



WAPES Asia-Pacific Regional Conference 2025

“The Future of Work: Inclusive Public Employment Services Adapting to Demographic Realities in the Asia-Pacific”

Royce Hotel, Clark City, Pampanga, The Philippines

06-07 November 2025

Hosted by

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE)



Disclaimer

This publication was produced jointly by the World Association of Public Employment Services (WAPES) and the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) following the WAPES Asia-Pacific Regional Conference held in Clark City, 06-07 November 2025.

The information, analyses, and opinions presented herein reflect the contributions of the conference speakers and participants. They do not necessarily represent the official views of WAPES, DOLE, or any participating institution.



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A. A Brief Overview

The WAPES Asia-Pacific Regional Conference 2025 brought together government officials, PES leaders, development partners, private sector representatives, and practitioners from across the region — both in person and online — to examine how Public Employment Services (PES) can adapt to the profound demographic and technological transformations shaping the future of work.

Over two days of rich dialogue, the conference reaffirmed a shared vision: building inclusive, digital, and human-centered employment services that ensure every person — young or old, migrant or local — can access decent work and opportunity.

This report synthesizes the key insights, discussions, and commitments that emerged throughout the event.

B. Opening Feature – The WAPES–Japan Joint Project: A Model of Regional Peer Learning

The conference opened with a presentation of the WAPES–Japan Joint Project (2019–2026), led by Ms. Minako Takasaki. This initiative has become a flagship model of cross-border cooperation, supporting Cambodia (2019–2024) and, now, the Philippines (2025–2026) in strengthening their national employment services.

Central to the project is its peer-learning framework, grounded in:

- self-assessment instruments,
- workshops and mutual learning exchanges,
- study visits to Japan’s “Hello Work” system.

This approach illustrates that innovation gains its full impact when it is shared across institutions, and becomes truly regional when it is grounded in trust, mutual learning, and sustained collaboration.

C. Panel I – Ageing Societies and the Employability of Older Workers

The first panel explored how PES can turn demographic ageing into opportunity.

Experts from India, Japan, and Indonesia emphasized that:

- ageing populations are reshaping labour markets across the region;
- active ageing policies and lifelong learning are essential;
- removing age-related biases is critical to sustaining inclusive employment;
- older workers contribute valuable experience, institutional memory, and stability.

The Japanese experience, through the “Hello Work” system, illustrated how supportive policies, counselling, and flexible arrangements can extend working lives. Indonesia highlighted the concept of a “**second demographic bonus**”, where seniors remain productive contributors when adequate support is in place.

This panel underscored how Public Employment Services can help societies respond effectively to demographic transformations by supporting older workers’ employability and participation, ensuring that adaptation to population ageing goes hand in hand with inclusive labour market integration where no one is left behind.

D. Panel II – Technology for Youth: Smoother Transitions from School to Work

The second panel examined how digital innovation is transforming youth employment services.

Key examples included:

- **Philippines (private sector):** technology-enabled learning and partnerships to engage young talent;
- **Malaysia:** AI-driven labour market systems (MYFutureJobs, Labour Market Exchange) creating personalized pathways;
- **Cambodia:** a comprehensive digital PES ecosystem (CPES) including mobile apps, online job fairs, and modernized career guidance tools.

These initiatives show how technology can **connect young people to jobs, information, and skills more efficiently than ever before** — but only if digital inclusion is ensured.

The discussion highlighted how digital innovation is empowering the region's youth and modernizing PES operations, underscoring that technology not only transforms the way services are delivered but also strengthens connections across borders.

E. Panel III – Migration, Labour Mobility, and the Future Workforce

With ageing populations and widening skill shortages, international labour mobility is playing a growing role across the region.

The panel highlighted that:

- well-governed migration benefits both origin and destination countries;
- fair recruitment and migrant protection must remain central principles;
- PES play a crucial role not only in job matching abroad, but also in reintegration at home;
- cooperation among countries is essential to managing labour mobility sustainably.

This perspective reinforces the idea that Public Employment Services act as catalysts of inclusion and opportunity, playing a vital role in connecting people to dignified work both domestically and abroad.

F. Panel IV – Digital Transformation of Public Employment Services

The final panel showcased how digitalization can make PES more efficient, responsive, and insight-driven.

Presentations by the private sector (Aboitiz Group), WCC Group (Netherlands), and the Korea Employment Information Service demonstrated innovations such as:

- interoperable job-matching platforms,
- big-data systems for labour market forecasting,
- AI-powered skills profiling and job recommendations,
- integrated portals that connect jobseekers, employers, and training providers.

