



## PROJECT NOTIFICATION

29 June 2018

1. **Project Code** 18-RP-41-GE-RES-B
2. **Title** Research on Reskilling Workers to Enhance Labor Productivity
3. **Timing and Duration** December 2018–November 2019 (one year)  
Coordination Meeting:  
5–7 December 2018 (three days)  
Jakarta, Indonesia
4. **Venue** APO Secretariat
5. **Number of Participating Countries** Two chief experts and up to five national experts from India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand.

However, other member countries with special interest in this project may nominate national expert candidates upon consultation with the APO Secretariat. The selection of the national experts will be based on the criteria outlined in section 10 below.

6. **Closing Date for Nominations of National Experts** 5 October 2018

### 7. Objectives

- a. To outline models for national skill strategies to realign the workforce with the labor market transition for expanding economic growth and opportunities for all;
- b. To identify job transition opportunities and prerequisites for them; and
- c. To publish a regional outlook on labor reskilling for enhancing productivity and competitiveness in APO member countries.

### 8. Background

Technological changes have always affected the nature of work and continue to do so, although the pace of change appears to be faster. Some have forecast a rather bleak scenario of the future of work, with numerous jobs being replaced by machines. In this scenario, many skills that workers currently hold will become obsolete, but at the same time demand for new skills will emerge. History shows that since the beginning of civilization, new technologies have had similar disruptive effects on the supply of and demand for skills.

Disruptive technologies will always change the nature of work, as shown by past industrial revolutions. While the adjustment of the nature of work was previously mostly associated with improvements permitting efficiency gains as well as the creation of jobs, the current disruptive effects of technologies could negatively affect opportunities to participate in work if factors contributing to labor skill adjustment do not support the evolving demands of the labor market. Technology-driven structural unemployment may complicate efforts by developing economies to improve productivity.

This type of structural unemployment caused by advances in technology is a cause of concern for developing economies endeavoring to improve productivity. Its mitigation requires the concerted effort of all actors in the labor market. A national reskilling strategy ensuring that workers are offered opportunities either to broaden or deepen their existing sets of skills to match those demanded in the emerging labor market is therefore critical.

A national strategy must be dynamic so that it can easily adjust to changing labor and training markets. While governments may play the main coordinating and regulatory role in this, a strategy would be deficient if it did not harness the potential of education and training providers, employers, and unions in the supply of skills. The role of education and training providers is vital in ensuring that all workers have basic literacy, numeracy, and generic or foundation technical skills. Their role also extends to developing soft employment skills, such as the ability to work in teams. As many advanced skills are developed on the job, employers play a critical role in supporting skill development at work. The workplace environment, including human resources management, also has a role in ensuring that workers' skills are used efficiently. It is in the interest of unions to support lifelong learning because of the link between skills and wages.

As workforce skills are important in improving productivity, reskilling is an area of particular importance to the APO. It intends to support policymakers and all relevant parties in member economies with evidence- and research-based models of national labor reskilling strategies. The proposed research will include, among other topics, cross-country comparative studies of labor force reskilling, current challenges in specific countries, and novel policy initiatives adopted by countries to solve long-term structural challenges. The final report will offer possible models of national labor reskilling, highlight the necessary preconditions for adopting some of those models, provide policy insights for job transition opportunities for workers, and make recommendations for better institutional arrangements for ensuring that workers will be appropriately equipped for the future labor market.

## **9. Scope and Methodology**

### **Scope**

- 1) Coordination meeting of experts: A meeting will be held 5–7 December 2018 in Jakarta, Indonesia. The tentative topics of discussion to be covered in the meeting are:
  - a. Research framework, methodology, and other arrangements such as time frame, follow-up activities, etc.;
  - b. Technological advances and current labor market situation;
  - c. Review of national labor training and reskilling strategies;
  - d. Identification and challenges of future skill needs;
  - e. Labor market transition opportunities;

- f. Institutional arrangements for a future-ready labor force;
  - g. Strategic policy directions for cultivating new talent for the future;
  - h. The final report format; and
  - i. Follow-up activities such as further studies, research dissemination, development of policy papers, etc.
- 2) Conducting in-country research: Each national expert will collect and analyze data under the guidance of the chief experts based on the agreed research methodology and framework. The experts will be responsible for analyzing the data and preparing a report for review and acceptance by the chief experts and APO.

