



**Asia-Pacific  
Economic Cooperation**

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**2018/SOM1/HRDWG/002**

Agenda Item: 4

## **Revision of HRDWG Terms of Reference**

Purpose: Consideration

Submitted by: HRDWG Lead Shepherd



**43<sup>rd</sup> Human Resources Development  
Working Group Meeting  
Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea  
27 February – 1 March 2018**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE  
HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP**

**ARTICLE I: BACKGROUND**

The Human Resources Development Working Group (HRDWG) was established in 1990 and conducts work programs on developing human resources, touching on issues ranging from education to labor to capacity building. In addition, the HRDWG has responsibilities to help build cultural awareness and promote gender equality.

The APEC Human Resources Development Working Group (HRDWG) derives its mandate from taskings by APEC Leaders and Ministers, as well as HRD and Education Ministers. Its key documents are:

- Declaration: A Human Resources Development Framework for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, Jakarta, 1994, that set out objectives, principles, and priorities for HRD and APEC.
- Osaka Action Agenda and Action Programme for Human Resources Development, 1995 that stated “human resources development in APEC is to promote the well-being of all people in the region through economic growth and development.”
- Declaration on an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Framework for Strengthening Economic Cooperation and Development, Manila, 1996 (also known as the ECOTECH Statement), identifies developing human capital as one of the six areas of economic and technical cooperation (ECOTECH) in APEC.
- HRDWG Statement of Medium Term Strategic Priorities adopted in 1997 identifies eight medium term strategic priorities in the areas of basic education, labor market, training for executives and SMEs, mobility, labor force and workplace, and HRD for trade and investment liberalization and facilitation.
- 2006 APEC Senior Officials' Report on Economic and Technical Cooperation reaffirmed the pivotal role of human resources development for sustainable development and prosperity in the APEC region and encouraged the HRDWG to consider building on work already underway to describe research-based promising practices.
- 2012 APEC Education Ministerial Meeting Joint Statement, which directed all future HRDWG/EDNET work be guided by the 21<sup>st</sup> century realities of globalization, innovation, and cooperation to ensure sustainable, innovative, and inclusive growth, as part of the APEC Leaders' Growth Strategy.
- 2016 APEC Education Ministerial Meeting Joint Statement, which acknowledges the importance of “An Inclusive and Quality Education” by ensuring access to education and developing competencies, strengthening innovation, and advancing employability for all learners in a globalized economy.
- 2012 and 2013 APEC Leaders' Declarations where People-to-People Connectivity and the Promotion of Cross-Border Education were adopted as priority working areas of HRDWG.
- 2015, 2016, and 2017 APEC Leaders' Declarations, **including the APEC Framework on Human Resources Development in the Digital Age which is annexed to the 2017 APEC Leaders' Declaration**, which acknowledge Human Capital Development and Human Development as priority working areas of HRDWG.
- 2014 APEC Leaders' Declaration commends the constructive role of the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) in strengthening public-private partnership and promoting APEC cooperation in various fields.

- 2014 APEC Human Resources Development Ministerial Meeting Joint Statement, which emphasizes “Quality Employment and Strengthening People-to-People Connectivity through Human Resources Development”.
- Statements from the High Level Policy Dialogues (HLPD) on Human Capacity Building (2015), Science and Technology in Higher Education (2015), and Human Resources Development in the Digital Age (2017).

This ToR implements these mandates through reforms that seek to improve the effectiveness of HRDWG by:

- Clarifying and streamlining HRDWG mission and objectives.
- Strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of Network operations and projects.
- Conducting regular reviews of HRDWG operations and outcomes to assess performance and results against HRDWG mission and objectives and propose improvements.

## **ARTICLE II: HRDWG Mission**

The mission of the HRDWG is:

“Sharing knowledge, experience, and skills to strengthen human resource development and promote sustainable economic growth.”

