Summary of the 13th Emergency Preparedness Working Group Meeting

Purpose: Consideration
Submitted by: EPWG Co-Chairs
Summary of the Meeting
13th Emergency Preparedness Working Group Meeting
Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea
24 - 25 February 2018

1. The 13th Emergency Preparedness Working Group was held in Hotel Laguna, Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea on 24–25 February 2018. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Li Wei-Sen (Chinese Taipei) as EPWG Co-Chair.

2. The meeting attended by 11 out of 21 APEC Economies namely: Australia; Chile; China; Indonesia; Japan; Republic of Korea; Papua New Guinea; Russia; Singapore; Chinese Taipei; and United States.

Agenda Item 1: Welcome Remarks by Host Economy

3. Mr. Ruel Yamuna, Managing Director Climate Change and Development Authority of Papua New Guinea opened the meeting and at his welcoming remarks, he listed down a number of disasters happened in early 2018 in APEC Economies, and that was just at the beginning of the year, he said. He further reported on preparation for the 12th SDMOF in Kokopo which will take the theme of “Advancing Multi Hazard Early Warning Systems for Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Risk Management”, and this theme is connected to the broader 2018 hosting theme of “Harnessing Inclusive Opportunity and Embracing the Digital Future”. Finally, he emphasized that improving warnings, taking a multi-hazard approach and using digital tools were needed to ensure that anyone threatened by disaster is enabled to take timely action to reduce this threat. The focus should not be on the most digitally connected but on those who, like many in Papua New Guinea live on isolated islands or deep in the mountains.

Agenda Item 2: Opening Remarks by Co-chairs

4. Dr. Wei-Sen Li, Co-Chair EPWG delivered his opening remarks and stated that as the new EPWG Co-Chair for period of 2018 – 2019, he proposed for this meeting to have some collaboration for some agenda items. Since establishment of EPWG, EPWG has been working in a unique way in regard of the disasters risk reduction by combining commercial/private sectors with community level. The EPWG wanted to bring disaster risk reduction into real life and the meeting should not only reporting or information sharing but also how to change attitude and to improve disaster management governance in this region. In the last few years, promising developments were happening in this region. For example, the Philippines just set up a National Resilience Council which 50% from the Government officials and 50% from the private sector. However, the group is currently facing some challenges in particular related to participation and quorum issue as SOM mandated all APEC fora to have 14 APEC economies attended the meeting to reach quorum. In this connection, the meeting should discuss how to engage more participation by all member economies. EPWG also shared a lot of outcomes and knowledge on technology. This year Co-chair will also emphasize on improving early warning system and information sharing. The major challenge for EPWG is also no key document to support EPWG’s work in particular for securing APEC funding for project, as there were some changes in BMC rule. In that connection, the group needs to find good document to secure and support the work. Lastly, co-chair welcomed economies active participation in the current meeting and sincerely invited input from delegations. Co-Chair was confident that by active contribution by economies, assistance from Program Director and Co-Chair, the group would show real collaboration and show to APEC family that EPWG is the real working group who cares about how to ensure secured and safer environment.

Agenda Item 3: Adoption of the Annotated Agenda of the 13th EPWG Meeting

5. The Draft Agenda of EPWG was formally adopted (2018/SOM1/EPWG/001).
Agenda Item 4: Papua New Guinea 2018 Theme and Priorities

6. Papua New Guinea APEC SOM and Director General of the PNG APEC Secretariat on behalf of the SOM Chair welcomed all delegates to the 13th EPWG Meeting and thanked them for their participation in the EPWG and their continued support towards PNG’s hosting of APEC 2018. He then presented on the 2018 theme and policy priorities. The theme for 2018 is “Harnessing Inclusive Opportunities, Embracing the Digital Future”. The theme seeks to drive APEC’s collective work on growth and connectivity, and brings to the fore discussions on the digital future that APEC beyond 2020 can embrace. With the theme, In 2018 PNG seeks to continue to promote the notion of quality growth and advance the APEC Leaders’ Growth Strategy as well as to harness a discussion on digital economy, and how can APEC seize opportunities and respond to challenges associated with it. Under this theme, there were three policy priorities: (i) Policy Priority 1: Improving Digital Connectivity, deepening Regional Economic Integration; (ii) Policy Priority 2: Promoting Inclusive and Sustainable Growth; and (iii) Policy Priority 3: Strengthening Inclusive Economic Growth through Structural reform. He further informed the meeting on 2018 Notional Calendar including SOM 3 on 4 – 20 August 2018 (2018/SOM1/EPWG/010).

