



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

**Independent Assessment of the
APEC Human Resources Development Working Group**

**Report to the APEC SOM Steering Committee
on Economic and Technical Cooperation**

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1 Executive Summary

Review of Human Resources Development Working Group

The APEC SOM Human Resources Developing Working Group (HRDWG) was established and first met in 1990. Over its almost 20 year existence the HRDWG has made ongoing efforts to build the capacity of human capital across APEC economies together in a partnership between government, business, and research institutions. The achievements of the HRDWG in diffusing best practice models of mathematics and science education, and labour market policy, sharing information about education and social protection systems, and promoting approaches to corporate social responsibility have been sound and valuable to APEC trade and region-building. The HRDWG's encouragement of a large number of projects in these areas has also been commendable. The relevance of this APEC Working Group tasked with addressing the social dimension of globalization is more readily apparent than ever -- given the widespread impacts and diverse responses in the APEC region to the global economic recession. In 2009 APEC Trade Ministers welcomed "the Human Resources Development Working Group's initiative to boost the effectiveness of economies' social safety nets and labour market systems to ameliorate the impact of the global economic crisis on people".

At the 2009 17th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting and the 21st APEC Ministerial Meeting, Leaders and Ministers reinforced the common APEC goal to support growth and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region, through free and open trade and investment. However, they also stated their aspiration for APEC to search for new ways to promote "balanced, inclusive, sustainable and knowledge-based growth" within and across APEC economies and to strengthen the social resilience of individuals, particularly the most vulnerable. This reinvigorated APEC agenda provides the HRDWG with an important window of opportunity to expand the impact of its education, social security and labour capacity-building activities on policymaking processes and outcomes across APEC economies. But to take up this challenging opportunity, the HRDWG has some work to do to achieve greater visibility and unity of purpose and to improve the effectiveness of its internal operations.

The SOM Steering Committee on ECOTECH (SCE) has asked this Review to identify ways to strengthen the implementation of ECOTECH activities in the HRDWG. Based on the assessment of the HRDWG's internal effectiveness and external impact, the review proposes 13 Recommendations to the SCE and HRDWG for their consideration and adoption. Most recommendations suggest minor changes to improve the existing Terms of Reference. For instance, the Review proposes that the HRDWG address the issue of leadership succession by encouraging Economies to put forward women as well as men candidates for Lead Shepherd and Network Coordinator positions. It also suggests the formalisation of "Deputy" positions to the LS and Network Coordinators to bolster leadership capacity and to ensure institutional continuity given the size and scope of the HRDWG work programme. The Review also directs the SCE to help strengthen policy coordination on labour and gender "inclusive growth" goals between the HRDWG and

APEC fora, especially the Gender Focal Point Network and the Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group, but other fora as well. This coordination could take the form of policy dialogues on the achievement of inclusive growth and project collaboration and co-sponsorship on projects following from this dialogue.

The major recommendation of this Review is to reallocate the human resource management capacity-building tasks of the Capacity Building Network within the HRDWG to the Labour and Social Protection Network and the Education Network as well as other relevant APEC groups. This organisational change should aim to build on the successes of the CBN, foregrounding not diminishing the role of capacity-building and collaboration with the private sector. The Review also recommends that EDNET redefine its mandate and core objectives to bring a more strategic trade and investment capacity-building focus to APEC policy discussions about education and training. If implemented, these two recommendations will bolster both the effectiveness and the impact of the HRDWG in strengthening the social resilience of individuals and supporting inclusive, balanced, sustainable and knowledge-based growth rather than “growth as usual”.¹

¹ APEC Leaders Statement. “Sustaining Growth, Connecting The Region.” The 17th APAEC Economic Leaders’ Meeting, Singapore 14 - 15 November 2009; also Joint Statement, The 21st APEC Ministerial Meeting, Singapore, 11 - 12 November, 2009.

2 Abbreviations

ABAC	APEC Business Advisory Council
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
BMC	Budget and Management Committee
CBN	Capacity Building Network, one of three networks in the HRDWG
CTI	Committee on Trade and Investment
ECOTECH	Economic and Technical Cooperation
EDNET	APEC Education Network, one of three networks in the HRDWG
ECSG	Electronic Commerce Steering Group
GFPN	Gender Focal Point Network
HRDWG	Human Resources Development Working Group
IAP	APEC Economy Individual Action Plan
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IST/ISTWG	Industrial Science and Technology Working Group
LS	Lead Shepherd
LSAC	Lead Shepherd Advisory Committee
LSPN	Labour and Social Protection Network, one of three networks in the HRDWG
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PD	APEC Secretariat Programme Director
SCE	SOM Steering Committee on ECOTECH
SEAMEO	South East Asian Ministers of Education Organisations
SME/SMEWG	Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group
SOM	Senior Officials' Meeting
TEL/TELWG	Telecommunications and Information Working Group
TILF	Trade and Investment Liberalisation and Facilitation
TP/TPWG	Trade Promotion Working Group
WG	Working Group
WTO	World Trade Organization

3 Recommendations

For SCE and HRDWG consideration – to be adopted immediately

1. **Agree** that Economies should be encouraged to put forward women as well as men based on merit delegates for leadership positions in the HRDWG, including as Heads of delegations, Network Coordinators, and Lead Shepherd.
2. **Agree** that key selection criteria for the position of Lead Shepherd should be commitment to an inclusive style of working, the ability to chair a large consensus-based grouping, and leadership skills. The LS should promote education, labour and social protection capacity-building equally regardless of their expertise. The LS position should be elected at the end of the first year of the existing LS term and take office at the end of the incumbent LS two year term.
3. **Agree** that Deputy Lead Shepherd and Deputy Network Coordinator be formalised as positions with role descriptions create in order to build the strategic and consensual leadership capacity of the LS and Network Coordinators. These “deputy” positions should preferably be filled by delegates from a different APEC economy to the LS, and be set on a different term to ensure continuity of leadership across the LS office holders. The Deputy LS may or may not succeed the Lead Shepherd.
4. **Agree** that the core work programme of the CBN be reallocated among the LSPN and EDNET, and other relevant groups within APEC such as the SMEWG, the EC, and the CTI with the goal of reinvigorating the APEC-wide strategic focus on capacity building for individuals, government and enterprises and building on the collaborative approach of the CBN within the HRDWG.
5. **Agree** that the LS and Network Coordinators be tasked with maintaining and building the collaboration among government, non-government, and private sector organisations in Network activities.
6. **Agree** that EDNET redefine its mandate and core objectives consistent with APEC Leader and Ministerial priorities and emphasising the linkages between capacity-building for regional trade and economic cooperation as well as education/training, and the activities that follow from these.
7. **Agree** that all Networks in the HRDWG adopt multi-year planning and complete the template submitted by the current LS.
8. **Agree** that HRDWG project overseers seek help from Project Management Unit in preparing project evaluation reports after the completion of a project. These reports can be used to derive lessons and guide future project proposals relevant to APEC trade and investment goals. The SCE should consider supporting a third party external evaluation process for all ECOTECH projects to ensure transparency, to direct future funding, and to maximize the policy outcomes from projects.
9. **Agree** that HRDWG annual meetings be primarily focused on *policy discussion* around a few key Working Group-wide priorities and strategic planning.

For SCE and HRDWG consideration

- 10. *Agree*** that an HRDWG paper should be produced identifying the human resources development activities of all relevant multilateral organisations, highlighting the synergies among these organizations and APEC activities, and distinguishing the comparative advantages of APEC HRDWG activities.
- 11. *Agree*** that the SCE should strengthen coordination on labour and gender “inclusive growth” goals between the HRDWG and other APEC fora, especially the Gender Focal Point Network and the Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group. This coordination could take the form of policy dialogues on the achievement of inclusive growth and project collaboration and co-sponsorship on projects following from this dialogue.
- 12. *Agree*** that SCE Chair formally discuss the application of the SCE criteria for project funding with the Lead Shepherd Advisory Committee of the HRDWG.
- 13. *Agree*** that the APEC Secretariat and Programme Director communicate in advance with HRDWG members about the deadlines and process for the evaluation of project proposals and for the submission of final project evaluation reports by electronic communication or teleconference.

4 Purpose And Objectives

4.1 Introduction

This independent assessment of the Human Resources Development Working Group is intended to improve the effectiveness of its internal operations and maximise the impact of its activities in APEC economies and the region as a whole. Beyond the discussion of the purpose, objectives and approach to the assessment, the review document has two major sections: Section 4 assesses the effectiveness of the HRDWG, its current membership structure, terms of reference and work programme; and section 5 documents the impact of the HRDWG primarily on APEC economies and section 6 summarises the recommendations to strengthen the HRDWG as an institutional mechanism for APEC to address the education, labour and social dimensions of global and regional integration. The 13 Recommendations proposed by the review are listed separately above, in section 3.

4.2 Background

The Human Resources Developing Working Group (HRDWG) was established in 1990. It is tasked with developing human resources in APEC through education, capacity building, labour market and social policy initiatives and discussion. The HRDWG is also responsible for building cultural awareness and gender equity in APEC as crucial dimensions of human capacity-building. The HRDWG has formal status as an APEC SCE Working Group. However it conducts its work program primarily through three constituent networks: the Capacity Building Network (CBN); the Education Network (EDNET); and the Labour and Social Protection Network (LSPN). The HRDWG meets once a year and reports annually to the Senior Officials Meeting on its activities and outcomes.

The APEC SOM Steering Committee of ECOTECH (SCE) has requested an independent assessment of the Human Resources Developing Working Group (HRDWG) as part of its ongoing efforts to improve ECOTECH project management and raise awareness of APEC's economic and technical cooperation activities among the 21 member economies. This review of the HRDWG, together with reviews of other APEC working groups and SOM taskforces, is expected to help to bring a more strategic perspective to APEC's capacity-building and technical assistance. In particular, it puts forward recommendations to support the objectives of APEC Leaders and Ministers in light of the current global economic recession to progress trade and investment liberalisation while fostering "inclusive growth" to share the benefits of this liberalisation more widely.²

² APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade, "Statement on Addressing the Economic Crisis and Positioning for Recovery", Singapore from 21-22 July 2009.