## **ARTICLE III: HRDWG OBJECTIVES**

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century economy offers unprecedented economic opportunities for students, workers, managers, and academics to maximize the benefits of globalization and ICT through increased worker productivity and more efficient approaches to work. HRDWG projects address these opportunities through a balanced set of short- and medium-term objectives that offer immediate improvements and build cumulative benefits through the following three objectives:

**1. Develop 21<sup>st</sup> Century Knowledge and Skills for All.** This objective responds to the knowledge and skill needs for workers and citizens to succeed in the knowledge-based economies that characterize the APEC region. Experts from research and the corporate sector urge focusing education and training systems to develop a combination of 21<sup>st</sup> Century academic and workplace skills.<sup>1</sup> Thus, specific aims for the HRDWG in undertaking this objective are to:

- Teach 21<sup>st</sup> Century Academic Content with an emphasis on literacy, math/science; foreign language; cultural and global awareness; and economic, international trade, business and entrepreneurial literacy.
- Build 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills: critical and innovative thinking, inter-personal skills, intra-personal skills, global citizenship, and media and information literacy
- Promote skills development and training programs to cultivate 21<sup>st</sup> Century talent and provide quality employment in the job market.
- Expand access to and effective use of information and communication technology to narrow down the digital divide.
- Develop and employ evidence-based interventions to effectively address 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills.

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<sup>1</sup>See for example Port Moresby High Level Policy Dialogue on Human Capacity Building May 05-06, 2015 ([http://www.apec.org/Press/News-Releases/2015/0507\\_HCBJS.aspx](http://www.apec.org/Press/News-Releases/2015/0507_HCBJS.aspx)) and the Partnership for 21st Century Skills representing a number of leading international businesses and private sector nonprofit organization (<http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/index.php>).

**2. Integrate HRD into the Global Economy.** This objective establishes the importance of sharing knowledge and skills across the APEC region. It includes education for enterprise (including business, trade, and entrepreneurial know-how); the international education of students attending institutions in different APEC economies, and the many forms of international online and distance learning. This objective will be a way to accomplish the APEC goal of shared prosperity harmonized with economic and non-economic value.

Specific aims in undertaking this objective are to:

- Encourage the development of entrepreneurial skills in international trade participation.
- Develop common understandings about qualifications, skills, and professional recognition in order to facilitate the mobility of students, workers, managers, and academics to enable them to be more competitive in the global skilled labor market.
- Reduce barriers to the cross-border exchange of education and training.
- Cooperate on the delivery of quality APEC-wide education and training.
- Uphold and strengthen human values to balance the economic and non-economic goals of education and training including the fostering of personal development, civic education, and cultural identity within the APEC region.
- Develop new and needed skillsets at present and future workplace in alignment to industry needs by establishing APEC skills development capacity building programs.

**3. Address the Social Dimension of Globalization.** This objective recognizes that our interdependent world requires appropriate governmental supports to enable and support economies that address the social dimension of globalization. Aims of this objective include: strengthening economies to prevent long-term employment disruptions; using evidence to guide policy development; and, addressing human and environmental needs associated with economic development. Specific aims for the HRDWG in undertaking this objective are to:

- Foster economic development to enhance growth and employment creation and alleviate poverty
- Strengthen social safety nets
- Work toward environmentally sound and sustainable economic growth

#### **ARTICLE IV: NETWORK OBJECTIVES**

The HRDWG conducts its work program both through the working group directly and through its three networks: the Capacity Building Network (CBN); the Education Network (EDNET); and the Labor and Social Protection Network (LSPN). In addition, the HRDWG and its networks recognize that collaboration among government, academia, and the private sector can improve the effectiveness of its work. The goals and objectives of the networks are:

**CBN** — To promote human capacity building on skills development, human resource management and vocational training through cross-cutting collaboration to facilitate 21st Century talents, enhance employability and provide quality employment by means of:

- Strengthening HRM and HRD capacity building for SMEs and entrepreneurs to create job opportunity and facilitate successful trade and investment in APEC.
- Promoting skill development and network training provider in APEC region to bridge school to work and enhance labor productivity.
- Developing competency standardization and training quality to promote skills mobility in APEC.
- Narrowing talent gap by Industry-VET-Academia cooperation.

