



ASIAN PRODUCTIVITY ORGANIZATION

PROJECT NOTIFICATION

30 May 2017

- 1. Project Code** 17-IN-44-GE-OSM-B
- 2. Title** Multicountry Observational Study Mission on SME Development
- 3. Timing and Duration** 7–11 October 2017 (five days)
- 4. Venue** Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
- 5. Implementing Organization** National Iranian Productivity Organization (NIPO)
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1598994911, Islamic Republic of Iran
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e-Mail: nipo@mporg.ir, m_alipour@mporg.ir
- 6. Number of Overseas Participants** Up to 18 qualified participants from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Republic of China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, 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** 21 August 2017
- 9. Objectives**
 - a. To familiarize participants with key elements and current trends in SME development and understand the opportunities and challenges faced by APO member countries;
 - b. To observe good practices, policy programs, and development strategies for SMEs in IR Iran; and
 - c. To provide a platform for experience sharing and network building.

10. Background

SMEs, including microenterprises and start-ups, are one of the most important pillars supporting socioeconomic development in APO member countries. They vary in business models and types of activity, but en masse contribute significantly to production, trade, employment, income growth, and a country's fiscal and financial development. Supporting the development of SMEs has thus been a major mission of all economies, despite the diversity in strategies and focuses that are contingent on an individual country's own context.

The momentum for growth provided by SMEs in IR Iran has been impressive as the country was once constrained by international sanctions and had to rely mainly on autonomous development. According to the Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization, SMEs constitute over 95% of the Iranian businesses and account for 42% of all employment in the industrial sector, which has helped to stabilize the domestic employment situation and support economic growth when foreign trade, investment, and technology transfers were not easily available. Currently, with reexposure to the global economy, Iranian SMEs have greater opportunities and face corresponding challenges in sustaining their contributions, which can serve as a good reference for other APO members to observe their strategies and strengths.

Promoting the development of SMEs is a core element of the APO's mandate and one of its strategic directions. The APO has been organizing a variety of activities focusing on SMEs, including, in recent years, bilateral cooperation projects between national productivity organizations (Cambodia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, and Singapore), workshops on development policies in IR Iran and Nepal, and observational study missions in the ROC, Japan, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. This study mission is a continuation of this effort; it also aims to introduce new trends and challenges in SME development to prepare APO members to be resilient in the volatile economic environment.

11. Scope and Methodology

Scope

Core elements of SME development; policies and programs supporting SME development; good practices of SME support; new trends in SME operation, such as the on-demand economy; and implications of digital technologies.

Methodology

Interactive lectures, observational site visits, group discussions, participants' presentations.

The tentative program of the workshop is given below:

Date/Time	Activity
Fri., 6 Oct. 2017	Arrival of participants in Tehran
Sat., 7 Oct.	Opening session, program overview, and resource presentations
Sun., 8 Oct.	Resource presentations and country paper presentations
Mon., 9 Oct.	Site visits and country paper presentations
Tues., 10 Oct.	Site visit recap, group discussion, and action plan formation
Wed., 11 Oct.	Group presentations and closing session
Thurs., 12 Oct.	Departure of participants

12. Qualifications of Candidates

The participants are expected to possess the following qualifications:

Present Position	Policymakers in charge of SME development policies; entrepreneurs and executives of SMEs; and academics and association representatives promoting SME development.
Experience	At least five years of experience in the position described above.
Education	University degree or equivalent qualification from a recognized 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 not nominate candidates likely to suffer from physical and mental stress.
Age	Candidates who fit the above profile are typically between 30 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 Tehran; and
- b. Participating Country Expenses at USD50.00 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 USD10,000.00 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.
- d. Any cancellation charges for airfare and hotel accommodations arising from withdrawals after letters of acceptance have been issued by the APO.

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. Transportation costs for hotel and airport transfers and site visit venues.
- c. 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 participants' place of work and Tehran for participants from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Lao PDR, Mongolia, and Nepal, and for participants from SMEs and nonprofit organizations from other APO member countries. 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.
- c. The APO may select more than 18 overseas participants in anticipation of last-minute withdrawals or no-shows. If more than 18 overseas participants attend, per diem allowances and hotel accommodation costs will be borne by the APO for up to two additional overseas participants at the rate to be prescribed for up to six days.

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 course.
- l. NPOs should inform participants that they must attend the entire duration of the project to qualify for the certificate of attendance.
- m. NPOs should assist the APO and/or host country in collecting amounts corresponding to cancellation charges arising from participant withdrawal, as provided for under item 13.

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. Project Preparation

The participants are required to prepare a short country paper on policies on SME development in their countries prior to departure for the project venue. In preparing the paper, they are expected to follow the “Guidelines for the Preparation of Country Papers” to be provided later.

17. Postproject Actions

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

18. Evaluation of Participants

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

19. 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).



Santhi Kanoktanaporn
Secretary-General