4.3 Review Objectives

The aim of this independent assessment of the Human Resources Development Working Group is to:

1. Identify ways to strengthen the implementation of ECOTECH work programmes on developing human resources, including whether the HRDWG terms of reference should be changed;
2. Improve coordination and synergies between the HRDWG and various APEC fora;
3. Consider ways to tap resources and share best practices with private sector partners, enhance cooperation with other multilateral organisations on addressing the social dimension of globalisation, developing 21st Century knowledge and skills for all and integrating human resource development into the global economy;
4. Identify areas where HRDWG activities could better take account of APEC's commitment to considering cross-cutting gender issues and addressing gender disparities;
5. Enhance the SCE's ability to examine and improve coherence and cost-effectiveness, and;
6. Facilitate the setting of strategic priorities for future ECOTECH human resources development work from education and labour to capacity building, gender equity and cultural awareness.

To achieve its objectives, the project engaged in participant observation, and document and survey analysis designed to evaluate the HRDWG's:

1. Internal operations and their effectiveness in meeting APEC ECOTECH goals and strategies priorities; and
2. External impact on APEC Member Economies, other APEC Fora and non-APEC parties.

4.4 Review Approach

Questions

1. How effective is the Human Resources Development Working Group in implementing key ECOTECH goals with respect to technical assistance, cooperation and economic capacity-building in the areas of education, labour, gender equity and cultural awareness?
2. What are the impacts of HRDWG activities on the ground in APEC member economies and the synergies with other APEC fora and non-APEC groups in the private sector and civil society and how can we measure these impacts?
3. In what ways can the HRDWG strengthen its work process across the wide range of its activities to maximise their impact, effectiveness and efficiency?

4.5 Methods

To address these research questions, the review assessed the previous and current goals, objectives and relevant work programs of the Human Resources Developing Working Group (HRDWG). The methods of document analysis, participant observation, personal interviews, and survey analysis were used as discussed below.

The project involved a four-step empirical research methodology.

The first step involved consideration and analysis of all relevant background APEC and HRDWG documents.

The second step involved participant observation of the HRDWG annual meeting in Chicago, USA, June 21-27, 2009. At this time informal interviews were also conducted with delegates from member economies present at the meeting.

The third step involved drafting a survey questionnaire instrument evaluating the internal workings and external impact of HRDWG activities. This survey was first piloted in three APEC economies and revised based on their feedback. The electronic online survey was then sent to all HRDWG delegates on the Chicago meeting participant list, to APEC Secretariat officials and to several former HRDWG members from a range of APEC economies. The consultant communicated with HRDWG members about the questionnaire and responded to many individual queries on the questionnaire's form and content. The survey was available to complete from September 1-September 27, 2009 (The survey was extended one week on request from delegates from two APEC economies). Overall 131 respondents were identified and **44 questionnaire responses** were received either online or by email to the Independent Assessor. **12 out of 21 APEC Economies were represented** among the survey respondents and half (50%) of all survey responses received were from English-speaking APEC Economies. A response rate cannot be calculated from this number of survey responses since many APEC economies decided to collate the input of their officials in one overall survey response (for example, Australia's response was collated among 7 relevant HRDWG delegates/officials). In addition to these survey responses, the consultant received email communications from individual HRDWG members contained more detailed input clarifying and deepening their survey responses and met with two members of the HRDWG in Auckland.

The fourth step involved analysing the data generated by the survey and the keyword and content analysis of APEC projects to identify and assess the impacts of HRDWG work in APEC member economies.

5 Effectiveness of HRDWG

This section assesses the effectiveness of the Human Resources Development Working Group's internal operations. It considers the extent to which the HRDWG has been able to meet APEC ECOTECH goals and strategies priorities, which include coordination across APEC fora, coherence and efficiency; knowledge and recognition of activities.

5.1 Terms of Reference

The HRDWG Terms of Reference were revised in 2007. Thus, considerable streamlining of mission and objectives has already occurred with the aim of strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of the WG operations. However, the HRDWG could benefit from further revision and clarification of its TOR in four areas: 1) Clarifying the role of private sector, non-government organisations in its membership; 2) Strengthening cultural awareness, gender equity and participation of women across all its operations and projects; 3) Including a new Deputy Lead Shepherd position with a different term of office and; 4) Redefining the HRDWG as two networks.

5.2 Goal and Membership of HRDWG

The broad goal of the HRDWG is to “share knowledge, experience, and skills to strengthen human resource development and promote sustainable economic growth.” (Article 2, TOR 2007). This goal has been devolved further into three core objectives and a fourth organisational objective:

1. To develop 21st Century Knowledge and Skills for all.³
2. To integrate Human Resources Development into the global economy.
3. To address the social dimension of globalization.

These goals cohere well with the 2006 ECOTECH priorities⁴, which include developing human capital, integration into the global economy, addressing the social dimension of globalization, and promoting the development of a knowledge-based economy.

4. To establish Human Resource Development priorities and effectively disseminate and build on the body of knowledge from former and current projects.

Since 2000 HRDWG goals and objectives have been carried out by three distinct networks within the Working Group: The Education Network or EDNET, the Labour and

³ The *Partnership for 21st Century Skills* representing a number of leading international businesses and private sector nonprofit organization (<http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/index.php>). This was the theme of the APEC Education Ministers Meeting (AEMM) in Peru in 2008.

⁴ These three objectives are derived from the APEC-wide ECOTECH priorities as outlined in the 2006 APEC Senior Officials' Report on Economic and Technical Cooperation. (http://www.apec.org/content/apec/publications/all_publications/ecotech_sub-committee.html).

Social Protection Network or LSPN and the Capacity-Building Network or CBN. Over its nearly twenty year existence the HRDWG has been restructured several times, most recently to include social protection when the Social Safety Net Capacity-Building Network was disbanded and merged with the LSPN in 2007.

What We Heard:

“When the HRDWG was created in 1990 there were originally three networks, focusing on capacity development for business management, industrial skills and development administration, respectively. The Education Forum, predecessor of the EDNET, was added shortly afterwards [in 1992], followed by a group of government officials focused on measurement and data. In a subsequent streamlining of the WG, two of the three networks whose mandate was originally to focus on capacity building merged to form the CBN.”

Source: Anonymous Survey Response.

5.2.1 Private Sector, Non-Government Membership

At present the HRDWG Terms of Reference recognises the importance of collaboration among the private sector, academia and government in human resources development. This collaboration primarily happens through specific projects and policy forums such as projects on corporate social responsibility and the current financial recession. However, there is little actual representation and participation of private sector business delegates in the internal operations of the HRDWG. It has been largely left to the CBN to make the linkage between government and business. Members of the HRDWG are divided on the issue of private sector representation. Some members think there should be regular, formal consultations between the HRDWG and private sector groups. EDNET members tend to prefer to keep the HRDWG as an intergovernmental group where private sector input is limited to appropriate projects and stronger collaboration is maintained with academic researchers. LSPN and CBN members appreciate the benefits of private sector participation as the enterprise side of human resource development.

What We Heard:

*

“The issue is probably less about the current structure, and more about what types of representation do member economies promote, and for what purpose? I think that a strong case could be made that the WG is falling down on its involvement of the private sector in its activities, despite, for example, private sector involvement in some projects”

*

“On the subject of representation on EDNet it should be noted that in 2006 and 2007 there was a protracted and highly divisive debate on the issue of whether a non-government official could stand for the position of EDNet Coordinator. The compromise developed by a small working group was the establishment of the criteria that a candidate required the endorsement of her/his minister. This compromise remains a thorn in the side of a number of economies.”

*

“There is a gap emerging between the Leaders’ focus on links with the private sector and the work of the WG. This was the original purpose of the BMN, then CBN, but member economies are, on the whole, not addressing this gap.”

*

“In education, what happens almost immediately is that for-profit businesses involved in education try and get involved and the potential for conflicts of interest arrive. If the private companies are part of the deliberative process, in most things they should be frozen out of any kind of monetary or advertising benefit. Many centralized education systems feel this way quite strongly.

*

Source: Anonymous Survey Responses.

In evaluating the three-network structure of the HRDWG below, I recommend a way to ensure the connections between government, business and academic researchers in the ongoing work of the HRDWG.

5.3 Participation of Women

At the 2009 annual meeting of the HRDWG approximately 50 per cent of registered delegates were female. However, many delegates were involved primarily in administration and did not actually attend the WG or Network meetings but it is not possible to disaggregate administrative staff from the meeting participant list. Based on the independent assessor’s participant-observation at the four day meeting men still dominate participation in the HRDWG: More men headed delegations than women, all the leadership positions in the WG are currently held by men, and considerably more men than women participated in the final day of the HRDWG meeting devoted to agenda-setting discussions on the HRD Ministerial meeting to be held in China in 2010 (17 male delegates compared with 7 female delegates). Disaggregating a total count of all officials by sex may reveal that women are present in APEC but it effectively masks the degrees of seniority and hierarchy that affect women’s meaningful participation in APEC. In assessing women’s participation in APEC and the HRDWG specifically it is more

accurate to measure the proportion of women in leadership positions, including the Lead Shepherd's Advisory Committee and Heads of delegations.

The fact that the Lead Shepherd Advisory Committee (LSAC) (with the exception of the *ad hoc* Deputy LS – see the discussion below) does not include a woman member and that the Lead Shepherd and three Network Coordinators are all men represents a situation of gender imbalance that is inconsistent with both the gender equity mandate of the Human Resources Development Working Group and the APEC-wide commitment to the participation of women. This situation must be rectified as soon as possible by Economies putting forward qualified women as well as men candidates based on merit to succeed current leaders.

Recommendation:

1. *Agree* that Economies should be encouraged to put forward women as well as men delegates based on merit for leadership positions in the HRDWG, including as Heads of delegations, Network Coordinators, and Lead Shepherd.

5.4 Leadership

The current decision-making body of the HRDWG is the *Lead Shepherd Advisory Committee* or LSAC. “The LSAC is comprised of the prior and present Network coordinators, 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” (TOR 2007: Article). The LSAC is judged to be working well. 75 per cent of survey respondents were satisfied with the leadership structure. Sharing the leadership responsibility for the HRDWG is an effective way of ensuring institutional responsibility and continuity in HRDWG activities across several years. The effectiveness of the LSAC relies on Network Coordinators being responsive to official APEC communications, actively working to engage their Network members, and participating intersessionally to follow-up on LS and APEC Secretariat directives.