**EDNET**— To foster strong and vibrant learning systems across APEC member economies, promote education for all, and strengthen the role of education in promoting social, individual, economic and sustainable development through cross-border education cooperation.

- Developing global education cooperation with other relevant fora and institutions/multilateral organizations through collaborative research and publication, exchange programs, training and education;
- Providing appropriate opportunities and conducive environment for K-12 children and students in higher education to engage in happy and effective learning; and

- Preparing today's youth with appropriate education and training, skills, and participating in cross-border education to succeed in their local education system and compete in a globalized world.

**LSPN** — To foster strong and flexible labor markets and strengthen social protection including social safety nets through evidence-based interventions, collaboration, technical co-operation and the provision of labor market and social protection information and analysis to address sustainable human resource development across APEC member economies.<sup>2</sup>

Specifically, LSPN will focus on issues and support activities in the following areas:

- Fostering economic development to enhance growth and employment creation and alleviate poverty through effective labor market policies, including such measures as enhancing productivity, labor force participation and skills development;
- Maximizing the opportunities afforded by globalization through the development of improved workplace conditions and practices through the adoption of new technologies, effective labor-management relations, awareness of their labour and social rights, improved workplace health and safety practices and labor market adjustment measures to assist workers affected by globalization; and
- Building capacity to strengthen social protection and narrow socio-economic disparity in APEC member economies through the exchange of information on active labour market measures and on good practices and policy tools for better social safety net delivery, and by so doing enable all citizens and disadvantaged groups to have equal opportunities to share the benefits from economic growth.

## **ARTICLE V: HRDWG AND NETWORK LEADERSHIP**

**There is a Lead Shepherd who serves as the chair of the HRDWG and one Coordinator chair for each network.**

### **1. Lead Shepherd (LS)**

**Selection and Term:** A Lead Shepherd is selected by consensus from among the member economies. The LS, shall each serve for a period of two years<sup>3</sup> or the term of service can be extended to another consecutive term if the member economies and respective government support for the extension. To share the leadership, all APEC member economies are encouraged to take on leadership roles.

**Functions:** The functions of the Lead Shepherd, with support from the APEC Secretariat, are:

- Communicating the work of HRDWG within APEC and consulting with other fora
- Chairing the Lead Shepherd's Advisory Committee (LSAC)
- Setting the theme for the HRDWG meeting in consultation with the Co-Chair
- Coordinating the scheduling and chairing of meetings
- Initiating the preparation of the necessary reports
- Tracking project implementation including the submission of final evaluation reports
- Acting as the spokesperson and representative of the HRDWG

**Selection criteria:**

The essential selection criteria for the position of Lead Shepherd are that they have:

- Obtained official support of the Economy at ministerial level from ministry responsible for employment, labour, social protection, skills development or education.

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<sup>2</sup> Addressing the social dimension of globalization is one of the four APEC-wide ECOTECH priorities endorsed by Leaders and Ministers in 2003 <http://www.apecsn.org/data/file/discussion.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> In accordance with SCE recommendations made in *2007/SOM1/SCE/007: Review of Fora Outcomes Recommendation 12: Recommendations for Improving Working Arrangements*.

