

**National Productivity Organization  
Ministry of Industries & Production  
Government of Pakistan**

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10(1)/NPO/APO/2024-25SS  
Islamabad, 13 April 2026

SUBJECT: **RESEARCH ON RAISING INFORMAL-SECTOR PRODUCTIVITY, BY APO SECRETARIAT JAPAN, INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP RESEARCH PROGRAM (ONLINE MEETINGS)**

The National Productivity Organization (NPO), Ministry of Industries & Production, Government of Pakistan in collaboration with Asian Productivity Organization (APO), Japan is inviting research proposal from institutions in Pakistan for the following APO research program:

- i. 24-RC-11-GE-RES-A: **Research on Raising Informal-sector Productivity** (Pakistan based), implementing by APO Secretariat, Japan from 08 July 2024–31 December 2026, (Online meetings through zoom).  
**Note:** The detailed scope of work is provided in the Request for Proposal (RFP), which can be found at APO link. <https://www.apo-tokyo.org/procurement-notice/>. **(Extended Deadline: 19 April 2026)**.

2. APO Member countries will take part in this research program. Member countries comprise of Japan, Republic of Korea, Turkiye, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Thailand, Philippines, Fiji, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, India, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Pakistan.

3.

Following documents are required for processing (soft copies must be sent to email address [sohaibnpopak@gmail.com](mailto:sohaibnpopak@gmail.com)):

- i. Research proposal.
- ii. Cover letter of interest (Annex 1) – format available at above APO link.
- iii. Basic organizational details (Annex 2).
- iv. Profile of institution (maximum 01 page: A4-sized).
- v. Experience in conducting research in similar areas (Annex 3).
- vi. Financial proposal to indicate the cost of services (Annex 4).
- vii. Nomination of focal person from institute along with CV and copy of CNIC.

4. The final selection of proposal/nominee rests with the APO Japan screening committee and is not challengeable.

5. In case of selection “institution” will participate in the meetings online/virtually using their own devices, applications and internet connections, etc. The selected institution will work under the supervision of Chief Expert(s) provided by APO Japan and conduct research according to the provided guidelines and submit a comprehensive research report to APO Japan and NPO Pakistan within the given time frame (developing the research framework, finalizing the methodology, collect data at national level following the methodology and framework provided, confirming the research findings, write country reports /revise report, cooperate with the chief expert to ensure the quality and consistency of the final report).

6. Honoraria for the participating institution to be paid upon completion/approval of the final report by APO Secretariat, Japan.


7. Selected institute will bear all kind of local implementation costs to complete the research work.

8. Incomplete and late nominations received after the above-mentioned deadline/s will not be processed.

9. Interested institutions submit their research proposals (also nominate focal person) fulfilling the prescribed criteria in respective APO Project Notification.

10. Kindly send nominations along with documents to National Productivity Organization (NPO), APO Liaison Department, 11th Floor, Shaheed-e-Millat Secretariat, Nazim-ud-Din Road, F-6/1, and Islamabad, Pakistan.

11. For any inquiry and further information please contact undersigned on 051-9244254-5, 0332-5490277.

  
(M. Sohaib)  
APO Liaison Department



## PROJECT NOTIFICATION

Reference No.: 811

<b>Date of Issue</b>	28 March 2026
<b>Project Code</b>	24-RC-11-GE-RES-A
<b>Title</b>	Research on Raising Informal-sector Productivity
<b>Timing</b>	8 July 2024–31 December 2026
<b>Hosting Country(ies)</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Venue City(ies)</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Modality</b>	Online
<b>Implementing Organization(s)</b>	APO Secretariat
<b>Participating Country(ies)</b>	All member countries
<b>Overseas Participants</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Local Participants</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Closing Date</b>	<del>20 April 2026</del> <b>Extended closing date: 19 April 2026</b>
<b>Remarks</b>	This PN supersedes the version issued on 2 July 2024 (Reference No. 431) to extend the project timing and closing date. This is to ensure the successful implementation of the research project. The closing date is the deadline for submission of proposals by research institutions. Please refer to the implementation procedures for information.

