



ASIAN PRODUCTIVITY ORGANIZATION

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

7 April 2017

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| 1. Project Code | 17-AG-23-GE-DLN-A-04 |
| 2. Project Title | Self-learning e-Course on Rural Entrepreneurship Development |
| 3. Reference | Project Notification 17-AG-23-GE-DLN-A dated 22 March 2017 |
| 4. Timing and Duration | 11 September 2017–10 February 2018 (five months) |
| 5. Implementing Organizations | APO Secretariat and National Productivity Organizations (NPOs) |
| 6. Number of Participants | Minimum of 400 participants |
| 7. Self-registration | Self-registration opens from 10:00 AM Japan Standard Time on 11 September 2017 on the APO's e-learning web portal: http://epo-tokyo.org |

Note: Participants can register directly from this portal on the APO website. Those who are already registered can access the course by using the assigned username and password. If you have forgotten your username and password, please refer to the FAQs on the home page of the portal.

8. Objectives

The course is designed to build the capabilities of rural entrepreneurs, SME operators, and rural development planners, trainers, and consultants who are engaged in business advisory services and/or are interested in initiating businesses in rural areas. At the end of the course, the enrollees will be familiar with innovative entrepreneurial thinking and have an understanding of various entrepreneurial strategies in line with sustainable rural development. The specific objectives are for participants to:

- a. Understand the concept and special features of entrepreneurship to provide livelihoods for rural populations and foster rural development;

- b. Enhance the ability to design and manage rural enterprises using different techniques, tools, and models for strategic business development;
- c. Recognize global trends, the changing environment consistent with agriculture 2030, and emerging topics to identify future challenges and opportunities; and
- d. Learn about the role of government and institutional setups in developing entrepreneurial mindsets and conducive environments for rural entrepreneurship development.

9. Background

Entrepreneurship is a driving force for rural development. It involves strategic interventions to accelerate and revitalize declining rural economies by expanding business outreach to farm/nonfarm areas. People with entrepreneurial mindsets recognize unexploited market opportunities by thinking intuitively and reading future trends in given circumstances. In a rural context, entrepreneurship means building something meaningful by utilizing local resources not practically perceived or valued previously. In this way, the value of natural, capital, and human resources in rural communities can be recreated in a viable way to take the fullest advantage of them.

The interplay between rural development and entrepreneurship overcomes the constraints of primary industry, mainly agriculture, which is the principal source of income in rural areas. Rural populations are highly dependent on agricultural production, although its performance is volatile due to natural calamities such as droughts, flooding, insect pests, and others. Similarly, achieving drastic yield increases in agriculture is often not controllable.

In this regard, rural entrepreneurship can offer innovative, cost-effective sources of living by crossing the boundaries among primary, secondary, and tertiary industries. It enables local people to appreciate the value of resources in the area and utilize them as inputs for creating value-added products and services. Thus entrepreneurship diversifies sources of livelihood and increases per capita income. Furthermore, it creates jobs for the under/unemployed labor force and improves the autonomy and independence of rural households. In reality, however, nurturing successful entrepreneurs has often faced challenges such as a lack of financial support and social recognition, and rural people rarely start businesses or put their business ideas into practice. Therefore the social infrastructure that underpins entrepreneurs' entry into markets and makes them resilient against failure needs to be discussed and developed. The entrepreneurial mindset is based on the idea of taking risks, and entrepreneurs should be able to enter and exit markets freely even after experiencing failure.

10. Scope and Methodology

Scope

The tentative course structure is as follows:

Module 1: Introduction to entrepreneurship development

Concept of entrepreneurship; features of rural entrepreneurship; key roles of entrepreneurs in fostering rural development; and salient challenges and opportunities in rural entrepreneurship development.

Module 2: Developing entrepreneurial ideas into actionable plans

How to read trends and identify creative options; things to consider before starting a business; and analytic tools, techniques, and models to identify new trends and potential business areas.

Quiz 1 (for self-assessment based on questions from Modules 1 and 2)

Module 3: Project implementation by rural enterprises

Issues in project implementation; skills needed for successful project implementation; project cycle management; and how to achieve self-reliance for financial, organizational, and environmental sustainability.

Module 4: Agribusiness and rural enterprise promotion and marketing

Concepts and basic understanding of rural enterprise promotion and marketing; and useful strategies for creating marketing and sales channels.

Quiz 2 (for self-assessment based on questions from Modules 3 and 4)

Module 5: Agricultural start-ups for rural entrepreneurs

Understanding of start-ups; and emerging areas for agricultural start-ups around the world.

Module 6: Conducive environment for incubating young enterprises

Features of conducive environments for startups; the role of government in creating conducive environments to nurture young enterprises; and policy and institutional settings for social recognition and promotion of young entrepreneurs.

Quiz 3 (for self-assessment based on questions from Modules 5 and 6)

Module 7: Role of business development service providers (BDSPs)

Concept of BDSPs; the role of BDSPs in establishing market linkages; and approaches to build the capacities and develop the competitiveness of BDSPs.

Module 8: Financial modeling for sustainable rural enterprises

Various financing options available such as development finance institutions and microfinance institutions; and innovative cluster-based financing for communities.

Module 9: Role of entrepreneurs in shared interests and philanthropic development

Case studies of entrepreneurial sharing for social benefit; and business goodwill for social responsibility.

Quiz 4 (for self-assessment based on questions from Modules 7, 8, and 9)

Module 10: Final examination

Methodology

Self-learning e-modules, additional study materials for participants, intermittent quizzes for self-assessment, assignments, and a final examination to qualify for the APO e-certificate.

11. Qualifications of Candidates

The target participants are rural entrepreneurs, CEOs and managers of SMEs; rural development planners, trainers, and consultants engaged in business advisory services and/or interested in initiating businesses in rural areas; and government officers, representatives of NGOs, academics, extension officers, and other personnel engaged in planning, training, and/or promoting rural businesses and startups and providing consultancy services on profit-generating economic activities in rural communities.

12. Eligibility for e-Certificate

A minimum score of 70% on the final examination is required to qualify for the APO e-certificate.

Note: Participants from nonmember countries are welcome to take the course for self-development, although APO e-certificates will not be provided.



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Secretary-General