7. Japan expressed their sincere appreciation for the host economy for great arrangement of the meeting and the hospitality extended to the delegation. Japan also congratulated the inauguration of Dr. Li Wei-Sen as the new EPWG Co-chair and looked forward to working with Chair and EPWG this year.

8. Co-Chair on behalf of the EPWG expressed appreciation for the update by PNG SOM and reminded that the group will still have 2 more important activities this year. Next one will be in August 2018 and the other one is Senior Disaster Management Officials Forum in September which later will be presented by PNG.

9. United States also expressed their gratitude for PNG wonderful hospitalities and seek clarification for SOM2 date. SOM PNG clarified that SOM 2 will be on 11-26 May 2018.

Agenda Item 5: 12th EPWG Meeting Summary Report


Agenda Item 6: Administrative and Logistic Arrangements

11. Host Economy Representative announced administrative and logistic arrangements including dinner invitation hosted by Climate Change and Development Authority in collaboration with PNG APEC Authority.

Agenda Item 7: Major outcomes from the 2017

12. Co-Chair reported that in 2017, EPWG held 2 (two) EPWG Meetings, one in February and one in August. In April there was an APEC Summit on Resilience and Capacity Building Training Workshop on Promoting Business Connectivity (EPCC), in May EPWG had collaboration with MSMEWG regarding APEC O2O Expert Network Meeting, and in August there was APEC Workshop on Promoting Policies, Regulations and Flexibility to Improve Resilience of Supply Chains (with TPTWG). 11th Senior Disaster Management Officials Forum was also held in September back to back with APEC Workshop on Build Back Better of Infrastructure Supporting Industries in Region held by Japan as the PO. In December in Santiago, there was APEC Seminar for evaluation of Tsunamis 2017 (2018/SOM1/EPWG/019).

Agenda Item 8: Preparation for 12th SDMOF

13. Papua New Guinea updated on their preparation for the 12th SDMOF. The Forum will be held on 25 – 26 September 2018 in Kokopo with the theme of “Advancing Multi Hazards Early Warning Systems for Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Risk Management. As APEC Economies are very prone to natural disasters, thus APEC economies need to improve the understanding of hazards and use this knowledge to reduce threats to at-risk populations,
with improved multi-hazard warning playing a key role in achieving a reduction of disaster impacts (2018/SOM1/EPWG/013). The purpose of the meeting is to: (i) Identify multi-hazards monitoring and warning system best practices, including digital technology to collect, store, analyze and communicate warnings, (ii) Identify additional research, technological developments and scientific knowledge needed to improve monitoring and warning, (iii) Document data collection, processing, and dissemination best practices for geological, hydrological and meteorological hazards using a multi-hazard approach, and (iv) Document digital technologies best practice in communicating warnings lead mitigation or adaptation. Expected outcomes from the forum are among other policy statements and recommendations to ensure early warning systems monitor multiple hazards in a coordinated and efficient manner to reduce disaster impacts, best practices on the use of digital technology to collect, store, and analyze monitoring and warning data, identification of research requirements to improve monitoring and warning, as well as best practices in using digital technology for the effective communication of warnings. Papua New Guinea further presented a policy paper for member economies’ inputs and comments (2018/SOM1/EPWG/012).

14. Japan thanked PNG for the proposal and stated that early warning was one of the key issues in disaster risk reduction that also involved other issues such as risk communication because the message should be understand by wider communities.