<b>Objectives</b>	Study the effects of the informal sector on productivity in APO member economies; identify trends in and determinants of informal-sector productivity and impacts on national economies; and examine policy interventions to manage the informal sector to improve productivity growth and achieve better socioeconomic outcomes.
<b>Rationale</b>	The informal sector is characterized by low productivity while posing challenges for inclusive growth. It employs a vast share of the labor force in APO members. Multicountry analysis allows hypotheses about informal-sector effects on economies to be tested, enabling identification of factors, determinants, and policy implications.
<b>Background</b>	<p>Informal-sector employment shares range from over 80% in some developing APO members, including numerous women, to 26% in the ROK (ILO data). Informal-sector enterprises suffer from low economies of scale and lack of access to finance, undermining their productivity. Countries with larger informal sectors fare less well in inclusive development with lower productivity, fiscal resources, financial deepening, capital accumulation, institutional quality, empowerment of women, and social security coverage. However, informal sectors encourage entrepreneurship and digital technology use, providing secondary jobs in times of high inflation.</p> <p>While the APO publication “Issues and Challenges on the Productivity Performance of the Informal Sector in Selected APO Members” (2023) provides descriptive case studies of informal sectors in developing members, the objective of this research is integrated multicountry analysis to test, measure, and provide insights on inclusive growth.</p>
<b>Topics</b>	Measuring informal-sector productivity in APO members and reference economies; Multicountry analysis of informal-sector productivity; Characteristics of informality; Determinants of informality; Effects of informality on inclusive development; and Policy recommendations.
<b>Outcome</b>	A report on the impact of the informal sector on productivity in APO members and reference economies with integrated multicountry data analysis using econometric approaches; insights into causes, effects, and characteristics of informal sectors in APO members; and policy recommendations.
<b>Qualifications</b>	Research institutions specialized in informal-sector issues, productivity measurements of national economies and sectoral approaches, inclusive economic growth, and multicountry studies on current socioeconomic trends in the Asia-Pacific region, with a track record of publications in English.

Please refer to the implementation procedures circulated with this document for further details.



Dr. Indra Pradana Singawinata  
Secretary-General

## **IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES FOR APO RESEARCH PROJECT ON RAISING INFORMAL- SECTOR PRODUCTIVITY (DIGITAL MULTICOUNTRY)**

### **1. Methodology**

- a. Submission of proposals: Interested research institutions submit their research proposals to the APO Secretariat by the deadline.
- b. Multistakeholder consultative meeting: To finalize the plan for the research, a meeting will be held virtually, tentatively in May 2026. The indicative agenda items and tentative timeline are:
  - Research overview: May 2026
  - Proposals for the study by research institution: May 2026
  - Discussion on implementation of the study: June 2026
  - Finalization of the research plan and initiation of research: June 2026
  - Completion of research: October 2026
- c. Joint study implementation: The research team will collect, process, and analyze data for the report. The final report will be submitted to the APO Secretariat by the end of November 2026.

### **2. Tasks of Selected Research Institution**

- a. Assisting and working with the APO Secretariat in developing the research framework.
- b. Finalizing the methodology and outline of the report structure with the APO Secretariat.
- c. Collecting data for the research (including communicating with the original data owners) and analyzing them based on the agreed framework and methodology.
- d. Preparing the final report and submitting it to the APO Secretariat by the deadline.
- e. Supporting the APO Secretariat during the process of confirming the research findings with APO member economies.
- f. Providing support for dissemination of the research findings after report completion.

### **3. Qualifications of Research Institution**

The APO Secretariat will select an appropriate research institution with the following qualifications:

- a. Extensive, specialized knowledge of productivity concepts, socioeconomic development, issues relating to informal sectors of countries at various stages of development, inclusive economic growth, productivity measurement of economies and sectoral approaches, and multicountry studies on current socioeconomic trends in the Asia-Pacific, with a track record of publications in English.
- b. Excellent report preparation skills.
- c. Strong commitment to undertaking and completing the research project within the given time frame.

#### **Notes:**

The detailed scope of work is provided in the Request for Proposal (RFP) to be available at the following link. <https://www.apo-tokyo.org/procurement-notice/>.

The selection of the participating research institution will be made by the APO Secretariat based on its selection criteria. The APO Secretariat will in no case be responsible or liable for any costs involved in proposal submission, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the selection process.

#### **4. Financial Arrangements**

##### **To be met by the APO**

Honorarium for the research institution to be paid upon completion and acceptance by the APO of the final report.

##### **To be met by research institution**

All implementation costs incurred by the research institution when conducting the study.

#### **5. Actions by the APO Secretariat**

Coordinate all arrangements related to project activities with the research institution.