

**HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP
TERMS OF REFERENCE ADDENDUM ON DISABILITY ISSUES**

Article 1: BACKGROUND

The economic empowerment of persons with disabilities is an important issue for APEC:

- At the High-level Meeting on “Equal Access, Inclusive Development” held in Beijing in November 2014, during the APEC Economic Leaders’ Week, a Joint Initiative on Equal Access and Inclusive Development for Persons with Disabilities was introduced which established a “*Group of Friends on Disability Issues*” (GOFD), with 6 founding members, namely, Australia, China, Hong Kong, China, Mexico, the Philippines and the United States, and joined by Russia and Chile afterwards. The GOFD Terms of Reference stated: The initial mandate of the GOFD will be until the end of 2018. In view of the TOR and the tasks assigned by the APEC GOFD, GOFD may request renewal of its mandate, subject to approval by the SCE. If not renewed, the APEC GOFD will sunset at the end of 2018.
- At the 2nd APEC Senior Officials’ Meeting (SOM2) and Related Meetings held in Boracay Island, Aklan, the Republic of the Philippines in May 2015, the “*Concept Paper on Promoting Disability-inclusive Development in the Asia-Pacific Region*”, submitted by China and co-sponsored by Australia, Malaysia, Peru, and the United States, was discussed and adopted by consensus at the SOM Steering Committee on Economic and Technical Cooperation (SCE) and by Senior Officials (2015/SOM2/017).
- In 2018, in light of the GOFD’s concluding mandate, and to ensure the mainstreaming of disabilities issues across APEC, at the 3rd SCE3 Meeting in 2018 the United States proposed (2018/SCE3/004) that the work of GOFD, including its current projects and its work to promote disability-inclusive development, be integrated into APEC’s Human Resources Development Working Group (HRDWG), through the establishment of a coordinating mechanism on disability issues within the HRDWG.
- This proposal was discussed and agreed intersessionally by GOFD and HRDWG on 20 November 2018 and 23 December 2018 respectively. In terms of how to implement the coordinating mechanism, after careful consideration HRDWG members indicated support for the establishment of: (i) a standing agenda item on disability issues; and (ii) a coordinating role to lead disability work within HRDWG, and coordinate disability affairs with other APEC fora.

This Addendum gives effect to the agreement to establish an HRDWG coordinating mechanism on disability issues, and sets out how it will work in practice. Unless the context otherwise requires, all provisions of the HRDWG TOR apply *mutatis mutandis*. All current GOFD projects, will become HRDWG projects.

Article 2: Purpose of the coordinating mechanism:

The purpose of the HRDWG’s coordinating mechanism on disability issues is to provide a streamlined and effective mechanism to advance the participation of persons with disabilities in the economy, in particular in relation to access to education, skills development and labour market opportunities, and

to achieve disability-inclusive development through coordination with all member economies and across sectors.

HRDWG will be responsible for including disability issues into its work plan and fora reporting, in order to outline its short and long-term goals, note key challenges, identify stakeholders and track projects.¹

Article 3: Standing agenda item

The coordinating mechanism will be primarily facilitated through a permanent standing agenda item on disability issues to be included at every HRDWG meeting. The aim of this standing agenda item is to:

- Enable discussion on completed, active and potential future APEC projects relating to disability issues and relevant cross-fora collaboration;
- Engage HRDWG members in policy discussions on key issues related to the economic empowerment of persons with disabilities;
- Encourage and inspire HRDWG members to include disability-inclusive issues in their work and projects.
- Provide an opportunity for HRDWG members to hear directly from persons with disabilities on their experiences in relation to barriers to economic empowerment.

The three HRDWG Networks are also encouraged to incorporate disability issues into their meeting agendas, as appropriate and relevant. In doing so, Networks should avoid any duplication of discussions at the HRDWG meeting.

Article 4: Advisor to the HRDWG Lead Shepherd on Disability Issues

In addition to the standing agenda item, there will be an Advisor to the HRDWG Lead Shepherd on Disability Issues tasked with facilitating the operation of the coordinating mechanism.

Specific tasks:

- Guide the HRDWG Lead Shepherd on integrating disability issues into HRDWG work streams;
- Prepare for and lead discussions during the HRDWG standing disability agenda item, including inviting and coordinating with speakers and presenters;
- Engage in disability related APEC projects and initiatives;
- Make recommendations to the HRDWG Lead Shepherd on how to encourage activity with and by other APEC groups and, where approved, implement those recommendations;
- Provide input into the annual HRDWG workplan and fora report related to disability inclusive workstream;
- Join meetings of the Lead Shepherd's Advisory Committee (LSAC).

Article 5: Interim arrangement for Advisor to the HRDWG Lead Shepherd on Disability Issues for 2019 - 2021

In order to ensure that HRDWG is able to implement the coordinating arrangement in time for the 2019 meeting of HRDWG at SOM2, the former GOFD Chair will serve as the Advisor to the HRDWG Lead Shepherd on Disability Issues for the period of 2019 to 2021.

¹ There will be no separate workplan on disability issues.

Article 6: Review of arrangements

Current and future arrangements will be reviewed in 2021, and the result of the review will be reported to HRDWG at its meeting in 2021, in accordance with the overall review of HRDWG as set out in Article 8 of the HRDWG Terms of Reference.² This mechanism will sunset at the end of 2021 unless there is consensus for it to continue.

² Which provides: “The HRDWG has a term of four years starting from 2018. At the expiration of this and any subsequent term, the mandate of the HRDWG and its TOR shall be reviewed, and a recommendation on renewal shall be put to Senior Officials for approval.”