15. Papua New Guinea Representative also presented on Disaster Risk Management in Papua New Guinea. In his presentation he mentioned on the overview on PNG landscape and situation which consists of diverse Geological Meteorological and Hydrological hazards, Disaster Risk in PNG which according to Disaster Risk Index 2017 PNG is highly exposed to tsunamis and earthquakes. He further elaborated on DRM Architecture in PNG, current DRM initiatives, National DRR Framework 2017 – 2030, and some challenges such as lack of comprehensive DRM agenda at different levels. Limited understanding of roles and responsibilities, as well as technical capability gaps (2018/SOM1/EPWG/014).

Agenda Item 9: Discussion on EPWG 2018 Workplan including Project Implementation

16. Co-chair presented the proposed EPWG 2018 Workplan that was endorsed intersessionally. He stated that the Document is a living document and invited member economies if there are further activities to add to the document, the chair welcomed it (2018/SOM1/EPWG/003).

17. Japan updated on the status of EPWG 02 2016A: Enhancing Rural Disaster Resilience through Effective Infrastructure Investment, which she informed that the project was extended for a few months to facilitate outcome of the project. She mentioned that the purpose of the project is to promote quality infrastructure investment to enhance disaster risk resilience, in particular, in rural and non-metropolitan areas, by focusing on “Rehabilitation and Build Back Better (BBB) of infrastructure. The components of the project include (i) identify best practices and challenges of infrastructure BBB in Chinese Taipei, Indonesia, Japan, Philippines, Vietnam and USA; (ii) organize a workshop in Vinh city, Viet Nam, back to back SDMOF, and (iii) compile a case book for promoting resilient infrastructure investment. She summarized the essence of the casebook by presenting three major types of the cases including those of immediate recovery facilitating BBB, transport networks upgrading connectivity, and community based infrastructure, followed by key lessons learnt from the cases (2018/SOM1/EPWG/020). PO invited member economies to provide comments and further inputs on the draft.

18. United States thanked Japan for the report and the work that the PO has done for the project while commented that in post disaster there is a challenge to build back quickly. In that connection, he suggested that perhaps the concept may be broaden to retrofit better of key infrastructure to make it stronger rather than waiting until the building and infrastructure damaged by disasters. This may be more cost efficiency.

19. Chile updated on EPWG 01 2017A: EPWG 01 2017A implementation on Tsunami Threat Assessment for Tsunami Warning Centers of APEC Economies. The workshop was held in Santiago on 5 – 7 December 2017. The workshop aimed to be a space where the experts could share and discuss the most advance and cutting-edge tools used in assessment of tsunami threats by the principal Tsunami Warning Centers (TWC) and with the participations
of experts from Australia, Chile, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Spain and United States of America, the presentations focused on the strengths and weaknesses of each system, based on the varied tsunami risks. They also highlighted the role of the NGO’s in reducing the loss of life and the damages in critical infrastructure associated to tsunamis. One of the main conclusion of the workshop was all experts and participants agreed that this project should have a follow up event in 2019, destined to assess the advances made in each APEC Economy after this workshop (2018/SOM1/EPWG/004). Japan thanked and congratulated Chile for successful outcome of the workshop and informed that Japan would have workshop on Mega disaster including tsunami, and would build up from outcome of this project.

20. Japan updated on EPWG 02 2017A: EPWG 02 2017 progress report– Identifying Economic Impacts by Mega Disasters Affecting Asia Pacific Economies. Japan mentioned that they would organize an APEC workshop to discuss economic impact of mega disaster affecting Asia Pacific Region including indirect impact through supply chain and production chain, as well as direct impact of disaster. The workshop is planned to be held at the end of October most probably 29 October 2018 and would be held back to back with the ADRC, Asian Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in order to facilitate wider participation including participation by other non APEC economies and private sector. Japan requested the Economies to give input based on each experience on estimated economic impact derived from mega disasters as it is not simple to estimate real impact including indirect impact on economic activities.