Currently the Lead Shepherd (LS) is assisted by a Deputy LS. Given the size of the group it is recommended that this function should be formalised in the HRDWG Terms of Reference, although without the assumption that the Deputy position is an immediate successor to the LS. The Deputy LS should assist the LS with strategic policy and projects and come from a different APEC economy to promote consensual decision-making. One economy suggested that the Deputy position could be set on a different term than the LS as a mechanism for ensuring seamless transitions between officeholders. Certainly to ensure continuity the LS position should be elected at the end of the first year of the existing LS term and take office at the end of the incumbent LS two year term possibly with a “shadowing” period.

The chief issue for leadership for the HRDWG is ensuring the ongoing succession of Lead Shepherds by putting forward candidates for election to that position. This is reflected in member responses in the box below. Given the size and complexity of the

group the LS role requires a significant Economy-level commitment. It also requires an individual who has demonstrated an inclusive style of working, the ability to chair a large consensus-based grouping, and whose leadership can encompass the several agendas of the HRDWG: education/training capacity-building, labour/employment, and social protection policymaking. More than one survey respondent stated concerns about the dominance of EDNET activities in the Working Group due to the EDNET affiliation of the current Lead Shepherd, although most respondents were impressed by the leadership skills of the current LS.

What We Heard:

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“The leadership structure and processes have been strengthened and clarified in recent years, but there are still issues round succession processes/planning. The personality and strength of the current Lead Shepherd has been a key factor in the strengthening I have referred to, and the question is, will this survive a change in personnel?”

*

“Leadership renewal is needed. The present network coordinators have been in place for too long because no one has volunteered to succeed them.”

*

No economy wishes to take up the CBN role, which is, in itself, a telling circumstance

*

“I think succession planning and processes for replacement of Lead Shepherd and network coordinators need much more attention.”

*

Source: Anonymous Survey Responses.

Recommendations:

2. **Agree** that key selection criteria for the position of Lead Shepherd should be commitment to an inclusive style of working, the ability to chair a large consensus-based grouping and leadership skills. The LS should promote education, labour and social protection capacity-building equally regardless of their background, The LS position should be elected at the end of the first year of the existing LS term and take office at the end of the incumbent LS two year term.
3. **Agree** that Deputy Lead Shepherd and Deputy Network Coordinator be formalised as positions with role descriptions create in order to build the strategic and consensual leadership capacity of the LS and Network Coordinators. These “deputy” positions should preferably be filled by delegates from a different APEC economy to the LS, and be set on a different term to ensure continuity of leadership across the LS office holders. The Deputy LS may or may not succeed the Lead Shepherd.

5.5 Organisational Structure

The HRDWG lacks cohesiveness and an integral strategic focus across the Working Group that is tethered to APEC's comparative advantage as a trade and economic policy discussion forum. Half (or 50 per cent) of all survey respondents were not satisfied with the current organisational structure of the Working Group. The theme of human capacity-building to meet the opportunities and challenges of trade and economic integration is common across all three networks. For instance, sharing knowledge and skills across the APEC region to 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 labour market is clearly a key task for the HRDWG as a whole. However, given resources constraints and strategic interests, most APEC economies do not actively participate in all three networks. Several APEC economies do not send delegates to the Capacity-Building Network for instance, or they expect LSPN delegates to cover the CBN also.

127 delegates and 16 APEC Economies registered for the 2009 Chicago annual meeting of the HRDWG.⁵ Of these, 62 indicated that they would attend the EDNET meeting (and all 16 participating economies did attend), making it the largest network within the HRDWG; 31 indicated that they would attend the LSPN meeting and 14 economies attended) and 23 indicated that they would attend the CBN meeting with just 12 economies attending. However, 55 delegates indicated that they would only attend the EDNET meeting whereas only 15 delegates indicated that they would only attend the CBN meeting. The constituent networks of the HRDWG are not equal in size nor do they have equal weight in shaping the HRDWG agenda. For instance, of the 11 HRDWG projects highlighted on the www.apec.org website, 8 are EDNET projects.

The existence of the three networks, their diversity of activities and unevenness in size, and the lack of cross-fertilisation among them present difficulties for the Working Group in: 1) meeting the group's three core objectives and 2) disseminating clear messages to APEC, including Senior Officials Meetings and other APEC groups, about their activities. While each of the Networks has made important contributions to furthering APEC goals (as Section 4 of this report details), their ability to demonstrate the importance of human resources development and maximize the impact on APEC economic cooperation and trade liberalization is limited by the organisational disunity of the Working Group.

From different perspectives, respondents to the survey undertaken for this review commented on the ineffective functioning of the HRDWG.

⁵ 43 delegates gave no answer as to which Network meetings(s) they would attend (including De Paul University staff, US Department of Education and SEI Administrative Staff, APEC Secretariat and the Independent Assessor).

What We Heard:

*

“EDNET’s focus is too much on the school sector (at the expense of higher education) and is overwhelmingly domestic (rather than regional) - a concomitant of APEC’s consensus-based approach and the preponderance of schools officials among EDNET delegates.”

*

“It is not at all clear what CBN does, nor is the coordinator particularly active outside of the annual meetings. I think the work of HRDWG needs to be streamlined to focus more on labour and education.”

*

“On the one hand, there is duplication across the HRDWG's three networks and, on the other hand, limited cross-fertilisation. We would suggest that the content of the LSPN and CBN could be condensed, to cover labour, employment and capacity building, with the EDNET continuing to cover education & training issues. Under the existing three-network structure, or a reduced two-network structure, there remains a need for on-going strategic oversight and cross-network activity both to combat duplication and foster co-operation.”

*

Source: Anonymous Survey Response.

Malaysia’s review of the HRDWG in 2003 also concluded that the strategic priorities of the WG may be too diverse, leading to economies being “unable to capture all of them and leaving aside those issues that are of common interest and of immediate needs” (p.3). This review of the HRDWG mentions support within the WG for the proposed theme of “skilling and reskilling of the workforce”, but it also conveys concern that a single theme might confine the scope of the WG.⁶

The lack of a strategic focus in the HRDWG stems not only from the network structure of WG but from the limited intra-economy consultation prior to, during and after WG meetings, and on projects by the different agencies/departments from the same economy attending the three separate networks. High levels of communication and coordination at the economy-level are critical to the effectiveness as well as the impact of the HRDWG. Although 80 per cent of HRDWG members responding to the survey reported that they maintained good working relationships with non-HRDWG focused APEC officials and working groups in their economy, with a few notable exceptions, in most APEC economies little coordination is apparent across the networks of the HRDWG itself.

⁶ 2004.1 Review and future direction of the APEC Human Resources Development Working Group. APEC HRDWG.

5.6 Redefining Networks and Enhancing Strategic Focus and Collaboration

All of the three existing networks within the HRDWG assist APEC economies in building their capacity for trade and inclusive economic growth. EDNET focuses on educational capacity-building and training for individuals and economies helping them to acquire 21st century skills and entrepreneurship to participate in international trade. LSPN is tasked with building the policymaking and operational capacity of enterprise and government organisations to deliver key outcomes in the labour market (employability, retraining/upskilling, productivity, mobility) and to design appropriate social safety nets to moderate the negative impacts of global competition. CBN has engaged in capacity-building for managers and firms in human resource management, service delivery and corporate social responsibility also in a regional/global environment.

Cultural awareness and gender equity cut across all of these core tasks of the HRDWG. But they must be adequately reflected across all HRDWG activities and not just contained in one or two projects for instance, on equal access to education and economic opportunities by encouraging girls in math and science education. Achieving these goals of the HRDWG requires the partnership of government, non-government organisations and business so it makes sense that all networks should collaborate. In so doing, there is a greater chance that the HRDWG will significantly progress APEC's renewed agenda of inclusive and sustainable growth.

Although there is currently one Network devoted to "capacity-building" (CBN), the review recommends that the core work programme of CBN be reallocated among the LSPN and EDNET as well as other relevant groups within APEC such as the SMEWG, the EC, and the CTI. The aim here is to reinvigorate the APEC-wide strategic focus on capacity building for individuals, government and enterprises. Building on the collaborative approach of the CBN within HRDWG, and its past successes, capacity-building for trade involving the private sector needs to be more overtly central in the work programmes of both the LSPN and EDNET. At the same time, some CBN activities on business performance and innovation could be integrated in other APEC fora such as the Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group and groups within the Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI) which have already made building business management capacity and education a strategic priority.⁷

⁷ See the SMEWG Strategic Plan 2009-2012. Enhancing Business Environment; Building Management Capability and Promoting Entrepreneurship and and Raise Awareness of Sustainable Business Practices are 3 among 6 of the agreed priorities. (The others are; Market Access and Internationalization; Innovation; Financing). The CTI also focuses on business management capacity-building as illustrated by the recent Sub Committee on Standards and Conformance project to develop textbooks and teaching manuals on standards and conformance to increase public awareness in business and higher education system and to build capacity in a more strategic and comprehensive manner. (CTI 20/2008T APEC SCSC Strategic Education Program for Trade Facilitation: Phase II - Textbook and Teaching Manual development).

Half of all survey respondents agreed that CBN activities should be merged with LSPN (25 per cent disagreed and 25 per cent were neutral about it). The option of dispersing CBN task among several groups was not mentioned on the survey but surfaced subsequently in survey responses and feedback on the draft of this review. This option is widely supported by the APEC Economies that participated in this Review. There would be many benefits and few costs from reinvigorating capacity-building activities and involving private sector management across HRDWG and APEC. Foremost would be a higher, strategic profile for capacity-building, if it were a central task of LSPN and EDNET and better collaboration with private sector business in those existing HRDWG networks. Redesigned roles for the HRDWG LS and two Network Coordinators would need to stress the importance of their highlighting the role of capacity-building and finding ways to build connections with the private sector.

What We Heard: Benefits of Reallocating CBN tasks across WG

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“The number of delegates from all economies might be decreased.”

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“It might bring synergies among the networks.”