These examples highlight how digital tools can extend the reach of PES, especially in geographically diverse countries — while also reminding governments of the need to ensure rural inclusion and adequate digital infrastructure.

The discussions emphasized that when used thoughtfully, technology can make Public Employment Services more human—enhancing their capacity to connect people to dignity, opportunity, and better futures.

G. Study Visit – PESO–Enterprise Convergence in Pampanga

Participants experienced firsthand how the Philippines is integrating PESOs into enterprise ecosystems. The visit demonstrated:

- strong partnerships between DOLE, PESOs, and industries;
- robust workforce development practices;
- innovative employer–PES coordination mechanisms.

This visit reinforced the central theme of the conference: collaboration is the foundation for future-ready employment systems.

H. A Conference Rooted in Unity and Shared Purpose

Throughout the sessions, a consistent message emerged: the strength of WAPES lies in its unity and in its collective capacity to transform challenges into shared progress.

The APRC demonstrated that:

- despite geographical distances, WAPES members share a common mission—connecting people to decent work and better lives;
- cooperation across countries amplifies impact;
- digital tools serve as powerful enablers of this shared ambition.

The conference also highlighted the essential role of partnership, with contributions from DOLE, PESOMAP, KEIS, Japan, Cambodia, and other members illustrating how regional solidarity fosters innovation and strengthens resilience across Public Employment Services.

I. APRC 2025 Resolution – A Roadmap for the Future

The **Resolution adopted on 7 November 2025** reflects the collective commitments reaffirmed during the conference. Delegates agreed to:

- **promote active ageing** and support the continued employability of older workers;
- **empower youth** through technology-enabled pathways and education;
- **enhance cooperation on migration and labour mobility**;
- **accelerate digital transformation** across PES systems;
- **deepen regional partnerships and capacity-building**, especially through WAPES peer-learning initiatives.

The Resolution adopted at the APRC is presented not merely as a document, but as a shared roadmap that will guide collective action in the years ahead.

J. Closing Reflections – A Human-Centered Future for WAPES

The conclusion of the conference captured the spirit that had defined the APRC throughout its sessions: deep appreciation for the hospitality and professionalism of the Philippines; recognition of the region's creativity, warmth, and leadership; and a celebration of the cultural richness experienced in Pampanga.

The discussions reaffirmed that WAPES is united not only through technical cooperation, but also through shared values and strong human connections. A collective call to action emerged - to move forward with renewed purpose, strengthen collaboration, foster innovation, and work together to build a future of work grounded in dignity, opportunity, and inclusion for every worker in every country.

These reflections encapsulate the essence of APRC 2025: a conference that was not only productive, but profoundly inspiring.

K. Looking Ahead

The insights gathered in Clark City will guide the next phase of WAPES initiatives, including:

- the continued implementation of the WAPES–Japan Joint Project;
- expanded regional peer-learning programmes;
- enhanced support for digital transformation;
- strengthened collaboration among Public Employment Services.

The conference ultimately reaffirmed a clear outlook for the future: WAPES emerges stronger, more connected, and more inspired to serve workers and employers across the globe.

L. Quotes

“We have witnessed profound transformations in the world of work. This conference gives us an important opportunity to strengthen our collaboration, learn from the best practices of WAPES member states, and adapt together. It is a moment to sit down, share insights, and build mechanisms of cooperation that ensure everyone benefits — our people, our countries, and our governments.”

— *Bienvenido E. Laguesma, Secretary of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Philippines*

“Beyond technical cooperation, what truly unites us in WAPES are the shared values and human connections that drive our commitment to better employment services worldwide.”

— *Amandine Moignard, Executive Secretary of the World Association of Public Employment Services (WAPES)*

“Demographic change is not just a trend — it is a human reality that challenges us to rethink how we ensure opportunity, solidarity, and inclusion across generations”

— *Greta Metka Barbo Škerbinc, President of WAPES, Director General of the Employment Service of the Republic of Slovenia*

M. Visual Annex



Source: WAPES & DOLE

About the Hosts

The conference was hosted by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) in close cooperation with WAPES. Sessions were held in Clark City, in the Pampanga region, and were complemented by social events highlighting the Philippines' rich cultural heritage.

Participants also had the opportunity to observe firsthand how the Philippines is integrating Public Employment Service Offices (PESOs) into local enterprise ecosystems, offering a practical illustration of the country's commitment to modernizing employment services.