21. Chinese Taipei reported on the progress of EPWG 03 2017A: EPWG 03 2017A implementation on Capacity Building and Emergency Preparedness for Sustainable Development at Agricultural Communities through “Plant Back Better” (PBB) Initiatives. Currently the project was in the stage on selection of ideal communities for the pilot project and the requirements for selecting pilot area are strong leadership, active participations, and easy accessibility to the selective communities and most important is good communication since PO wanted to introduce some ICT idea for PBB. PO also wished to understand potential risks, minor social issue, and quality infrastructure on communication as having good communication exchange is also the key to successful project. At the end, PO will hold a workshop and will produce a toolkit or guidebook (2018/SOM1/EPWG/018).

Agenda Item 10: Review Intersessional Work and upcoming project proposal if any/Proposed project for EPWG

22. Co-Chair briefed economies to provide updates on intersessional work undertaken since the last EPWG meeting and invite member economies if there is Concept Note to be submitted for Project Session 1 - 2018. Co-Chair then informed some changes in the BMC process and new mechanism for submitting project proposal for APEC funding. The aim for the new process was to simplify and enhance efficiency. The Concept Note should also be more in line with hosting year priorities and now, there is no need for the group to fill Quality Assessment Form as well as to score. So no more peer - review by EPWG. Co-chair further raised concern that EPWG does not have main key outcome document endorsed by Leaders to link the project if EPWG wanted to apply fund.

Agenda Item 11: Recent major Disasters and DRR policy implementation

23. Australia presented on Lessons and Reforms from the recent Disasters including Tropical Cyclone Debbie that happened on 28 March to 7 April 2017. The cyclone categorized as Cat 4 – severe tropical cyclones which caused damage cost to nearly 2.4 billion Australian Dollar and affected infrastructure, tourism and agriculture. Australia also presented on recent unusual events that happened in early 2018. Further, in his presentation, he also mentioned Domestic Mitigation Framework initiative such as reducing existing risk, avoiding creating new risk and ensuring required information is available. The Five-year plan focuses on domestic disaster risk information platform, identifying the country’s highest priority natural hazards risks, as well as embedding disaster risk reduction into decision making processes (2018/SOM1EPWG/011).

24. The United States presented on several large disasters in the United States in 2017, mainly 3 major hurricanes and wild fires. He was first informed the role of FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency which was in charge of coordinating government efforts to support disaster management include among other mitigation, response, operation planning
for government, preparedness, and recovery. He further elaborated on Hurricane Harvey,
Hurricane Irma, Hurricane Maria, as well as the response taking and international assistance.
He also informed on California wildfires, its economic losses as well as destruction caused
by it. Finally, he mentioned about challenges and FEMA’s strategic priorities for moving
forwards (2018/SOM1/EPWG/005).

25. Japan briefed on recent disasters in Japan including Kyushu Flood in July. She mentioned
that in 2017 there were in total 27 typhoons recorded, eight approached Japan including the
four (Typhoon No. 3, No. 5, No. 18 and No. 21.) that made landfalls. She then elaborated on
each typhoon and damage caused by them and Government measures. Apart from typhoon,
she informed about Kusatsu Shirane Volcano eruption and heavy snow falls
(2018/SOM1/EPWG/022).

26. Papua New Guinea gave a presentation on El Nino that was happening in PNG in 2015 –
2016. This El Nino lead to drought and frost affecting 20% of the population and caused
a severe food and water insecurity, suspension of mining operations, destruction of cash crops
and depletion of personal savings with response cost of at least $85 million. He further
mentioned that in early 2017 there was a projection of or early warning of 60/70% of El Nino
in 2017 which further PNG took a downscaled country-level risk assessment with adaptation
of El Nino Risk Assessment methodology, El Nino preparedness planning and policy

27. Papua New Guinea also presented on Kadovar volcano eruption. He first gave a background
on Kadovar volcano, which is a home to over 600 people, and activities before it erupted in
6 January 2018. He explained that as there was a few weeks of increased seismicity,
residents were self-evacuated to neighboring Island before eruption. Eruption began with
moderate explosions from summit vents producing ash clouds rising 600 to 800m. He further
informed on government coordination and response to the Kadovar eruption, decision to
evacuate to mainland, and some challenges arise (2018/SOM1/EPWG/016).