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“Reduced duplication of projects [would result]”

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“This merger would streamline work of the two networks as their projects are often complementary. In 2008 and 2009 the two networks held joint sessions - they were informative and the discussions were substantive.”

*

“A merger of LSPN and CBN could result in a reduction in process and administration costs, where synergies would be more easily identified between the subject areas of the existing networks. The HRDWG as a whole would benefit from having the intellectual energy of participants spread across two networks, rather than three. Forcing engagement between a higher-level merged LSPN/CBN network and the EdNet would have positive outcomes for strategic HRD policy engagement across APEC economies.

*

“There would be a clearer focus on HRD for the worlds of education and work”

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Source: Anonymous Survey Responses.

Another mechanism for enhancing strategic focus and collaboration in the HRDWG is the redefinition of EDNET’s mandate to prioritise the linkages between capacity-building for APEC regional trade and economic cooperation and education/training. EDNET activities will need to be conceptualised and implemented with these linkages to the forefront. For example, with such a focus, projects on mathematics and science classroom teaching techniques for the benefit of learners would be a lower priority than projects that link teaching methods to particular education outcomes in light of an analysis of APEC economy/regional gaps in skills, labour markets, and trade capacity. In this way, the work of EDNET would be more closely tied to the other Network in the HRDWG.

APEC regional cooperation to improve the education sector at all levels is critical to achieving the goal of inclusive growth and managing the social dislocation from the global economic recession. Education, in particular vocational and higher education systems, is one of the strongest guarantees of individual resilience, social mobility and economic security in a competitive, global environment. EDNET thus has a crucial role in developing initiatives and implementing the renewed APEC growth agenda. However, not all APEC Economies and Leaders may be fully aware of this role. Given this, it is suggested that EDNET collaborate on a targeted HRDWG paper communication that compiles the research evidence on how the Network is meeting APEC Leaders' priorities in promoting inclusive growth, and where further effort is needed over the medium term. Such a paper could be one of the outcomes of the planned 5th APEC HRD Ministerial Meeting in light of APEC Leader's call for a more strategic, APEC-wide response to the global economic recession.

Recommendations:

4. *Agree* that the core work programme of the CBN be reallocated among the LSPN and EDNET, and other relevant groups within APEC such as the SMEWG, the EC, and the CTI with the goal of reinvigorating the APEC-wide strategic focus on capacity building for individuals, government and enterprises and building on the collaborative approach of the CBN within the HRDWG.
5. *Agree* that the LS and Network Coordinators be tasked with maintaining and building the collaboration among government and non-government, private sector, organisations in Network activities.
6. *Agree* that EDNET redefine its mandate and core objectives consistent with APEC Leader and Ministerial priorities and emphasising the linkages between capacity-building for regional trade and economic cooperation as well as education/training, and the activities that follow from these.

5.7 HRDWG Strategic Objectives and Work Programme

In the reviewing the HRDWG Terms of Reference and the strategic objectives or “tasks” that currently make up the work programme of the HRDWG below, I recommend further reprioritising the work of the Networks and integration of their activities.

What We Heard:
 *
 We consider that the existing terms of reference for the HRDWG would benefit from a greater connection with the trade & economic role of the APEC organisation - this is beginning to happen, with APEC Senior Officials' focus on inclusive growth and the 'human dimension' of the global economic crisis.
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Source: Anonymous Survey Responses.

The Table below provides an overview of the tasks assigned to the HRDWG in its 2007 Terms of Reference and reflected in its 2009 Work Plan. The table identifies which tasks are appropriate and have been effectively carried out and which tasks have not been effectively carried out. These tasks either need to be revised or eliminated. A *cross* indicates that the task needs to be revised or eliminated; a *cross* next to main responsibility or mechanism indicates that these need to be changed. Discussion of the effectiveness of the HRDWG in implementing the seven tasks follows the table. Four new HRDWG tasks and mechanisms are proposed by this Review. The addition of these new tasks will enable the HRDWG to be more effective in achieving APEC ECOTECH goals. A suggested new set of strategic objectives for the Terms of Reference is appended to this report (see appendix A).

These activities that correspond to the four objectives of the HRDWG should be included in an updated Work Plan and reflected in the new Terms of Reference subsequent to this review. The Terms of Reference currently does not make explicit who has main responsibility for each strategic objective and what the mechanism is for its implementation. It is recommended that the HRDWG complete a plan as below to clarify and improve implementation.

HRDWG Strategic Objectives – 7 Tasks Report Card		
1.	<i>Proposing 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.</i>	✓
	Main Responsibility: All Networks	✗
	Mechanism: Encouragement of Long-term Projects; Policy Dialogue at Annual Meetings, Forums and Ministerial Meetings	✗ Ongoing Improvement needed
2.	<i>Employing sound project measurement instruments that collect comparable information across economies.</i>	✓ where appropriate
	Main Responsibility: Project Overseers and Sponsors	✗
	Mechanism: Joint Network Projects; Information Sharing among Economies; APEC Policy Support Unit	✗
3.	<i>Using rigorous evidenced-based methodologies to identify policies and practices identified as promising or effective.</i>	✗ Policy discussion is as important as methodology
	Main Responsibility: All Networks	✓
	Mechanism: Annual meeting policy discussion and best Practice sharing among Economies; Projects.	More focus on policy discussion. Projects follow from this.
4.	<i>Coordinating projects across HRDWG Networks, other APEC Working Groups, and other international organisations as in accordance with APEC rules.</i>	✗
	Main Responsibility: Lead Shepherd, Network Coordinators and Lead Shepherd Advisory Committee	✓
	Mechanism: LSAC inter-sessional meetings; Annual Meetings; HRDWG Wiki; APEC Programme Director (PD).	Ongoing Improvement.
5.	<i>Publicizing HRDWG to expand awareness of projects, activities and results.</i>	✗. Combine with 7
	Main Responsibility: LSAC, PD, Networks.	✓
	Mechanism: APEC Newsletter, Website, HRDWG Wiki, HRDWG members, Joint Forum with other APEC groups.	Ongoing Improvement
6.	<i>Evaluating projects using appropriate methodologies to assess accomplishments and improve similar future projects.</i>	✓
	Main Responsibility: HRDWG and APEC Secretariat	✓
	Mechanism: APEC Project Criteria, Funding and Evaluation Guidelines; APEC Policy Support Unit	✗ External evaluation support required
7.	<i>Employing interactive Wiki technology to enable online collaboration and sharing of expertise throughout the APEC region.</i>	✓
	Main Responsibility: All HRDWG members.	✗ More Participation needed
	Mechanism: LSAC technical assistance	✓

5.7.1 Proposing 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.

All networks are responsible for proposing projects and evaluating their value in terms of HRDWG and APEC priorities. To date there have been large number of HRDWG projects. The APEC Project Database contains 232 projects in total. 20 per cent of all ECOTECH projects fall into the category of “developing human capital”. However, this task in the 2007 TOR sets a new standard for project proposals and management. It aims to encourage a lesser number of HRDWG projects that extend over a longer time period or projects that explicitly build from the findings of previous projects. This augurs well with the 2008 SCE priority on multi-year project planning: “APEC should explore the feasibility of multi-year ECOTECH projects and adopt a more strategic, longer-term approach toward capacity-building.”⁸

In 2009 the HRDWG Lead Shepherd drafted a multi-year plan for HRDWG projects against HRD priority areas and goals as well as overarching HRDWG and SCE ECOTECH objectives and SCE funding priorities. This plan has begun to be implemented by EDNET with respect to its projects in four priority areas relating to math and science, language learning, ICT and systemic reform, and career, technical and vocational education and training. However, these priority areas appear to be solely EDNET or “education” priorities and relatively autonomous of overall “human resource development” and ECOTECH priorities on integration into the global economy and APEC priorities around trade capacity-building.⁹

In addition, as HRDWG members pointed out in their survey responses the final evaluation reports on projects by project overseers do not effectively identify and disseminate project outcomes and findings to be able to build on these in future projects. One respondent suggested that “the project evaluation project should be similar to the QAF in which someone other than the project overseer completes the evaluation.” We agree that the overall low quality of project evaluation reports provide a poor basis on which to progress multi-year project planning. We recommend that the HRDWG seeks out the assistance of the APEC Policy Support Unit to improve project evaluation project and leverage their usefulness for planning purposes.

Looking to the future, APEC-wide project evaluation should be completed by an independent third party to ensure transparency and timeliness in the reporting of project outcomes. The APEC project database as useful as it is does not contain final project evaluation reports for many completed projects. The results of a more rigorous, external evaluation process could affect future funding and/or help direct resources to fewer but longer term quality projects. The cost of such evaluations could be built into project proposals.

⁸ 2008 Senior Officials Report on Economic and Technical Cooperation.

⁹ The Project Database reveals just 12 HRDWG projects that have received funding under the TILF fund since 1997. Two of these were EDNET projects, and a third, a project of the former Business Management Network.

This Review recommends that all Networks in the HRDWG adopt multi-year planning and complete the template submitted by the United States Lead Shepherd.¹⁰ Consistent with the survey feedback and **Recommendation 6** we suggest that EDNET redraft its priorities to better accord with APEC-wide ECOTECH priorities, especially developing human capital, integration into the global economy, promoting the development of knowledge-based economies, and addressing the social dimension of globalisation.¹¹

What We Heard:

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“There should be a clear differentiation made between the types of APEC-funded projects and self-funded projects. While self-funded projects may be genuinely focused on the interests of the proposing economy, APEC-funded projects should address common issues among the economies.”

*

Stronger policy guidance from the Secretariat/SOM could help influence EDNET projects towards reflecting APEC’s role as the premier forum for trade and investment liberalisation in the Asia-Pacific and its ambition for "free and open trade".

*

“On the one hand many of the projects link directly to domestic policy issues so this can be very useful - to gain wider perspectives on such issues. On other hand I'm not convinced the links between some of the issues and the overall APEC agenda/priorities are there or are explicit enough.”

*

“[M]ost HRDWG activities are not directly tied to the APEC agenda of trade and regional economic cooperation. Instead, they relate to what the SCE policy criteria for project funding in 2009 rate as “Rank 3”, or Rank 4 “other priorities identified by Leaders and Ministers” not closely linked to the furtherance of the Bogor Goals, accelerating Regional Economic Integration or intensifying structural reform among and in APEC economies”.