- Demonstrated staff capacity and travel resources to accomplish the required work of the position, with a team qualified to facilitate project activities, meetings, and inter-sessional communication.
- Understanding of economic principles and public policy issues (including gender) as they relate to human resource development in the Asia-Pacific, including education, skills development, employment, labour and/or social protection.
- Understanding of the APEC mission and goals, including fundamental knowledge of the main APEC policy documents (e.g., Bogor goals, ANSSR), and ability to translate these goals and directives into HRDWG policy and project activities.
- Understanding of and demonstrated experience in strategic planning, evaluation principles, and the ability to communicate organizational mission, goals, and successes as well as build networks across a diverse range of stakeholders to achieve results.
- Demonstrated demeanor of respect and cultural understanding for all the Economy members of APEC and for diverse persons of gender, religion, disability, ethnicity, and age.
- Ability to lead diverse groups of senior officials and facilitate effective meetings that engage participants and produce rich policy results for political leaders and substantive contributions to organizational objectives.

The desirable selection criteria for the position of Lead Shepherd are:

- Proven senior experience in the public sector

## 2. Network Coordinators

Selection and Term: Network Coordinators are selected by consensus from among the member economies. Coordinators shall each serve for a period of two years<sup>4</sup> or the term of service can be extended to another consecutive term if the member economies and respective government support for the extension. To share the leadership, all APEC member economies are encouraged to take on leadership roles.

### Selection criteria:

The essential criteria for the position of Coordinators are:

- Obtained the official support of their respective ministry at senior level (i.e., either education or employment/labor/social protection, NOT both).
- Demonstrated staff capacity and travel resources to accomplish the required work of the position, with a team qualified to facilitate project activities, meetings, and inter-sessional communication.
- Understanding of economic principles and public policy issues (including gender) as they relate to human resource development in the Asia-Pacific, including education, skills development, employment, labour and social protection.
- Demonstrated demeanor of respect and cultural understanding for all the Economy members of APEC and for diverse persons of gender, religion, disability, ethnicity, and age.

The desirable selection criteria for the position of Coordinators are:

- Proven senior experience in the public sector
- Demonstrated experience in chairing senior-level, multidisciplinary groups

3. **Deputy positions:** Deputy Lead Shepherd and Deputy Network Coordinator positions will be selected by the Lead Shepherd and Coordinators, respectively, from their same economy. Deputy positions are to be approved by the 21 APEC member economies on the basis of consensus. The Deputy Lead Shepherd is to be of the opposite gender from the Lead Shepherd and the same is true of the Deputy Coordinators.

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<sup>4</sup> In accordance with SCE recommendations made in 2007/SOM1/SCE/007: *Review of Fora Outcomes Recommendation 12: Recommendations for Improving Working Arrangements*.

**Co-Chairs:** The Lead Shepherd and Network Coordinators will have as their Co-Chair a representative from the HRDWG host economy<sup>5</sup> who will serve in the co-chair capacity for one year.

#### 4. **Lead Shepherd's Advisory Committee (LSAC)**

- **Composition:** The LSAC is comprised of the prior and present coordinators of every network, the Secretariat, as well as the prior and present host economies of the HRDWG. If the HRDWG meeting host economy differs from the APEC leaders' meeting host economy, then the APEC leaders' meeting economy host will also be represented in the LSAC.
- **Schedule:** The LSAC is convened as required. Immediately prior to the HRDWG, more meetings may be scheduled to make plans for the upcoming event.
- **Functions:** The LSAC will help develop the work programs intersessionally including the scheduling of meetings and preparing their agendas. The LSAC will also help the LS in reviewing the TOR and evaluating the work group operations. The LSAC will work together to provide recommendations for improvement to the HRDWG for review at their annual plenary.

### **ARTICLE VI: HRDWG STRATEGIC OPERATIONS**

HRDWG operations are undertaken mainly via APEC projects, either partially funded through the APEC funding mechanisms or through self-funded projects. HRDWG projects, operated through the three HRDWG Networks, are the primary means for sharing knowledge and skills to promote human resource development. HRDWG projects should align with HRDWG objectives and be of a high enough quality to merit APEC Secretariat financial support from central funds. In addition to APEC projects, activities are undertaken in response to Leaders' and Ministers directives and through recommendations from Independent Assessments (IA).

