PROJECT NOTIFICATION

Reference No.: 588

Date of Issue	17 April 2025
Project Code	25-RC-15-GE-RES-A
Title	Need Analysis of APO Members
Timing	18 April 2025–31 December 2025
Hosting Country(ies)	Not Applicable
Venue City(ies)	Not Applicable
Modality	Hybrid
Implementing Organization(s)	APO Secretariat
Participating Country(ies)	All Member Countries
Overseas Participants	Not Applicable
Local Participants	Not Applicable
Closing Date	~~16 May 2025~~ NPO Pakistan closing date: 12 May 2025
Remarks	The closing date is for the submission of proposals by research institutions and nominations of national experts from member economies. Please refer to the implementation procedures for information. The research will be conducted in three phases: Phase 1: Preparation by selected research institutions. Phase 2: Implementation of the research by national experts. Phase 3: Finalization of the research by the research institutions.

Objectives	Assess the AI-related needs and challenges of APO members by examining AI readiness, technology infrastructure, and institutional support; analyze gaps between current and desired AI capabilities and identify tools, techniques, and capacity-building needs for AI-driven productivity; and provide strategic recommendations for developing AI-related programs by the APO for member economies.
Rationale	AI has the potential to significantly enhance productivity and economic growth among APO members. However, its adoption is uneven due to varying levels of infrastructure, workforce skills, and policy support. Understanding these disparities will help develop targeted interventions aligned with the specific contexts and priorities of APO members.
Background	Rapid advances in AI are reshaping industries and transforming productivity dynamics worldwide. Many APO members have recognized the potential of AI and introduced national strategies and initiatives to support its adoption. However, the level of AI integration varies widely across the region due to differences in technological infrastructure, workforce skills, and institutional frameworks. While some economies are making significant investments in AI-driven innovation, others face challenges in digital transformation, policy implementation, and skill development. These differences underscore the need for a systematic assessment to understand the specific AI-related needs of APO members and to inform approaches that strengthen AI capabilities and align with national and regional priorities.
Topics	AI adoption and readiness of APO members; Key barriers to AI adoption, including gaps in infrastructure, workforce skills, and institutional support; Disparities between current and desired AI capabilities for productivity improvement; Specific AI needs and opportunities for capacity building to enhance productivity; and Strategic approaches to leverage AI for productivity.
Outcome	A report on emerging AI-related needs and actions recommended based on evidence from the assessment of AI readiness, capability gaps, policy proposals to strengthen AI adoption, and capacity-building needs of APO members.
Qualifications	Research institutions with specialized knowledge in AI adoption, digital transformation, and productivity enhancement and national experts with strong backgrounds in AI policy, workforce development, and digital infrastructure as well as knowledge of APO programs and activities for member economies.

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
NEED ANALYSIS OF APO MEMBERS
(HYBRID MULTICOUNTRY)**

1. Methodology

a. Submission of research proposals: The APO Secretariat will identify partner research institutions, invite research proposals, and form a research team. Interested research institutions should submit their 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 June–July 2025. The indicative agenda items are:

- Research overview
- Proposals for the study by research institutions
- Discussion on implementation of the study
- Finalization of the research plan.

c. Joint study implementation: The research team will collect, process, and analyze data for the report. The final report with findings will be submitted to the APO Secretariat by the end of December 2025.

d. Dissemination activities of final research output in APO members: To increase the visibility of the final research output, create more public engagement, and impact public policymaking, effective dissemination activities in participating APO members will be carried out either in the face-to-face or online modality, when necessary, as part of project implementation.

2. Tasks of the Selected Research Institution(s)

a. Conduct a comprehensive review of documents on AI adoption and policies in APO member economies to lead the research for AI need assessment.

b. Develop the overall AI need assessment guidelines and frameworks for use in the national-level assessment.

c. Provide technical support and clear instructions to national experts in conducting AI need assessments, including local data collection activities, surveys, and report writing.

d. Provide guidance on country-specific activities of national experts such as consultation meetings or focus group discussions (online) with specific APO members to gather data and information, when necessary, arranged by and in collaboration with national experts.

e. Provide overall coordination and guidance to national experts throughout the research project.

f. Prepare and submit an interim report and a final report to the APO Secretariat within the agreed time frame.

g. Assist the APO Secretariat in validating research findings with APO member economies.

h. Provide support in the dissemination of the research findings to APO members, either in the face-to-face or online mode, upon completion of the report.

3. Qualifications of Research Institution(s)

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

a. Extensive, specialized knowledge in AI adoption, digital transformation, and productivity enhancement as demonstrated through publications and international research.

b. Able to collect and analyze AI adoption data across multiple APO member economies, with comparative assessments of global best practices in AI-driven productivity strategies.

c. Experience in providing policy advisory services to governments and organizations on AI integration

and digital transformation strategies for productivity enhancement.

d. Excellent English writing skills.

e. Strong commitment to undertaking and completing the research project within the given time frame.