*

Source: Anonymous Survey Responses.

Recommendations:

7. Agree that all Networks in the HRDWG adopt multi-year planning and complete the template submitted by the United States Lead Shepherd.

8. Agree that HRDWG project overseers seek help from Project Management Unit in preparing project evaluations after the completion of a project. These evaluation reports can be used to derive lessons and guide future project proposals. The SCE should consider supporting a third party external evaluation process for all ECOTECH projects to ensure transparency, to direct future funding, and to maximize the policy outcomes from projects.

¹⁰ See 2009/HRDWG31/076.

¹¹ See 2008 Senior Officials Report on Economic and Technical Cooperation.
http://www.apec.org/apec/apec_groups/som_committee_on_economic.html

5.7.2 Employing sound project measurement instruments that collect comparable information across economies.

This is a new task in the revised 2007 TOR and only implemented since 2008. There is some evidence of implementation with respect to comparison of mathematics standards from 10 APEC economies and mapping national qualifications frameworks for instance.¹² Secondary data collection and comparison of social protection systems and policies in response to the global financial recession is forthcoming with the 2009 HRDWG project on the HRD response to the impacts of the global crisis. This project will greatly contribute important knowledge and information sharing for policy development in APEC economies.

Further collection and comparison of information is also possible on APEC economies' education systems for quality assurance, accreditation, recognition of qualifications. Such collection and analysis has the potential to directly enhance economic outcomes for all APEC HRDWG member economies.

5.7.3 Using rigorous evidenced-based methodologies to identify effective policies and practices identified.

This is a new task to be implemented because the HRDWG terms of reference were revised in 2007. It has clearly been formulated with respect to EDNET activities on teaching practices and comparative policies on mathematics and science education. However, while these activities have been very fruitful for APEC collaboration, a broader focus in the discussion of policies and best practices is much needed in HRDWG. Sharing the evidential support for policies is an important part of this discussion but evidence-based methodologies may not be widely implemented or shared across APEC economies particularly with respect to labour and social policies (compared with education policies for instance).

Now that project evaluation occurs inter-sessionally, annual meetings can be refocused on strategic policy and planning. Only 20 per cent of Respondents to the survey questionnaire were satisfied with the nature, format and focus of the annual HRDWG meetings. Most desired a greater focus on substantive policy discussion and planning as the feedback below documents. 70 per cent of Respondents were satisfied with the policy issues that the HRDWG currently addresses within APEC. Human resources development policy and planning has a crucial role to play in the context of the current economic recession that is having detrimental impacts on employment and investment

¹² HRD 01/2009A APEC 21st Century Mathematics and Science Education for All in the APEC Region: Strengthening Developing Economies and the Gender Equity Through Standards, Assessments and Teachers; HRD 04/2008 Mapping of Qualifications Frameworks Across APEC Economies compares identified formal and informal qualifications frameworks across APEC economies. HRD 01/2007S Developing Effective Public-Private Partnerships explored different models of PPPs in the delivery of labor market and employment programs.

and has required reinvigorated government responses in labour market and fiscal/social protection policies.

The 2009 HRDWG project on the Human Resource Development response to the Global Financial Crisis is particularly valuable in this context. A very good exchange and discussion of policies and government experiences in response to the global recession took place at the Chicago joint meeting of the LSPN and CBN. Policy discussion and project activities should be mutually informative in this way.

What We Heard:

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“There is little substantive policy discussion at the HRDWG - even at the network level. The group needs to evolve from programmatic discussions to policy discussions to ensure that it remains relevant in the current context.”

*

“Policy issues are strongly aligned with economic competitiveness internationally as human resources has become one of the most important resources in international trade and development”

*

“There has been a tendency in the past to stray away from core APEC concerns. The HRDWG is aware of this, but there may still be a way to go to achieve the right balance.”

*

[T]his year there was a bright spot on the agenda. The discussion on the economic crisis was quite useful and provided an excellent avenue for timely discussion.”

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Source: Anonymous Survey Response.

Recommendation:

9. *Agree* that HRDWG annual meetings be primarily focused on *policy discussion* around a few key Working Group-wide priorities and strategic planning.

5.7.4 Coordinating projects across HRDWG Networks, other APEC Working Groups, and other international organisations as in accordance with APEC rules.

This task could be carried out more effectively especially with respect to coordination of activities and projects within the HRDWG itself as discussed above. Greater focus in annual meetings on policy dialogue, including discussion of project outcomes and their policy implications, would facilitate this coordination.

Collaboration with other APEC fora and non-APEC bodies can strengthen both project effectiveness and impact. There has been some co-sponsorship of projects with other APEC groups and some dissemination of APEC project outcomes with other international organisations, such as the OECD, World Bank, and SEAMEO, but much more could be done in this area as indicated by the survey responses.

First, there are some areas, particularly the labour and gender dimensions of inclusive growth where the HRDWG could have a greater impact on policy outcomes by collaborating with other APEC fora. Prior to the establishment of the Gender Focal Point Network (GFPN), the HRDWG took the lead in APEC in addressing gender inequalities in education, employment and business. The HRDWG project on the human resource development impacts of the Global Economic Crisis Project, for example, provides a current opportunity for the HRDWG to collaborate with the GFPN given the disproportionate gender impacts of economic crisis in some APEC economies. These gender impacts were highlighted by the Chilean delegate at the HRDWG 2009 annual meeting. At a minimum a member of the GFPN should be included among that project advisory group.

Second, a closer, complementary relationship and clearer sense of the comparative advantage of human resource development activities within APEC relative to activities in the OECD, ILO, SEAMEO, the World Bank and others would help to identify where partnerships should be sought and policy overlap avoided with other APEC groups and international organisations. One example of a current, fruitful IO partnership is the APEC/SEAMEO collaboration on language lesson study seminar. Identifying and creating similar synergies in labour market and social security policymaking will enhance the effectiveness of the HRDWG as well as facilitating inter-regional cooperation. There was substantial support in the survey responses and in feedback to this review for devoting strategic attention to HRDWG's relationships and role vis a vis relevant international and regional organisations. To progress this concern, the Review recommends that the HRDWG with the support of the PSU and APEC Secretariat commission a paper/memo to be regularly updated identifying the human resource development work and synergies across multilateral organisations, and highlighting the distinctive work of the APEC HRDWG. Such a paper could be used in APEC-wide communications about HRDWG activities as well as for internal coherence and effectiveness. It could be initially funded jointly by interested member Economies and APEC as an APEC project.

What We Heard:

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Most ministries responsible for education have clear written policies or guidelines [on collaboration with the private sector]. This is a complex area and requires attention on a case-by-case basis. Most politicians support the concept of public-private sector partnerships BUT remain adamant about retaining control of the process and its outcome.

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"[There is a] lack of synergy between EdNet initiatives and the work of SEAMEO regional centers. Meetings of APEC Ministers Responsible for Education are valuable opportunities to strengthen policy development and project support among the economies."

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Source: Anonymous Survey Response.

Recommendations:

10. Agree that an HRDWG paper should be produced identifying the human resources development activities of all relevant multilateral organisations, highlighting the synergies among these organizations and APEC activities, and distinguishing the comparative advantages of APEC HRDWG activities.

11. Agree that the SCE should strengthen coordination fora on labour and gender “inclusive growth” goals between the HRDWG and other APEC fora, especially the Gender Focal Point Network and the Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group. This coordination could take the form of policy dialogues on the achievement of inclusive growth and project collaboration and co-sponsorship on projects following from this dialogue.

5.7.5 Publicizing HRDWG to expand awareness of projects, activities and results.

We suggest that this task be combined with *task 7* below on the use of HRDWG Wiki and other technology to facilitate collaboration within the HRDWG. These technologies also allow for within-Economy and wider public dissemination of HRDWG activities and projects and should be embraced and updated by all APEC economies and HRDWG members.

The innovation of the HRDWG Wiki contributes greatly to increasing awareness of the Working Group activities, including research projects and seminars, and information about relevant policies and programmes in APEC economies. The APEC e-Newsletter has also been used to good effect by HRDWG members in highlighting policy issues and particular collaborative projects. Issue 21 on inclusive growth for instance, highlights the centrality of labour and features an article on the HRDWG’s project led by New Zealand on the situation of young workers in APEC economies.¹³

What We Heard:

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We can always do significantly better on [publicity]. The key is for member economies to set in place internally consistent information channels, which allow APEC outputs to reach interested parties at economy-level. I think that few economies have put the effort and resources into that process.”

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5.7.6 Evaluating projects using appropriate methodologies to assess accomplishments and improve future projects.

In 2009 the evaluation of project proposals moved to a new system whereby proposals are considered for BMC funding three times per year. Evaluation and ranking of projects process now takes place intersessionally by electronic consultation rather than at the annual meeting. The QAF process was positively evaluated by most respondents to the

¹³ APEC Newsletter Issue 21: The Inclusive Growth Edition. November 2009.

survey. HRDWG project teams are given constructive feedback on their proposals and able to revise them before being approved for funding. However, many HRDWG members are frustrated by their communications with the APEC Secretariat in this transition to a new system. Only 40 per cent of survey respondents were satisfied with the project evaluation process. Some respondents expressed uncertainty about how the APEC Secretariat would rank their project against the new SCE priorities. There is also a concern among EDNET members in particular that these SCE four criteria for ranking clash with Ministerial priorities particularly those of Education Ministers at their 2008 meeting: “These changes greatly affect what projects can be funded because Ministerial priorities in education used to be a top means for receiving funding, but now they are relegated to Tier 4: “lower priority cooperation” with implications for future funding of education-type projects.

What We Heard:

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“The current project evaluation process is joint participation of economies and HRDWG. The ranking for HRDWG projects should be raised. And the evaluation process should be more transparent.”

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I think that the same Economies normally evaluate projects and that the HRDWG leadership (outside of the LS) does not take the responsibility seriously enough to ensure that the evaluation process is done in a timely manner and in an orchestrated way where the evaluators have reached some agreement together.”

*

“Prior to the [QAF] evaluation process, decisions were made based on politics, friends and favours. It has introduced rigour into the process so that we can improve the quality of projects.”