28. Korea briefed on Pohang Earthquake that hit Korea on 15 November 2017 with magnitude
of 5.4, which there were 91 aftershocks. He also elaborated on earthquakes in Korea and
damages caused by them, major response and recovery, major issues and future plan. He
emphasized that rapid decision-making and civil-government-military cooperation is
important component for effective recovery. For Korea future plan he mentioned that Korea
will among other improve alarming response time by upgrading response manuals, more
earthquake education and trainings for the public, enhanced recovery standards and
emergency relief for the displaced people as well as improved seismic safety regulations

29. Chinese Taipei shared their experience on recent Hualien earthquake that hit Chinese Taipei
in February 6 2018. He elaborated on numbers and facts related to the earthquake including
intensity, casualties, and damages. He further shared the findings and lessons learned from
the earthquake and response, which among other private-owned for public buildings could
be hot spots to focus on checking seismic capacity, information preparedness to conduct
screening and highlighting disaster hotspots and early warning system to alert citizen for
upcoming hits sent through the cell broadcasting service to mobile phone. (2018/SOM1/EPWG/021)

30. Russia Federation presented on Development of the Russian Disaster Management System
and International Cooperation. She was first elaborated on the system of Natural Disasters
Emergencies Prevention in the Russian Federation, the results of Unified State System for
the Emergencies Prevention and Response in 2012 – 2017 including reduced number of
emergencies by 41% as well as in fires, accidents, disasters and emergency situations,
185,404 people were saved. She also informed on Russia Federation important documents
of the domestic strategic planning, development of space monitoring technologies for
disaster monitoring and forecasting, as well as international cooperation. She further briefed
on Global network of disaster management centers as part of international cooperation
efforts among international disaster management centers in different steps of emergency
management cycle (2018/SOM1/EPWG/017).

31. China to brief recovery and reconstructions from 2008 Sichuan Earthquakes including some
construction done after the earthquake which almost took 3 years to rebuild and
reconstruction and now the city has new look which much better look than before. As the area is very prone to natural disasters it is very important to raise awareness to the area and reconstruction was done by taking into account the vulnerability of the area in which China was focusing on Build Back Better (2018/SOM1/EPWG/025).

Agenda Item 12: DRR policy priorities and APEC DRR Framework implementation.

32. Japan reported on GLIDE proposed by Asian Disaster Reduction Center for DRR information sharing: Global Unique Disaster Identifier that has been widely used for effective sharing of disaster information and data sources among diverse organizations which also facilitates identifying APEC wide effects of natural disasters. She informed that GLIDE numbers issued from 2001 to 2016 were approximately 5200 and in 2017, there were 197 GLIDE numbers issued which included 48 for APEC economies. She further informed on background of GLIDE, and showed how GLIDE could be used as an effective information sharing tool for natural disasters including identifying a typhoon and relevant disasters affecting many economies. She also shared that GLIDE could be used as a key tool to facilitate identifying natural disasters, linking databases developed for diverse DRR purposes by different organizations and sharing information and establishing knowledge bases for DRR cooperation beyond borders (2018/SOM1/EPWG/023).

33. Co-chair informed also recent development in APEC economies regarding DRR policy priorities including in the Philippines, which just set up Disaster Resilient Council, composed of public and private sector as well as in Viet Nam, which just set up Directorate Disaster Prevention and Control.

34. Peru through video gave presentation on natural disasters in Peru in particular El Nino, its impacts, type of emergency, as well as efforts taken by INDECI to response to those disasters.

