



PROJECT NOTIFICATION

Ref. No.: 22-CL-04-GE-WSP-A-PN2200017-001

Date of Issue	03 March 2022
Project Code	22-CL-04-GE-WSP-A
Title	Workshop on Women's Entrepreneurship in the Digital Economy
Timing and Duration	11–13 May 2022 (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	38
Local Participants	12
Qualifications of Participants	Government officials involved in women's labor force participation, SME and startup development, and digital innovation policies; entrepreneurs and business executives with experience in digital innovation; and academics and representatives of associations promoting gender inclusion and women's leadership
Nomination of Participants	All nominations must be submitted through National Productivity Organizations of member countries
Closing Date for Nominations	15 April 2022

1. Objectives

- a. Familiarize participants with trends in and examples of women's entrepreneurship and participation in the digital economy.
- b. Discuss the impact of digital technologies on entrepreneurship and strategies for enhancing women's empowerment by leveraging digital tools and skills.
- c. Provide references for government policies and organizational practices for promoting women's entrepreneurship.

2. Background

Entrepreneurship is a major impetus for innovation, productivity, and long-term economic growth. The digital economy provides fertile ground for entrepreneurs to flourish as digital technologies open up opportunities for greater diversity, equity, and inclusion in society and enable more talent, including women entrepreneurs, to participate in economic activities. Access to enabling technologies, markets, and opportunities for greater gender equality, however, does not immediately translate into a supportive business environment for women and their meaningful participation in the economy. To fully harness the benefits of digital technologies for empowering women and unleashing their potential for enhancing productivity and innovation, it is necessary to understand the relationships and synergies among technologies, entrepreneurship, and women's participation and leadership.

A report from the Global System for Mobile Communications in 2021 estimated that fewer than 40% of women in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa could access mobile internet services. APO research in 2021 on Economic, Gender, and Digital Divides: Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Philippines also indicated that the digital and technology divide remained severe in Asia and that it adversely affected women more than men. Government agencies and the private sector need to provide infrastructure, cultivate skills and competencies, and raise social awareness to foster a conducive environment for women to leverage digital tools, start and run businesses, and provide new momentum for economic growth, innovation, and employment.

Echoing UN SDG 5, Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls, this workshop aims at strengthening APO members' policy formulation for innovation and productivity enhancement which supports a more inclusive society. It will discuss and provide references on government and organizational strategies for women's empowerment and leadership in businesses in the digital economy, thereby reaffirming the APO's support for inclusive growth.

3. Scope, 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:

- Women's empowerment and the role of entrepreneurship
- Digital technologies: Barriers to or enablers of women's empowerment

Day 2:

- Breaking gender barriers and bridging the digital divide
- Case studies from APO member countries

Day 3:

- Building a conducive environment: Access, skills, and capabilities
- Strategies and policies promoting women's entrepreneurship

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 the APO digital multicountry projects circulated with this document.

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Secretary-General