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“We fully support the 'QAF' process, and consider this is a valuable technique for assessing quality of HRDWG projects proposed by economies. It is a clear and transparent filtering system. On the type of project, we do not consider that this issue can be resolved until a shared understanding on the scope of the HRDWG is agreed in the lead-up to, or following, the HRD Ministerial Meeting in 2010.”

*

“We are less satisfied with the project evaluation process and support provided through the APEC Secretariat. There is sometimes a lack of clarity regarding the Secretariat's expectations for proposing economies - in our case, a Secretariat checklist was made available late in the project lifecycle that would have been useful at the beginning.”

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“We have had experiences where advice on project funding or proposal content received from the Secretariat differed from that of the Network Co-ordinator, and vice versa. We are not satisfied with the ranking process for HRDWG projects offered by the Secretariat - where projects across the three networks are ranked against each other, and economies are required to rank even those projects they do not support.

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Source: Anonymous Survey Responses.

The Review recommends that the APEC Secretariat and Programme Director improve the quality and timeliness of their communication by electronic communication or teleconference with HRDWG members about the project proposal evaluation process (i.e. well in advance of deadlines). It also suggests that the SCE Chair formally discuss the application of the criteria for project funding with the Lead Shepherd Advisory Committee of the HRDWG. This communication between the SCE and HRDWG chairs may be facilitated by the coincidence of their meetings during Senior Official Meetings, as in Japan in February 2010.

Recommendations:

12. Agree that SCE Chair formally discuss the application of the criteria for project funding with the Lead Shepherd Advisory Committee of the HRDWG.

13. Agree that the APEC Secretariat and Programme Director communicate in advance with HRDWG members about the deadlines and process for the evaluation of project proposals and for the submission of final project evaluation reports by electronic communication or teleconference.

5.7.7 Employing interactive Wiki technology to enable online collaboration and sharing of expertise throughout APEC.

This is a new task introduced in the 2007 Terms of Reference and introduced by the Lead Shepherd of the HRDWG. It is an excellent innovation and a very user-friendly e-tool for HRDWG members to collaborate and share their work outside of their annual meeting. It can also serve as a form of publicity for the HRDWG sharing materials and information including recent and current project products (academic papers, presentations, training manuals, websites, etc.) from the Working Group with a broader global public (thus this objective encompasses objective 5 as well). Certainly the interface is far more attractive than the official HRDWG webpage on the www.apec.org site.

To date the Knowledge Bank Wiki has been led and regularly updated by the United States but other APEC economies are beginning to contribute information about their projects and activities as well. There are some issues to be ironed out, such as ensuring consistency between the Wiki, the AIMP site and the HRDWG webpage on the official APEC site. Overall, the HRDWG is to be commended for practicing what they preach: the value of human resources innovation and collaboration.

What We Heard:

"[T]hought should be given to consistency across the three web references for the HRDWG - the HRDWG Wiki, the AIMP site and the generic APEC HRDWG (www.apec.org) site. It is confusing using all three sites, and not knowing, which is the definitive source of project and project evaluation material."

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"Considerable effort by the HRDWG leadership recently on improving access to HRDWG projects and activities and user-friendly resources such as the HRDWG Wiki could usefully support a publicity effort."

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"[E]ncourage ALL Economies to participate in uploading content to the HRDWG wiki. Lots of folks include doing it in their project proposals, but are not following through with actually doing it."

Source: Anonymous Survey Response.

5.7.8 Prepare for the HRDWG Ministerial Meetings to establish a focused set of long-term priorities.

This is a new strategic objective and work plan task that complements Strategic Objective 1 on the need to develop multi-year planning of projects and activities. It needs to be added to the Terms of Reference to reflect the significant work that the HRDWG does to prepare and set the agenda for Ministerial meetings. All HRDWG members must engage their Ministers to secure their commitment to these meetings. 100 per cent of survey respondents agreed that Ministerial Meetings are important initiatives for advancing the human resource development agenda in APEC.

According to the 2007 TOR "Ministers of HRD and Education meet at least every four years". Ministers of Education and Human Resource Development have traditionally met separately. The TOR states that "although there are two Ministerial meetings, both should attempt to be inclusive of issues concerning the wider HRDWG" (TOR 2007, p.8). The Education Ministerial Meeting was held in Peru in 2008 around the HRDWG-wide relevant theme of building 21st Century skills following a research and policy symposium held earlier in the year in China. The preparation for and outcomes of the Education Ministerial meeting are judged to have been a success in so far as the meeting produced a set of priorities that have given EDNET a mandate and have been taken up in a slew of new project proposals in 2009.

However, respondents to the survey expressed a concern that these Ministerial priorities may not adequately engage with broader APEC goals and SCE ECOTECH policy criteria: "EDNET takes a mandate for 4 years work from the Ministerial Meeting that they have largely determined in advance. But it may have more of an educational - curriculum, assessment, pedagogy - focus than an 'APEC' one. That is not to say the education collaborations are not useful ...but they can be too disconnected from the trade and economic focus." Several respondents also perceived that the selection of Ministerial

priorities for Education was determined by the Lead Shepherd and a small number of economies. In actuality at least 10 Economies were involved in setting the agenda for the Education Ministerial. Nevertheless, this feedback suggests that future preparation for Ministerial Meetings must strive to be as inclusive and consultative as possible. HRDWG delegates must inform their Minister of APEC priorities so that these can transparently inform the setting of Ministerial priorities.

What We Heard:

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"[G]aining a Ministerial perspective on the new direction of the HRDWG will be imperative to move forward effectively.

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"We are very much looking forward to the APEC HRD Ministerial Meeting in China in 2010. We consider that this will give new impetus to refresh the terms of reference of the HRDWG (and LSPN and CBN) and crystallise the outcomes sought from the WG."

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"When there is an HRD Ministerial, CBN and LSPN will be better able to function because they will have priorities for the first time in 9 years"

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"We would like to see a high-quality HRD Ministerial meeting in 2010 that provides a refreshed mandate for the HRDWG, and confirms the scope of the work of the group and its relationship to the wider APEC organisation."

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Source: Anonymous Survey Response.

Preparations are well underway in the HRDWG for the first meeting of Human Resources Development Ministers in 8 years in mid 2010. This initiative is being led by China. A one day meeting at the end of the annual HRDWG meeting in Chicago was devoted to a consultation with all APEC economies on preparations for the HRD Ministerial. Respondents to the survey from the WG expressed great hope that this preparation process will renew and reprioritize the work programme of the HRDWG. In Chicago three themes were suggested for the forthcoming Ministerial meeting.¹⁴ Other themes may be decided on by 2010. Overall, however, the preparation process observed in June 2009 in Chicago suggested an inclusive approach is being taken and that members intend to strategically leverage the opportunity of the Ministerial Meeting to clarify and refocus HRDWG priorities consistent with **Recommendation 4, 6, 7 and 9** above.

¹⁴ These three themes discussed were: 1) Skills for a productive, resilient economy; 2) Productivity and high performance workplace systems for trade capacity; and 3) Labor participation and vulnerability.

Summary

The HRDWG is beginning to implement the strategic objectives in its 2007 Terms of Reference. However, this implementation is challenging and requires greater coordination across HRDWG networks and collaboration among APEC economies and non-government partners to be successful. To improve the effectiveness of this implementation HRDWG Lead Shepherd Advisory Committee including Network Coordinators and the APEC Secretariat Programme Director need to better coordinate their activities and become more aware of the connections among the work that they do. All APEC economies should be able to participate in discussion of the 8 strategic objectives and collaboration to accomplish the annual tasks following from them. Specific recommendations for strengthening this implementation and for revising the HRDWG Terms of Reference have been indicated here and are summarised in Section 3 of the report. The next section considers the impact of the Human Resources Development Working Group.

6 Impact of HRDWG

This section provides an overview of the impact of the HRDWG. It identifies and provides evidence of the areas where HRDWG activities have had an impact on APEC member economies primarily but also on the APEC region, other APEC fora and non-APEC parties. It analyses this impact broadly in terms of: i) Impact on the awareness of the human resource development activities among APEC economy officials; ii) Impact on Economy-level policy and programme development and diffusion; iii) Substantive impacts of HRDWG projects on APEC economies and non-APEC groups.

6.1 Impact on Awareness of HRD issues in APEC Economies and Fora

Respondents to the independent assessment survey were asked to indicate how aware their economy APEC officials were of the activities of the HRDWG. 45 per cent stated that their officials were aware or very aware. 50 per cent that their officials were somewhat aware and just 5 per cent stated that their economy officials were barely aware of HRDWG activities. This finding suggests that there is room for improvement to maximize the impact of the HRDWG with other APEC groups within and across economies. In some APEC economies there is little input of Education and Labour Ministries into the Economy APEC and Senior Official agenda whereas in other APEC economies there is more consultation and internal cohesion.

Despite this disparity HRDWG members are working to raise the awareness of policymakers in APEC economies as conveyed by the experiences below.

The HRDWG recognised that language itself is not a priority for APEC but identified the process of learning English as a key issue and specific barrier to Peru's integration into the global economy. In so doing, the WG assisted trainers of English in Peru, and helped potential Peruvian migrants become part of the labour force for APEC's regional economy.

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"The HRDWG math conference in March 2010 in Thailand has a strong gender focus that the USA gender focal point is aware of and the APEC secretariat. HRDWG work on social safety nets/education and the global financial crisis is being watched by several working groups and committees, especially the Economic Committee."

*

In collaboration with other APEC groups and ABAC, the HRDWG has developed a project to collate and analyse the various human resource development impacts and responses to the global economic crisis. Although this research has yet to bear fruits it has already had an impact on the awareness of HRD issues in APEC. The project findings will likely have a significant impact on policy diffusion, highlighting the policy options which are most effective under recession conditions. An earlier HRDWG special task force following the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997-8 influenced APEC economy-level policy according to anecdotal evidence shared in response to the survey questionnaire.

The fact that such evidence is only anecdotal points to the inadequacy of current project evaluation reports prepared by project overseers. **Recommendation 8** is intended to improve this evaluation such that policy impacts and outcomes could be more readily known, quantified and built upon.