APEC Projects: HRDWG projects are carried out primarily through identifying and sharing:

- **Policies and planning priorities** to support HRD objectives.
- **Research-based HRD practices** with empirical evidence of effective outcomes in member economies.
- **Relevant statistics** on HRD topics.
- **Training** to support implementation of policies and promising practices.

HRDWG seeks to improve the **efficiency and effectiveness of its projects and activities** through the following reform steps:

**1. Propose a series of projects that build findings cumulatively from project to project to create a significant knowledge base to inform policy and practice addressing HRDWG priorities.** Networks are encouraged to:

- Identify priority areas within the Networks to focus work.
- Identify topics/activities that are recommended areas for future work in the priority area.
- Sequence project topics within an area to build on the knowledge and skills of prior work.

**2. Approve projects with broad member support and encourage projects with paired member oversight** The Concept Note (CN) must be completed for every project submitted to HRDWG with the support at least six member economies. The full proposals of endorsed and prioritized CNs must be reviewed for funding. HRDWG economies are encouraged to propose project oversight by pairing one or more developed APEC economies with one or more developing APEC economies. Members should give paired projects priority in the ranking over projects of otherwise equivalent ranking that are not paired.

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<sup>5</sup> If the HRDWG meeting and the APEC leaders' meeting are located in different economies, the HRDWG host economy is defined as the economy where the HRDWG meeting is held

**3. Design and implement projects to add maximum value in using project resources.** Networks are encouraged to:

- Employ project measurement/evaluation instruments that collect comparable information across economies.
- Mine data and analyses collected by other international organizations on the same or similar topics.
- Use evidenced-based methodologies to identify policies and practices identified as promising or effective.
- Use ICT for project collaboration including piloting interactive WIKI technology.

**4. Coordinate projects and activities with others where significant improvements in efficiency or effectiveness are likely to result and in accordance with APEC rules and guidelines. Project overseers should consider coordination with:**

- Other networks within HRDWG;
- Other HRD-relevant fora within APEC including Gender, SME, and Science and Technology Fora, etc.

**5. Publicize HRDWG** to expand awareness of HRDWG activities, results, and products throughout the APEC region. Networks are encouraged to:

- Actively participate in the HRDWG website with home pages on the site for each of its three networks.
- Publicize project results through such means as press releases, conferences, and online areas including the HRDWG WIKI.

**6. Evaluate projects** by implementing guidelines for evaluation and reporting of APEC projects. Networks are encouraged to:

- Complete APEC project evaluation guidelines for all HRDWG projects.
- Ensure that all completed projects are evaluated and the information entered into the AIMPS database.
- The LS Shepherd working with the Network coordinators shall report biannually the collective accomplishments across projects in achieving HRDWG objectives or Network priorities.

**Leader and Minister Directives. APEC Leaders and Ministers can direct working groups to undertake activities through their declarations and joint statements. These activities include developing workplans on topics that can cross fora (e.g., cross-border education and undertaking affinity groups that also often cross fora missions (e.g., gender equity, disability).**

**Independent Assessments.** The Senior Officials Steering Committee on ECOTECH (SCE) has a requirement for an independent consultant to review the operations and structure of APEC working groups to ensure economic and technical cooperation (ECOTECH) activities are targeted, effective, efficient, and make the best use of scarce resources. The output of the independent assessments is a report providing recommendations designed to ensure that the working group is responsive to APEC's current priorities and contributes to the achievement of APEC's overall vision and objectives. HRDWG should be vigilant in tracking the recommendations of any IAs undertaken by the organizations and keep the membership apprised of any steps undertaken to address the recommendations.

## **ARTICLE VII: GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

### **Projects**

1. **Funding:** Projects can be initiated with or without APEC funding. Funding can be accessed through three different APEC accounts: Trade and Investment Liberalization and Facilitation Account (TILF), General Project Account (GPA), or APEC Support Fund (ASF). An economy may self-fund a project, as well.



