



SOCIALLY SENSITIVE ENTERPRISE RESTRUCTURING IN ASIA: COUNTRY CONTEXT AND EXAMPLES

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Globalization and liberalization of trade increase competition and accelerate change in business environments. To be competitive and survive, enterprises should prepare for new challenges driven by changes in global and regional trends. Many enterprises feel pressured to transform their corporate strategies and structures to adapt to new economic conditions. Restructuring, a profound change in the way a company operates, is no longer an option but a vital requirement for corporate survival and growth. However, as society demands that enterprises assume a more socially responsible role, numerous workers, governments, and even employers believe that restructuring should be carried out in a socially sensitive manner.

Over the years, the APO and International Labour Organization (ILO) have been involved in a number of joint productivity-related activities addressing not only economic issues but also social dimensions, labor-management relations, and recently corporate social responsibility. In 2005, both institutions expressed interest in pursuing a joint project aimed at a better understanding of policy implications in the area of productivity and industrial restructuring. As a result, the Joint APO-ILO Survey on Socially Sensitive Enterprise Restructuring (SSER) in Asia was undertaken. The objective was to increase awareness of the need for SSER among Asian policymakers and enterprise managers. The main question the APO and ILO sought to answer was how an economy, a sector, or an enterprise can restructure with maximum economic benefit and minimum social cost.

The Coordination Meeting of the APO-ILO Survey on SSER in Asia was held in Vietnam, 19–23 December 2005. The meeting brought together experts from the Republic of Korea, Republic of China, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines. Professor Randall S. Schuler, State University of New Jersey, USA, acted as the chief expert. National experts deliberated on the survey framework and methodology as well as major issues and areas that should be included in the final report. Subsequently, each collected information on SSER in their country from the latest and most reliable sources and investigated several examples of enterprises that had gone through a restructuring process.

This volume is a compilation of the national experts' reports. "The selections in this book highlight the dynamics of several Asia-Pacific countries as they confront global realities and trends and address the need for adjustment and adoption," Dr. Schuler commented. This book also contains a Summary Report prepared by Dr. Schuler and Dr. Nikolai Rogovsky, ILO, and Concluding Comments on SSER by Dr. Rogovsky. Dr. Rogovsky expressed the hope "that if enterprises and policymakers choose to act according to the recommendations presented in this publication, the relations between the enterprise and its environment will become a win-win relationship, focused on long-term success, and will generate a better social climate, favorable to economic growth and peaceful social relations for the advantages of both the enterprises and its environment."

This publication is available both in hard copy and in e-edition on the APO Web site.

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