6.2 Impact on Economy-level Policy Development and Diffusion

New policy issues have been put on the agendas of APEC economies as a result of HRDWG initiatives. 35 per cent of respondents to the survey questionnaire said they had developed or changed a human resources, education, labour or social protection policy or programme based on a finding or outcome of a HRDWG project or policy discussion. Moreover, 43 per cent of respondents could cite an instance of where a HRDWG recommendation resulted in an action or a change in a project or programme or in policy change at the APEC regional level or in an APEC economy. The impact of HRDWG activities on capacity-building, i.e. professional development, for government officials as well as teachers across APEC through the vocational and IT training provided by EDNET projects cannot be underestimated.

Evidence from New Zealand shows how HRDWG activities promoted at the Economy-level influenced the APEC Leaders and Senior Officials agenda in Peru in 2008 on corporate social responsibility and on 2009 on the human impact of the financial crisis. The case from the United States below reveals a “boomerang” impact with HRDWG comparison of APEC regional maths and science standards leading to similar benchmarking and standards efforts within and across US state-level jurisdictions.

*

“In preparation for the APEC ministerial meeting the US led an effort to translate and provide mathematics and science education standards via the World Wide Web for researchers to conduct international benchmarking and comparative research. The US Department of Education partnered with Achieve, a nonprofit organization, to do an initial comparative analysis of APEC economy standards. This has helped initiate a major standards development effort in the United States in which three US major organisations including the National Governors Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and Achieve have partnered to recommend international benchmarking activities (including developing standards) in their recent report *Benchmarking for Success: Ensuring US Students Receive A World-Class Education*. Since the US has a decentralized education system in which the states are responsible for most implementation of education practices, recommendations from these organizations are very important in the reform of education in the US. The US Department of Education has since received queries from US states regarding internationally benchmarked standards development.”

*

Some developed APEC economies noted in their survey responses that policy discussions on education, labour and social protection often relate to the basic framework

infrastructure level and are therefore more likely to be useful for policy development in developing economies. However, in some instances, they have been influential in supporting a particular policy direction.

*

“Some of the findings of policy analysis in connection with the preparation for the Ministerial meetings endorsed the policy directions which had been discussed at the national level.”

*

“I can speak only for education policies. Our economy has not made significant changes as a result of EDNET work. However, it would be fair to say that some work, for example, on languages policy, has provided an input into our thinking.

*

Source: Anonymous Survey Responses.

In addition to the direct impact of HRDWG initiatives on policy change in APEC economies, 80 per cent of survey respondents said they had offered models, expertise and experience from their own economy to inform HRDWG projects and policy work. The HRDWG has actively facilitated this diffusion of knowledge and good practice about education, labour, capacity-building and social protection across APEC economies. For instance, one current “Promoting good practice and policies for young people’s work” (HD 10/2009) aims to share policy models and best practices on support for young people’s employment especially in a recession context. This project is intended to produce results that can be applied to policy in both developed and developing countries. A selection of examples of policy diffusion and exchange in the HRDWG are excerpted below.

*

In the area of HRD, through participation in projects Japan has offered information on its systems dealing with topics such as higher education and “lesson study” in mathematics and science education.¹⁵

*

The US Department of Education has developed a research-based guide on encouraging girls in mathematics and science. We are using this model to support a math and science education project that will develop an APEC-wide guide for gender and mathematics and science education. In addition, there will be a one day pre-conference meeting for APEC economies to discuss encouraging girls in mathematics and science education prior to an APEC mathematics and science education conference

*

China has shared its experience in the areas of vocational training and response to the current financial crisis.

*

¹⁵ For example, HRD 02/2008 Collaborative Studies on Innovations for Teaching and Learning Mathematics in Different Cultures (III) – Lesson Study focusing on Mathematical Communication.

These examples demonstrate that the HRDWG activities and approach have influenced policy development in several APEC economies. It is difficult to find data or evidence that show how successful these policies have been in members economies. However, there is a sustained sense of cooperation or community in the framing of human resource development issues and the sharing of best practices in the APEC region.

6.3 Impact of HRDWG projects on APEC region and non-APEC groups.

40 per cent of respondents to the survey questionnaire cited an instance of where an HRDWG discussion or project finding resulted in a substantive action or policy outcome in APEC economies. These impacts could potentially be quantified. For instance, EDNET work on facilitating qualification recognition, improving understanding of education quality assurance systems in APEC has removed barriers to trade in education services and undoubtedly contributed to the expansion of the APEC trade.

The ongoing interest in the intersection between trade and labour in the LSPN within the HRDWG has had more intangible impacts than the above but it has opened an important political space for advancing trade policy initiative that may have tangible APEC-wide outcomes in the longer term. Since the discussion on labour mobility was begun in the HRDWG in 1998, some APEC economies have agreed on labour cooperation within bilateral trade agreements and projects on effective models for managing those interests have been funded by APEC. For example, the HRDWG has had input into the CTI project on an APEC Labour Model Measure (CTI). New Zealand is leading an HRDWG project on youth employment with its APEC partners in the “Memorandum of Understanding on Labour Cooperation among the Parties to the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement” (Chile, Brunei Darussalam and Singapore) and under the “Arrangement on Labour between New Zealand and the Kingdom of Thailand”.

A selection of substantive actions and policy outcomes resulted from HRDWG activities are documented below.

*

Australia's self-funded projects in EDNET on professional recognition of qualified Engineers and Architects appear to have made substantive impacts upon their respective professions in the region.¹⁶ Australia has received positive feedback from both professions' representative bodies in their Economy and they signed a bilateral agreement with Japan in 2003 to promote the mobility of APEC engineers in the fields of mechanical, electrical and chemical engineering.

*

The HRDWG mathematics education project that focused on lesson study (Japan/Thailand) initiated an economy-wide teacher professional development effort in Chile. Key consultants for this project include project participants from the APEC project.

*

New Zealand and Australia were both involved in a study of barriers to cross-border trade in education services, which made the stance of economies more transparent and provided a better basis for those seeking liberalisation in trade to target their lobbying or requests in trade negotiations.

*

The APEC HRDWG Capacity Building Summit in 2001 promoted the concept of capacity building worldwide and brought the concept of the capacity building into the national government policy making in China. Since then the China-led "APEC Capacity Building Promotion" has trained 1122 participants in 3 years and increased IT practice level for developing economies.

*

"The World Bank invited us on multiple occasions to make presentations to education leaders from over 30 countries based on our HRD work in mathematics."

*

6.4 Summary

There is good evidence to suggest that the HRDWG's initiatives have influenced the policy and programme development of APEC member economies and vice versa. APEC economies have utilised the HRDWG as a forum for policy diffusion and exchange. HRDWG activities have resulted in concrete actions and outcomes but more than this; they have shaped a regional APEC community that is promoting APEC's goal of supporting inclusive growth and advancing the wellbeing of all people and economies.

¹⁶ HRD 03/2004 APEC Engineer Mutual Recognition Project Evaluation; HRD 11/2002 APEC Architect Project Evaluation.

7 Conclusion: Strengthening the HRDWG as a Force for Inclusive Growth in APEC

The SOM Steering Committee on ECOTECH has asked this Review to identify ways to strengthen the implementation of ECOTECH activities (See SCE 2006 Review of APEC Working Groups, Task Forces and Networks, recommendation). Based on the assessment of the HRDWG's internal effectiveness and external impact, the review proposes some changes to the terms of reference and work programme of the HRDWG to improve its operations and increase the impact of human resource development activities on the achievement of balanced, sustainable, knowledge-based and inclusive growth within and across APEC economies. In particular, the HRDWG needs to focus on strengthening its internal dialogue and collaboration and its partnerships. With the SCE's guidance, the HRDWG might implement further joint projects with other APEC groups such as the SCE, GFPN, SME, and the CTI.

This Review recommends a streamlining of the organisational structure of the HRDWG, reallocating the tasks of the CBN across the WG and other APEC groups to enhance collaboration and bring a more strategic, human capacity-building for trade and regional economic development focus in the Working Group as a whole. If implemented, these recommendations will greatly bolster the impact of the HRDWG and its capacity to lead the way in APEC by supporting inclusive growth and strengthening social and individual resilience in a regional and global environment.

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9 Appendices

Appendix A: Proposed New HRDWG Terms of Reference Strategic Objectives

HRDWG Terms of Reference – Proposed New 7 Tasks	
1.	Proposing 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.
	Main Responsibility: Network Coordinators and LSAC
	Mechanism: *Multi-year Planning Template*; Encouragement of Long-term Projects; Project Evaluation Reports; Policy Dialogue and Sharing of Findings at Annual Meetings, Forums and Ministerial Meetings
2.	Employing sound project measurement instruments that collect comparable information across economies.
	Main Responsibility: Project Overseers (assistance of *APEC Policy Support Unit*)
	Mechanism <i>*Joint Network Projects and Cross-APEC group collaboration*</i> ; <i>Information Sharing among Economies</i> ; <i>HRDWG Knowledge Wiki</i> .
3.	Using rigorous evidenced-based methodologies to identify policies and practices identified as promising or effective.
	Main Responsibility: All HRDWG Project Sponsors
	Mechanism Project Proposals and QAF process. *Policy Discussion and Sharing of Best Practice and Research among APEC Economies at Annual Meeting*.
4.	Coordinating projects across HRDWG Networks, other APEC Working Groups, and other international organisations as in accordance with APEC rules.
	Main Responsibility: HRDWG Lead Shepherd, Network Coordinators and Lead Shepherd Advisory Committee (with assistance of APEC Secretariat Programme Director).
	Mechanism LSAC inter-sessional meetings; AIMP site; Annual Meetings; HRDWG <i>Wiki</i> for online collaboration and sharing of expertise throughout the APEC region.
5.	<i>*Publicise and Share HRDWG projects, activities and results to expand awareness and collaboration*</i> .
	Main Responsibility:
	Mechanism HRDWG Wiki, HRDWG APEC webpage. *Frequent communication between HRDWG members and Economy APEC delegations; *HRDWG briefings for the APEC e-newsletter; *Regular email letters highlighting HRDWG achievements
6.	Evaluating projects using appropriate methodologies to assess accomplishments and improve similar future projects.
	Main Responsibility: HRD Project Overseers, APEC Secretariat (*with assistance of APEC Policy Support Unit on final evaluation*)
	Mechanism

	APEC Project Criteria, Funding and Evaluation Guidelines; QAF process. *Final Evaluation Report.*
7.	<i>*Prepare for the HRDWG Ministerial Meetings to establish a focused set of long-term HRDWG priorities.*</i>
	Main Responsibility: HRDWG with SOM Chair and APEC Secretariat
	Mechanism *APEC Project Criteria, Funding and Evaluation Guidelines; APEC Policy Support Unit.*

Appendix B: Survey Questionnaire

Independent Assessment of the ECOTECH Implementation of the APEC Human Resources Development Working Group

About the project: Background

The purpose of this questionnaire and Review of the Human Resources Development Network is to generate information and constructive input from officials, policymakers, academics and researchers, non-governmental advocates and participants, to support the ongoing economic and technical cooperation work of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum (APEC). The APEC SOM Steering Committee of ECOTECH (SCE) has requested an independent assessment of the Human Resources Development Working Group (HRDWG), [The SCE is undertaking a series of independent assessments of all working groups and taskforces including HRDWG \(as stated in current activities of the SCE\)](#). as part of its ongoing efforts to ensure ECOTECH activities are targeted, effective and efficient and to raise awareness of APEC's economic and technical cooperation activities among the 21 member economies.

