



PROJECT NOTIFICATION

Ref. No.:21-CP-01-GE-TRC-B-PN2100021-001

Date of Issue	24 March 2021
Project Code	21-CP-01-GE-TRC-B
Title	Training Course on Digitization Readiness Assessment
Timing and Duration	19–21 May 2021 (three days)
Hosting Country(ies)	Republic of China
Modality	Digital Multicountry
Implementing Organization(s)	China Productivity Center and APO Secretariat
Participating Country(ies)	All Member Countries
Overseas Participants	19
Local Participants	12
Qualifications of Participants	SMEs executives, representatives of industrial associations, consultants, and productivity practitioners with experience in manufacturing management, and government officials and policy research officers involved in industrial policy and development strategies for the SMEs and manufacturing sectors
Nomination of Participants	All nominations must be submitted through National Productivity Organizations of member countries
Closing Date for Nominations	16 April 2021

1. Objectives

- a. Identify frameworks to evaluate the readiness of businesses for digital upgrading.
- b. Provide practical methodologies and tools for assessing the readiness for digitization.
- c. Enable SMEs in developing strategies and action plans to build their digital capabilities.

2. Background

Leveraging digital technologies to transform services and business operations has become indispensable for any organization to stay productive and competitive in the era of Industry 4.0. This has been amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic when supply chains and traditional business models are disrupted by restrictions on human and product movements. However, according to research by ASEAN, by the end of 2019, only 10% of the surveyed MSMEs in Southeast Asia had incorporated digitalization in their core business models and operations, indicating that they still faced significant challenges in digital upgrading even though they recognized its importance. Enabling SMEs to initiate digitalization is thus necessary for the resilience and recovery of the economy during and after the pandemic.

A common reason why businesses are hesitant in embarking on digital transformation is the lack of understanding of how and where to start the journey. Evaluating their current status and identifying strategies for digital upgrading is thus the first step for SMEs to harness its benefits. Various models and tools have been developed by think tanks, consulting firms, and industrial coalitions to measure Industry 4.0 readiness at business, sectoral, and national levels. Nonetheless, SMEs will benefit the most from simple yet robust frameworks and methods that can help them identify opportunities for improvement and prioritize actions to adopt suitable digital technologies and build necessary capabilities.

This training course aims to impart methodologies and tools for SMEs executives, consultants, and productivity practitioners to assess the level of digitization in businesses and assist them in initiating and sustaining digital upgrading in a practical, incremental manner. It also aims to support APO members' policies for productivity enhancement, innovation, and digital transformation.

3. Scope and Methodology, and Certificate of Attendance

The duration of each day's sessions will be around three hours comprising presentations by experts, group discussions, and other relevant learning methods. The indicative topics of the presentations are:

Day 1:

- Industry 4.0 and smart manufacturing.
- The Smart Industry Readiness Index: Framework and assessment matrix.

Day 2:

- The Smart Industry Readiness Index: Steps for readiness assessment and prioritization matrix.
- Examples of SMEs digital upgrading.

Day 3:

- Case studies.
- Hands-on experience in conducting assessments.

The detailed program and list of speakers will be provided two weeks prior to the sessions with announcement of the names of the selected participants.

The participants are required to attend all sessions. This full participation is a prerequisite for receiving the APO certificate of attendance.

4. Financial Arrangements

- a. The APO will meet the assignment costs for overseas resource persons.
- b. The host country will meet the assignment costs of local resource persons and for a virtual site visit(s), either broadcast live or recorded as applicable.

5. Implementation Procedures

Please refer to the implementation procedures for APO digital multicountry projects circulated with this document.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dr. AKP Mochtan', with a long, sweeping flourish extending upwards and to the right.

Dr. AKP Mochtan
Secretary-General

IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES FOR APO DIGITAL MULTICOUNTRY PROJECTS (TRAINING COURSES/WORKSHOPS/CONFERENCES)

1. Modality of Implementation

- a. The sessions will be conducted virtually.
- b. The duration of each day's sessions will be around three hours for training courses and workshops.
- c. The duration of the sessions will be around four hours for conferences.
- d. The APO Secretariat will inform the resource persons and participants of the link to the virtual sessions.
- e. The link will be exclusive to resource persons and participants and should not be shared.

2. Requirements of Participants

- a. Competent in connecting to virtual meetings, including independently undertaking troubleshooting in the event of poor or lost connections.
- b. Proficient in English, both written and spoken.
- c. Have necessary devices comprising a computer, web camera, microphone, and speaker or headphones.
- d. Access to internet connections suitable for videoconferencing. Stable, wired LAN connections are preferred.
- e. Follow the instructions of the moderators/presenters in asking questions, joining discussions, and answering questions.
- f. Wear appropriate business attire during the sessions.

3. Actions by Member Countries

- a. Each participating country will nominate three or more candidates in order of preference for training courses and workshops, and five or more candidates for conferences.
- b. All nominations must be endorsed by an APO Director or Alternate Director and submitted by a Liaison Officer or designated officer. Self-nominations will not be accepted.
- c. Nominations should reach the Secretariat before the deadline.
- d. Each nomination must be accompanied by the APO biodata form and uploaded to the APO Document Management System/Fleekdrive by the NPO. The biodata form is available on the APO website.
- e. If a selected participant becomes unable to participate, the NPO concerned should inform the APO Secretariat and the host country promptly.

4. Actions by the APO Secretariat

- a. Selection of candidates will be at the discretion of the Participant Selection Committee of the APO Secretariat.
- b. Selection of candidates will be completed and announced two weeks prior to the start of the sessions.
- c. Slots that become available due to withdrawal of a selected candidate(s) or lack of nominations by a member country may be filled by alternates to be selected on a merit basis.
- d. The APO Secretariat will inform NPOs of the final program and link of the virtual sessions one week prior to commencement.