



ASIAN PRODUCTIVITY ORGANIZATION

## PROJECT NOTIFICATION

5 January 2017

1. **Project Code** 16-AG-08-GE-TRC-B
2. **Title** Training Course on Sustainability Assessment of Agribusiness Enterprises
3. **Timing and Duration** 25–29 September 2017 (five days)
4. **Venue** Vientiane, Lao PDR
5. **Implementing Organization** Department of Small and Medium Enterprise Promotion (DOSMEP),  
Lao National Productivity Organization (LNPO)  
Nong Bone Road, P.O. Box No. 474, 01005 Ban Fai Area  
Saysetha District, Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR  
Phone: 856-21-414064
6. **Number of Overseas Participants** Up to 18 qualified participants from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Republic of China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, IR Iran, 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** 1 July 2017
9. **Objectives**
  - a. To enhance the knowledge and skills of trainers on the latest approaches, tools, and techniques for assessing the sustainability of agribusiness enterprises and their applications;
  - b. To promote the adoption of best, practices, new technologies, and innovative models of sustainable development by farm and agribusiness enterprises, in particular SMEs in Asian countries; and
  - c. To formulate strategic action plans to promote the sustainability of agribusiness enterprises in member countries.

## **10. Background**

Over the years, there has been impressive progress in achieving socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable development. Agriculture and food-sector stakeholders have been playing a leading role in this progress through improving productivity, protecting natural resources, taking care of human resources, and minimizing the environmental impacts of farming and agribusiness operations. For full recognition of such achievements, a credible model for or approach to sustainability assessment is needed.

Sustainability assessment determines the rating of a company's or production site's sustainability performance. This includes environmental integrity, economic resilience, social well-being, and good governance throughout the agricultural sector, from production to processing and distribution of food and agricultural products. The purpose of sustainability assessment can be self-evaluation of an agribusiness enterprise for continued improvement or reporting to business partners, consumers, or authorities. For external communication, independent third-party certification of sustainability performance is necessary.

Recently, sustainability assessment has emerged as an important policy tool in both government and private business. Several approaches to assess the sustainability of farms, farming systems, and supply chains have been developed. They differ considerably in terms of scope, assessment level, and precision of indicators used. Thus different approaches can lead to contradictory results that may not be comparable. To overcome these shortcomings, sustainability assessments should include a precise definition of "sustainability," along with a description of the methodological approach and the indicator sets with the aim of harmonization of indicators and assumptions.

Global initiatives such as the UN Food and Agriculture Organization's Sustainability Assessment in Food and Agriculture Systems (SAFA) Guidelines can be a helpful step toward harmonization. SAFA-consistent assessment tools, e.g., SMART, can help in operationalizing the SAFA guidelines to establish transparent, comparable reporting systems for agribusiness enterprises.

## **11. Scope and Methodology**

The tentative modules to be covered are:

- a. Key concepts, principles, and challenges of sustainability assessment of agribusiness enterprises as well as challenges;
- b. Current status of sustainability assessment of agriculture and agribusiness enterprises in Asian countries;
- c. Global initiatives in sustainability assessment of food and agriculture systems;
- d. Methods of conducting sustainability assessment, e.g., tools, techniques, and requirements as well as status of sustainability metrics and global best practices; and
- e. Model cases of assessment of sustainability performance of agribusiness enterprises with the emphasis on SMEs.

The program will consist of lectures, presentations, sharing of best practices, hands-on exercises, and field visit(s).

The tentative program itinerary of the training course is given below:

<b>Date/Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Sunday, 24 September 2017	Arrival of participants in Vientiane
Monday, 25 Sept.	Opening session Training modules and presentations
Tuesday, 26 Sept.	Training modules
Wednesday, 27 Sept.	Training modules Field visit(s)
Thursday, 28 Sept.	Training modules Group exercise
Friday, 29 Sept.	Group exercise, summing up by resource persons, written examination to assess participants' learning, program evaluation, and closing session
Saturday, 30 Sept.	Departure of participants

## **12. Qualifications of Candidates**

The participants are expected to possess the following qualifications:

Present Position	Officials of government agencies, project planning managers of agribusiness companies, academics, and consultants in charge of planning/evaluating farm/agribusiness projects.
Experience	At least two 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 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 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 Vientiane, Lao PDR.
- b. Participating country expenses of US\$50 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.
- d. Any cancellation charges for airfare and hotel 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. 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 Vientiane for participants from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Lao PDR, Mongolia, and Nepal and for participants from SMEs and nonprofit-making 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](http://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 Agriculture Department, APO Secretariat (e-mail: [agr@apo-tokyo.org](mailto:agr@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 training course.
- l. NPOs should inform participants that they must attend all five days 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 withdrawal of a participant as provided for under item 13d.

#### **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 paper 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 also request participants to submit progress reports six months after completion of the workshop.

#### **18. Evaluation of Participants**

If the conduct/attendance/performance of a participant is not satisfactory, these 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](http://www.apo-tokyo.org)).



Santhi Kanoktanaporn  
Secretary-General