The HRDWG Review, together with reviews of other APEC working groups and SOM taskforces, is expected to help to bring a more strategic perspective to APEC's capacity-building and technical assistance.

The independent assessment is expected to produce recommendations that will support the objectives of APEC Leaders and Ministers and enhance the internal workings and external impact of the Human Resources Development Working Group.

About the questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to provide information that will help to assess and evaluate

- 7.** How effective the Human Resources Development Working Group has been in implementing ECOTECH goals and strategic priorities.
- 8.** What the impacts of Human Resources Development Working Group activities are on APEC working groups and committees, non-APEC groups and on the 21 APEC member economies.

How to complete the questionnaire

You can amend your responses at any time

What will we do with the data?

The information you provide will be treated in confidence and will only be used by Dr. Jacqui True, the consultant for the purposes of the APEC SOM HRDWG Independent Assessment. Your participation will contribute to our understanding of the HRDWG activities and how they might be improved in the future. The preliminary findings of the survey will be shared with those who fill out the survey and there will be an opportunity for all respondents to give their feedback.

You will be identified by 1) your economy; 2) by your role in general as an a) economy-level official, b) an APEC official, c) a non-governmental organisation or business representative d) academic or researcher; and 3) by your sex. Your name and personal identity will be kept strictly confidential.

In case of difficulty

If you have any queries or encounter problems while you are filling in the questionnaire please contact Dr. Jacqui True, j.true@auckland.ac.nz, who will respond as soon as possible.

When you have completed the questionnaire

1. About you

Name	
Position	
Organisation	
Economy	
Email	
Telephone <i>Only if you wish to be contacted for a follow-up interview</i>	

2. Participation of Women

APEC collects data on the number of men and women participating in APEC meetings, including HRDWG meetings. The available data will be collated and analysed for this review. In addition, however;

2.1	What information (anecdotal or hard data) do you have about the balance of men and women in your economy's APEC delegations? For example, are women in your economy present on all APEC committees and working groups? Are they present in senior roles? Please comment.
2.2	If there are any special initiatives to encourage women to participate in APEC or to increase the gender balance in your economy's official delegation or on the APEC Business Advisory Council for instance, please briefly describe them.

3. Organisational Structure

Organisational structure can contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of HRDWG activities. It must reflect the substantive policy concerns of the group and their change over time.

3.1	Which Network do you most attend?	EdNet - Education Network
3.2	I am satisfied with the current organisational structure of the HRDWG. (eg EdNET, LSPN & CBN)	Strongly Agree

3.3 If you are not satisfied with the current network structure, what alternative organisational arrangement would you suggest? Please describe below.	
3.4 Some HRDWG members have suggested that the CBN – Capacity Building Network – and the LSPN – Labour and Social Protection Network – be merged. Would this improve the effectiveness and efficiency of HRDWG activities?	Yes
3.5 What would be the impacts of such a Network merger? Please detail these below.	

4. Leadership

4.1 I am satisfied with the leadership structure and terms of the HRDWG and its three constituent Networks, [2007 Terms of Reference available for download at: http://hrd.apecwiki.org/index.php/Human_Resources_Development_Working_Group_%28HRDWG%29	Strongly A
4.2 If so, why?	
4.3 I am satisfied with the membership of the Lead Shepherd Advisory Committee (LSAC) consisting of the 3 network chairs.	Strongly A

4.4 Some APEC groups also have a “Friends of the Chair Group consisting of past and future Chairs as well the current one. What would be the benefits and the disadvantages of such an arrangement for the HRDWG? Please describe below.

5. Annual Meetings

5.1 I am satisfied with the nature, format and focus of the annual HRDWG meetings.	Strongly Agree
5.2 If you are not satisfied with any aspect of the annual meetings please elaborate here on suggestions or measures you would propose to improve them.	

6. Policy Agenda-Setting

6.1 I am satisfied with the policy issues that the HRDWG currently addresses within APEC.	Strongly Agree
6.2 If so, why?	
6.3 Current HRDWG activities are strongly relevant to the APEC agenda of trade and regional economic cooperation.	Strongly Agree
6.4 What is the comparative advantage of HRDWG compared with for example other multilateral forums for policy discussion on	

labour/education/capacity-building e.g. the ILO, ASEAN, OCED, Commonwealth etc. Please elaborate here.
6.5 Are there policy issues that should be on the HRDWG work programme to better address the APEC ECOTECH and TILF goals? Please list them below and how they would advance APEC goals.

7. Ministerial Priorities

7.1 Ministerial Meetings are important initiatives for advancing the human resource development agenda in APEC.	Strongly Agree
7.2 I am satisfied that the different perspectives and agendas of APEC economies are accommodated in Ministers meetings.	Strongly Agree
7.3 I am satisfied that SCE (SOM Steering Committee of ECOTECH) policy criteria and the HRDWG TOR are adequately reflected in Ministerial priorities.	Strongly Agree

7.4 If you disagreed with either statement in 7.2 or 7.3 please discuss the reasons here.

8. Policy Learning and Diffusion

<p>8.1 Have you taken up any APEC HRDWG initiatives at the economy level? For example, have you developed or changed a human resources, education, labour or social protection policy or programme based on a finding or outcome of a HRDWG project or policy discussion.</p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p>8.2 If so, please give examples here...If not, please explain why HRDWG initiatives have not influenced policy or programmes in your economy.</p>	
<p>8.3 Do you have any quantitative evidence of the impact of an HRDWG initiative at the economy level, for instance on a particular group or economy-level indicator or goal linked to trade or regional economic cooperation for example enhancing employment participation or productivity, increasing the uptake of corporate social responsibility or improvement in national management performance?</p>	
<p>8.4 Have you offered models, expertise and experience from your own economy in the area of human resources development, capacity building, labour and social protection to inform APEC projects and policy work?</p>	<p>Yes</p>

8.5 If so, please elaborate here...

9. Policy Dialogue/Exchange

9.1 Have you consulted or met with other APEC groups about any aspect of human resources development in regional trade, investment and economic integration?	Yes
9.2 Specifically have you talked to;	
<input type="checkbox"/> Government officials at the economy level <input type="checkbox"/> Non-APEC group at the economy level <input type="checkbox"/> Officials at APEC level <input type="checkbox"/> Non-APEC group from another economy? <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please list	
9.3 Do you maintain good working relationships with non-HRDWG focused APEC officials and working groups in your economy?	Yes
9.4 Can you give an example(s) of an occasion(s) in which you influenced their work and/or made it more aware of human resources development issues?	

10. Policy Outcomes

10.1 Do you know of an instance where an HRDWG discussion or project finding resulted in an action or policy change in APEC or in an APEC economy?	Yes
10.2 If so, please describe it below.	

10.3 What concrete outcomes of the Human Resources Development Working Group's work programme would you like to see? Please elaborate here.

11. Relationship with the Private Sector

In some APEC economies there are close relationships between HRDWG and private sector groups such as chambers of commerce and educational institutions.

11.1 Do you think there should be regular, formal consultations between the HRDWG and private sector groups?	No
11.2 Please elaborate on your answer here...	

12. Projects

The Independent Assessment will be examining all HRDWG projects using the project database. In addition, your answers to the following questions would be valuable;

12.1 Has your economy sponsored or co-sponsored an HRDWG project?	Yes
12.2 If so, can you list the titles of these projects (at least, the ones you are most familiar with) here?	
12.3 I am satisfied with the type of projects sponsored by the HRDWG.	Strongly Agree
12.4 I am satisfied with the quality of projects sponsored by the HRDWG.	Strongly Agree
12.5 If you are not satisfied with either the type or the quality of HRDWG projects what suggestions do you have about: a) the type of projects that should be sponsored by the HRDWG and; b) for how to improve their overall quality?	

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13. Project Evaluation

13.1 Have you been involved in any of the following;	
<input type="checkbox"/> Assisting HRDWG project teams with project proposals at the economy level	
<input type="checkbox"/> Assisting APEC project teams with project proposals as a HRDWG member	
<input type="checkbox"/> Evaluating HRDWG project proposals?	
13.2 What are the substantive impacts of human resources development projects that you are aware of? Please discuss any HRDWG project that you have been involved with and describe its impacts on APEC or APEC economies?	
13.3 I am satisfied with the APEC project evaluation process.	Strongly Agree
13.4 If so, why? Please elaborate here.	

14. Publicity and Awareness

14.1 How aware are your economy APEC officials of the activities of the Human Resources Development Working Group?	Very aware
14.2 Do you think there should be more publicity and marketing of the HRDWG projects and activities within APEC and beyond APEC?	Yes
14.3 Do you have any specific suggestions to better publicize and promote HRDWG projects and activities? Please provide them here.	

If you have any queries about this questionnaire please send them to Dr. Jacqui True, Independent assessor, j.true@auckland.ac.nz.