Building Natural Disaster Response Capacity – Sound Workforce Strategies for Recovery and Reconstruction

Purpose: Information
Submitted by: Australia
Building Natural Disaster Response Capacity – Sound Workforce Strategies for Recovery and Reconstruction (HRD01/2012A)

Australian delegation
APEC Labour and Social Protection Network
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Objectives of the project

• To share experiences and enhance understanding of jobs and training strategies followed in response to recent natural disasters.

• To improve emergency preparedness by providing a menu of practical workforce strategies that have been found to work well following previous natural disasters in the Asia-Pacific region.

Methodology

• Case studies were prepared by three member economies – Australia, Japan and New Zealand.

• New Zealand consultants (Resilient Organisations research group) prepared a comparative report, drawing also on their own expertise and links with the EPWG.

• Draft report circulated to HRDWG and EPWG in December, and finalised for publication.
Key findings – Impacts of disasters

• The impacts of natural disasters differs from other shocks and disturbances to a local economy and workforce.

• Case study economies responded to disasters in different ways.
  – Use of existing programmes; and
  – Discretionary labour market policy measures

Key findings – multifaceted approach to post-disaster labour market response

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<th>Immediate &amp; short-term assistance</th>
<th>• Stabilise economic conditions &amp; minimise labour market disruptions</th>
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<td>Medium-term assistance</td>
<td>• Restore confidence &amp; community spirit, retain employment &amp; promote economic opportunities</td>
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<td>Longer-term expansion &amp; development</td>
<td>• Development of a skilled workforce for rebuild &amp; regional development</td>
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Menu of practical workforce strategies

• **Social protection**
  – Income support; livelihood and housing support; public works

• **Employment retention and creation**
  – Business assistance; sector-based assistance; macrostimulus policies

• **Active Labour Market Programmes**
  – Training and education; Public Employment Services; Hiring subsidies

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**Sound workforce strategies: principles**

1. Target & tailor measures with flexibility
2. Institutional & organisational innovation
3. A diversity of multi-agency collaboration
4. A focus on sustainable employment outcome
5. Capacity-based preparedness & response
6. Local input & place-based solutions
7. Robust labour market intelligence
Conclusion

- Natural disasters are costly, increasing in number, and are concentrated in the Asia-Pacific region.

- This project shares experiences on the workforce dimension of natural disasters to improve workforce strategies and preparedness.

- It offers a set of policy principles which can be used by economies to inform their own strategies and improve emergency preparedness.

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