2. **Schedule and Duration:** The projects are implemented over two APEC financial years, starting with the year that a project is approved and ending on 31 December the following year. And all APEC funded projects are monitored twice a year and the monitoring reports are due for the projects on 1 August and 1 February each year, regardless of how long the project has been underway in line with the timeframes, budgets and methods presented in the project proposal.
3. **Accessibility:** Official documents regarding projects should be entered into the AIMP database. These include descriptions of projects, their status, and project reports (progress reports and evaluations). Project products (e.g., academic papers, conference proceedings, training materials, etc.) *must* be made available via the HRDWG portal and Network websites.

## Meetings

1. **Schedule and Duration:** HRDWG meets twice a year by having one official meeting and one additional meeting (called 'technical meeting') with government officials through tele/video conference in case of need.
2. **Composition:** Government officials involved in education and labor from the 21 APEC economies coupled with members of academia and the business sector to form a tripartite HRD organization. This tripartite membership is consistent with the response to the Ministers' call for greater engagement with the business sector and other organizations/stakeholders, in alignment with the APEC rules for consensus.
3. **Network Meetings:** CBN, EDNET, and LSPN will hold their Network meetings in conjunction with the HRDWG plenaries.
4. **Functions:** Working Group and Network business will be performed at the annual meetings including the presentation of new projects, the review of on-going projects, and the evaluation of completed projects. Reviews of terms of reference (TOR) and working plans will also occur. In addition, selection of coordinators and the Lead Shepherd will take place every two years.

## Education & HRD Ministerial Meetings

1. **Composition:** Ministers of HRD and Education meet at least every four years. The scope of the HRD Ministerial should reflect the interests of the HRDWG, including issues of labor, organizational capacity building, training and the development of management capability in the public sector and enterprises. Ministers of Education have traditionally met separately. The scope of the Education Ministerial Meeting should reflect the interests of HRDWG with a focus on EDNET-related issues in implementing collaborative initiatives for APEC shared prosperity.

Although there are two Ministerial meetings, both should attempt to be inclusive of issues concerning the wider HRDWG.

2. **Schedule:** Sectorial Ministerial meetings (HRD and Education) are held at least every four years.
3. **Policy and research symposia:** It is encouraged that planning meetings are held between HRD members and researchers prior to their sectorial Ministerial Meetings to prepare a substantive agenda for the Ministers. At the discretion of the HRDWG, these meetings may be held separate to the annual HRDWG meeting, or held in the margins of the HRDWG meeting to ensure wide attendance and economic efficiency.

## Reporting Requirements

1. The HRDWG will report annually to the Steering Committee on ECOTECH (SCE) through the SCE Fora report.
2. HRDWG will submit its annual work plan to the SCE.
3. HRDWG will respond to any reporting requests from SOM.

**ARTICLE VIII: REVISION OF TOR/SUNSET REVIEW**

There will be a sunset review of HRDWG operations and achievements against its TOR every four years. The Lead Shepherd will take responsibility for this review. This accountability review will consider whether or not the working group should continue to operate based on its past performance.

Quorum for the HRDWG's meetings constitutes attendees from 14 economies. Should the HRDWG fail to meet quorum for two consecutive meetings, it shall be referred to Senior Officials for a decision on whether it should continue to exist.

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.

**ARTICLE IX: WORK GROUP AND NETWORK WORK PLANS**

Work Group and Network work plans are structured as follows (per SCE):

1. Work plan and concrete deliverables for two-year increments in response to Leaders/ Ministers/SOM decisions and SCE priorities. These plans should include anticipated activities and/or proposed work with outside organizations with an HRD focus in response to Ministers' call for greater engagement with other Organizations/Stakeholders, including the IFIs and other International Organizations such as ADB, ASEAN, ILO, OECD, UNICEF, UNESCO, World Bank, etc. which have close link to the HRDWG issues.
2. Identify cross cutting issues and explain how they will be coordinated across Fora.
3. Expected Outcomes/Deliverables.