## **Methodology**

The research will employ two chief experts who will lead the team of national experts in performing the research.

### ***Chief experts' tasks:***

- a. Developing the guidelines and formulating the overall framework for the research;
- b. Presenting the research framework, methodology, and outline of the report structure and format during the coordination meeting;
- c. Providing support and advice to the national experts in conducting the research including data collection and data analysis;
- d. Reviewing the draft of the national experts' reports to ensure the quality of the work;
- e. Providing guidelines for follow-up activities after research completion; and
- f. Preparing the final report and submitting it to the APO Secretariat by the deadline.

### ***National experts' tasks:***

- a. Data collection at national level following the methodology, framework, and timeline agreed upon during the coordination meeting;
- b. Writing country reports on the analyses and findings based on the data collected;
- c. Submitting the report following the agreed format to the chief experts and APO within the agreed time frame;
- d. Proposing ideas for national follow-up activities; and
- e. Cooperating with the chief experts to ensure the quality and consistency of the final report.

## **10. Qualifications of National Experts**

The national experts are expected to possess the following qualifications:

**Present Position**      Researchers or policy analysts who have sufficient background, working experience in, and knowledge of labor policy/economics, education policy/economics, and labor force reskilling/upskilling/retraining as well as policies related to vocational training and collaboration between the education sector and industry for human capital development.

**Experience**              At least five years of experience in the position described above.

Education	University degree or higher in the areas mentioned above or a related field from a recognized university/institution.
Language	Sufficient English proficiency to communicate with the APO Secretariat and chief experts on matters related to the research and excellent writing skills.
Health	Physically and mentally fit to commit him/herself to a one-year period of research.
Age	Candidates who fit the above profile are typically between 35 and 50 years of age.
Other	A strong commitment to undertaking and completing the research within the time frame is necessary; published articles, books, or substantive reports in the area of labor force reskilling are desirable.

## **11. Qualifications of Chief Experts**

The APO will appoint two chief experts for this project to guide the group of national experts in undertaking the research. The APO-appointed chief experts must possess the following:

- a. Extensive knowledge, research experience, and professional contributions related to labor force reskilling with publications in English on the topic;
- b. Excellent English writing and presentation skills, as the final report will be written in English; and
- c. Strong commitment to undertaking and completing the research project within the given time frame and producing the consolidated analyses of all national reports.

## **12. Financial Arrangements**

### **To be borne by the APO**

- a. Honoraria for the chief and national experts to be paid upon completion of the final research report;
- b. All assignment costs for the chief and national experts including daily subsistence allowances, miscellaneous expenses, and round-trip international airfare by the most direct route between the international airport nearest to the experts' place of work and Jakarta for attending the coordination meeting for the research;
- c. Travel insurance coverage against accident and illness for the entire duration of the coordination meeting and travel; and
- d. Local implementation costs for the meeting package including meeting room rental and required equipment.

### **To be borne by experts or participating countries**

- a. Any expenses incurred by the experts for extra stay at the venue before and/or after the official project period due to early arrival, late departure, or any other reason must be borne by the experts attending the coordination meeting; and

- b. All local implementation costs incurred by the national experts when conducting the research and related activities at the national level.

### **13. Actions by Member Countries**

- a. Member countries included in the research are requested to submit appropriate nominations (preferably more than two for consideration) by 5 October 2018, in line with the provisions in section 10.
- b. Each nomination should be accompanied by the candidate's biodata on the standard APO form in duplicate along with a passport-sized photograph. In addition to the standard APO form, nominees should also prepare a list of publications, research, and/or consulting projects they have undertaken in this field. A nomination lacking any of these documents will not be considered.
- c. The selection of national experts will be based strictly upon their professional qualifications and experience, academic background, and commitment to this research.

### **14. Preparatory Work by National Experts**

The selected national experts will be instructed to prepare a preliminary report. The preliminary findings will be presented at the coordination meeting in Jakarta and will form the basis for further deliberations and development of the research framework. The detailed guidelines for the preliminary reports will be provided later.



Dr. Santhi Kanoktanaporn  
Secretary-General