Agenda Item 13: APEC Cross-Fora Report and Outreaching Collaborations

35. Japan presented Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) activities in relation to DRR priorities facing Asia Pacific Region as a case of regional international cooperation. For DRR in Asia She elaborated that ADRC has been working with 30 members with focused on information and knowledge sharing, human resources development, and cooperation with members, international or regional organizations and NGOs. She informed on major natural disaster happened in APEC economies, some international conferences organized by ADRC, priority issues in recent years raised and discussed among ADRC members, ADRC programs, and upcoming programs including ADRC Conference which will be end in October 2018 back to back with APEC Workshop on Economic Impact from Major Disasters for wider participations (2018/SOM1/EPWG/024).

36. Co-chair informed the meeting on initiative undertaken in collaboration with Manila Observatory on data recovery and media enterprise. The initiative will also involve SM supermarket in the Philippines on how to recover quickly after the event of disasters. This initiative is related to Business Continuity Plan (BCP). In this collaboration, there will be one mall selected in Makati Area as the area is suffering from flood.

37. Asia Disaster Prevention Center Executive Director from Bangkok through skype conference briefed the meeting on ADPC activities in particular to enhance its members' capacity to deal with disaster, current focus of ADPC including science and technology, and ADPC collaboration with other related APEC fora and centers. At the end of his presentation, he reiterated ADPC wishes to establish a more sustainable relation with EPWG by among other becoming observer of EPWG in order to support more of EPWG activities. ADPC has also established cooperation with PNG and hope could join the upcoming EPWG meeting.

Agenda Item 14: Report of the Secretariat

38. APEC Secretariat presented an update on the project management process in particular key dates on project session 1 – 2018, funds available, new model for approval process,
Responsible APEC Fora (RAF), priority for 2018, eligibility for specific sub-fund, and key advice for project implementation (2018/SOM1/EPWG/008). At the end of her presentation, she presented and informed on Manila Declaration as a reference document for EPWG to apply for APEC funding (2018/SOM1/EPWG/007). Co-chair highlighted that currently the process is very complicated in particular after BMC approval. In that connection, Co-chair suggested to consult PD for Concept Note submission to check on its quality.

39. Secretariat also formally tabled the updated EPWG Term of Reference that was endorsed by the group intersessionally and will be submitted to SCE for their consideration in the upcoming SCE Meeting. This updated ToR was mandated by SOM as part of Governance reform in APEC. The new ToR has sunset clause and quorum component, which consist of 14 economies. In connection of quorum, Secretariat also reported that at this EPWG meeting was only attended by 11 economies and EPWG will have one more chance to meet the quorum otherwise it will be subject to SOM review (2018/SOM1/EPWG/009). Co-chair informed that perhaps he will explore to have joint meeting or agenda with other fora such as Health Working Group, TPT WG or PPSTI, and try to increase non APEC members to participate or not having the meeting in the very beginning of SOM. By this hopefully EPWG could meet the quorum for next meeting.

Agenda Item 15: Documentation Classification List

40. APEC Secretariat together with participants reviewed the Document Classification List and to see whether the classification and purpose of all documents were correctly reflected. The meeting endorsed the Document Classification List (2018/SOM1/EPWG/000).

Agenda Item 16: Next Meeting of EPWG

41. Papua New Guinea informed that the next EPWG Meeting will be held in SOM 3 cluster which will be held from 4 to 20 August 2018.

Agenda Item 17: Other Business

42. Co-Chairs invited member economies to raise any other issues if any before closing of the meeting and no economy raised any other issue.

43. On the issue of selection of second co-chair for 2018-2019, Co-chairs also reminded that EPWG should have two Co-chairs according to EPWG ToR. Co-chair further suggested continuing the discussion intersessionally and encouraged member economies to voluntary nominate for co-chair.

Agenda Item 18: Closing Remarks

44. At the end of the meeting, EPWG Co-chair conveyed his sincere appreciation to the host economy for their hospitality and excellent arrangement for the meeting. He invited participants to join him for applause and invited members to attend the upcoming EPWG meeting.

- End of the 13th EPWG Meeting-