

Lessons Learned
on Employment Policy towards Natural Disaster Response
from the Special Session by the Government of Japan
on 5th December, 2011, Kyoto, Japan

Employment policy during the process of recovering and rebuilding from natural disasters is an essential issue in the Asia and the Pacific region where 40% of natural disasters in the world and 82% of the resulting casualties have occurred.

The Japanese Government arranged a special session in Kyoto on 5th December, 2011, for to share experiences and information on employment policy with respect to natural disaster response among countries in the region during the 15th Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting. In the session, governments, a trade union, an employers' organization and the ILO which have rich knowledge of natural disaster response briefed on their activities and exchanged opinions in line with the theme of "Natural Disaster Response with a Central Focus on Employment Policy."

The Senior Vice Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan, reaffirmed that policy for securing employment toward natural disaster response is one of the measures for 'Decent Work' which has been advanced by the ILO and needs linkage to social protection policy and dialogue among tripartite constituents to be carried out effectively. The Senior Vice Minister expressed his belief that participants share recognition that the dissemination of the above idea among tripartite constituents in the region has contributed towards realizing 'Decent Work'.

The Senior Vice Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan, has compiled lessons learned as follows, to share the results of the session and to ensure smooth implementation of employment policy in the face of future natural disasters.

1 The serious effect to employment by natural disasters and the importance of employment policy towards natural disaster response for recovery and restoration should be extensively noted.

2 The employment policy towards natural disaster response should be

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implemented for the purpose of recovering self-sustained livelihoods through mid-term living support of victims and securing their employment together with emergency aid for unemployment.

3 The employment policy towards natural disaster response should be implemented to promote the employment of victims in collaboration with recovery demands and according to the recovery stage.

4 Employment policy towards natural disaster response should be implemented by contributing to the Decent Work agenda as a part of social protection policy.

5 To support the employment of victims, job cultivation and job replacement services, vocational training based on restoring demand and job vacancies should be appropriately provided by public employment security organizations.

6 One-stop service centers with facilities to provide income security, to cultivate jobs, to offer job vacancies, to introduce vocational training and to carry out other necessary support for the re-employment of victims who are unemployed because of natural disasters are important for recovering the livelihoods of victims as well as the early securing of administration facilities on employment.

7 Employment policy towards natural disaster response should be carried out with consideration for the socially vulnerable since they are more likely to face difficulties.

8 Employment policy towards natural disaster response should be formulated based on dialogue with employers, employees, local governments and other relevant bodies.

9 It should be recognized that other areas not damaged by natural disaster could face an employment crisis based on slowing economic activities in the damaged area.

10 Employment policy towards natural disaster response should be ready for immediate implementation when it is necessary. It should be taken note that

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if employment and labour policy and social protection schemes are prepared in times of calm and stability, applying them for emergency response can ease damage.

11 The implementation of recovery efforts through the private sector partners can contribute to enabling smooth and effective recovery processes that create employment. Partnerships between businesses in recovery are also effective mechanisms to promote sustainable recovery both for workers and employers.

12 Appropriate measures for occupational safety and health in recovering and restoring the construction field should be carried out. Employed victims in the construction sector should be provided additional information on occupational safety and health.

13 The ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific is expected to collect experience on natural disaster response with a central focus on employment policy in the Asia and the Pacific area commencing with Japan, such as presented at this special session and to prepare dissemination to each country towards future natural disasters.

14 In order to realize Decent Work, the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific should take action to support the damaged area by providing know-how and carrying out aid there, etc. in coordination and cooperation with the government and relevant bodies when a large-scale disaster strikes in the region.