international airfare by the most direct route between the international airport nearest to the participant's place of work and Colombo. As far as practicable, all participants should purchase discount tickets. Please note that the arrangements for the purchase of air tickets should follow the "Guide on Purchases of Air Tickets for APO Participants," which will be sent to the selected participants. It is also available on the APO website and from APO Liaison Officers in member countries.

14. Actions by Member Countries

- a. Each participating country is requested to nominate three or more candidates in the order of preference. Please ensure that candidates nominated meet the qualifications specified under section 12 above.
- b. No form of self-nomination will be accepted. All nominations must be endorsed and submitted by an APO Director, Alternative Director, Liaison Officer, or their designated officer.
- c. Please note that nomination of a candidate does not necessarily guarantee that he/she will be selected. Selection is at the discretion of the APO Secretariat. A basic criterion for selection is the homogeneity of the participants in terms of qualifications and work experience. Nonselection therefore does not mean that the candidates concerned are not competent enough. Sometimes candidates are not selected because they are overqualified for a project.
- d. Each nomination should be accompanied by the necessary documents. A nomination lacking any of these documents may not be considered: two copies of the candidate's biodata on the APO biodata form together with a passport-sized photograph. The biodata form can be downloaded from the APO website (www.apo-tokyo.org). We encourage submitting the biodata form to the APO Secretariat in electronic form as an attachment to a cover e-mail message from the APO Director, Alternate Director, or Liaison Officer. The nomination documents should be sent to the Industry Department, APO Secretariat (e-mail: ind@apo-tokyo.org, fax: 81-3-5840-5324).
- e. The APO Medical and Insurance Declaration/Certification Form. Every candidate must complete and submit a copy of the APO Medical and Insurance Declaration/Certification Form with his/her biodata at the time of nomination. Please note that self-declaration is sufficient for candidates without any of health conditions or illnesses listed on the reverse side of the medical form. However, for all others, medical certification by a licensed physician on the reverse side of the medical form is required.
- f. Necessary documents are to be submitted electronically. In that case, there is no need to send a hard copy by postal mail. However, if the documents are submitted by fax, member countries are requested to mail the originals of the documents to the APO Secretariat as well. If a digital photograph of a nominee is not attached to the electronic biodata form, a hard-copy photograph should be sent to the APO Secretariat by postal mail. Please give the candidate's name and the project code on the reverse side of the photograph.
- g. Member countries are requested to adhere to the nomination deadline given on page 1. The

APO Secretariat may not consider late nominations as they have in the past resulted in considerable difficulties to the implementing organization in its preparatory work for the project.

- h. For member countries where nominations are required to be approved by higher government authorities and require a longer time, the APO Liaison Officers/NPOs are urged to send the names of nominees on or before the deadline, indicating that government approval will follow.
- i. If a selected participant becomes unable to attend, he/she should inform the APO Liaison Officer/NPO in his/her country immediately and give the reason for withdrawal. The NPO concerned is requested to transmit that information to the APO Secretariat and the host country promptly.
- j. NPOs are requested to inform the selected participants that they are not to bring family members or to engage in any private business activities during the entire duration of the project.
- k. Each selected participant should be instructed to arrive at the venue one day before the start of the official project. Also, he/she is expected to return home upon completion of the official project because he/she is visiting the host country for the specific purpose of attending this APO project.
- l. NPOs should inform participants that they must attend whole duration of the project to qualify for the certificate of attendance.

15. Actions by the APO Secretariat

- a. Under normal circumstances, candidates who are selected will be informed of their acceptance at least four weeks prior to the start of the project.
- b. If some candidates fail to qualify or be unable to participate after selection, or if some member countries fail to nominate any candidate, their slots may be filled by alternates from the same or another member country on a merit basis.

16. Postproject Actions

All participants are required to prepare action plans and share the plans with their NPOs. The APO will also request participants to submit progress reports six months after completion of the program.

17. Evaluation of Participants

If the conduct/attendance/performance of a participant is not satisfactory, these will be reported to the APO director concerned.

18. Guide for Participants

Other conditions for participation are given in the *APO Guide for Participants*, which is available from APO Liaison Officers/NPOs in member countries and on the APO website (www.apo-tokyo.org).



Mari Amano
Secretary-General