4. Tasks of National Experts

a. Collect information on national AI adoption and policies by the designated deadline, following the instructions and guidelines provided by the assigned research institution leading this study.

b. Identify tentative productivity-related targets in consultation with identified key national stakeholders to align AI adoption with national priorities.

c. Gather relevant policy documents, datasets, and other necessary information to assess the AI needs of APO members, with a focus on priority sectors. This may include conducting surveys and consultations with key stakeholders.

d. Analyze survey responses and other collected data, summarizing key findings in accordance with the AI need assessment framework.

e. Report findings to the research institution and collaborate to validate and refine key outcomes.

f. Prepare a report on the AI needs and priorities of the NPO and country, following the guidelines and instructions provided by the research institution. The length of the report should be 5,000–8,000 words, excluding references.

g. Provide additional information as requested by the research institution to support the validation of AI need assessment analyses.

5. Qualifications of National Experts

a. Master's degree or PhD in economics, public policy, technology policy, AI, digital transformation, or related fields.
b. Proficiency in qualitative and quantitative research methods, data analysis, and literature review.
c. Knowledge of AI adoption, digital infrastructure, and institutional frameworks in their countries.
d. Familiarity with APO and NPO programs and activities and socioeconomic contexts of member economies.

6. Actions by Participating APO Members

a. Participating members are requested to nominate at least two candidate national experts before the deadline for consideration on the selection of a national expert.
b. Candidates should submit an abstract of their research of between 250 and 1,000 words related to the subject.
c. Nominations should be registered and endorsed by NPOs in the designated project management system before the closing date for nominations.
d. Promote the research project with relevant local institutions/think tanks interested in undertaking the study, as disseminated in the Request for Proposal section on the APO website.
e. Make the necessary arrangements and assist in undertaking local dissemination activities, either in the face-to-face or online modality, of the final research output within the country, including inviting local stakeholders as participants in the program

7. Financial Arrangements

To be met by the APO
a. Honorarium for the research institution(s) and national experts to be paid upon completion and acceptance by the APO of the final report.
b. Costs relating to the face-to-face or online dissemination activities of the final research output which include but are not limited to the expenses of the expert(s) and APO Secretariat staff, as well as a portion of the local implementation costs such as logistics and meeting room package in APO members.

To be met by experts or participating APO members

a. All local implementation costs incurred by national experts when collecting data at the national level.

b. Other costs of the research output dissemination activities, either in the face-to-face or online modality, that are not covered by the APO if undertaking local implementation.

10(1)/NPO/APO/2025-08SS
Islamabad, 29 April 2025

SUBJECT: **NEED ANALYSIS OF APO MEMBERS, 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 proposal for research program along with nomination of National Expert from Pakistan for the following APO research program:

    i.   25-RC-15-GE-RES-A: Need Analysis of APO Members (Pakistan based), implementing by APO Secretariat, Japan from April 2025–December 2025, (Online meetings through zoom). **(NPO Deadline: 12 May 2025).**
         Note: APO Japan has requested that all applicants (for National Expert nomination) to visit below link and fill their Biodata Form through Online Portal URL: https://apo.my.site.com/s/programs.

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. To download the **Project Notification, Nomination Letter sample** and **Instruction Circular** Please visit http://npo.gov.pk/apo/.

Following documents are required for processing (soft copies must be sent to email address: sohaib@npo.gov.pk and rashid@npo.gov.pk:
    i.   Research proposal (follow guide lines at https://www.apo-tokyo.org/procurement-notice/).
    ii.   Cover letter of interest and nomination letter for National Expert (focal person) from institution.
    iii. Basic organizational details.
    iv. Profile of institution (maximum 01 page: A4-sized).
    v.   Experience in conducting research in similar areas.
    vi. For Expert nomination: please fill Bio-Data Form online through APO Japan Portal URL: **https://apo.my.site.com/s/programs**, and click "apply as participant" (previous APO Bio-data form in MS Excel format is not acceptable as per new APO Japan policy).
    vii. National Expert CV, copy of CNIC and copy of domicile certificate.

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

5. In case of selection "institution/Expert" 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). Multistakeholder consultative meeting: To finalize the plan for the research, a meeting will be held virtually, tentatively in June–July 2025 with selected research institution

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

7. All implementation costs incurred while conducting the research/study is to be met by selected institute it-self.

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 National Expert) 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

Copy to:
1.   Federal Secretary, Ministry of Industries & Production, Islamabad.
2.   The Secretaries to the Federal Ministries of Government of Pakistan, with the request to circulate to all the divisions/attached departments/Government owned companies/Organizations & Companies under their respective control.
3.   The Chief Secretary, Government of Punjab.
4.   The Chief Secretary, Government of Sindh.
5.   The Chief Secretary, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
6.   The Chief Secretary, Government of Balochistan.
7.   The Chief Secretary, Government of Gilgit Baltistan.
8.   The Chief Secretary, Government of AJK.
9.   Chairman, Higher Education Commission, Islamabad.
10. Section Officer (NPO), Ministry of Industries and Production, Islamabad.
11. The Chief Executive Officers/Managing Directors/Director Generals/ Directors of Organizations under the Administrative control of Ministry of Industries and Production.
12. President, Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI), Karachi.
13. Presidents/ Chairman(s) of recognized Chambers and Associations, with the request to circulate to relevant private sector organizations.