



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR



NATIONAL EMERGENCY GRANT PROMISING PRACTICES SERIES: WORKING ACROSS BOUNDARIES IN PLANNING A REGIONAL NEG RESPONSE

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ABOUT THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY GRANT PROMISING PRACTICES SERIES

States and local areas that administer National Emergency Grants (NEGs) have developed a growing body of expertise in the effective management of these grants. The *National Emergency Grant Promising Practices Series* is a compilation of ten documents whose purpose is to highlight and share some exemplary approaches that were instrumental in preparing for, planning, and implementing a NEG. The intent of disseminating these effective methodologies on a broad, national level is to facilitate the continuous improvement of NEG project operations and to promote peer-to-peer information-sharing among practitioners.

The information presented in the *NEG Promising Practices Series* was gleaned from a study, which focused on the in-depth review of fifteen NEG projects that varied in type, size, and scope. Collectively, these projects represent an investment of \$282,377,589 made by the Department of Labor (DOL) that helped states assist dislocated workers obtain reemployment in the aftermath of a large layoff or disaster-related event. The insights shared by these grantees were synthesized for dissemination, resulting in a set of promising practices that build upon four broad themes:

- ✚ *Infrastructure and Readiness.* How grantees have organized state and local delivery systems to ensure effective and efficient use of NEG resources;
- ✚ *Planning and Start-Up.* How grantees have mobilized key resources and stakeholders to facilitate effective grant planning and implementation;
- ✚ *Program Design and Implementation.* What specific interventions and services have been implemented to support the unique reemployment needs of dislocated workers; and
- ✚ *Institutional Results.* How NEG investments have directly or indirectly resulted in an enhanced capacity to respond to unexpected economic events.

Listed below are the ten documents, which comprise the *National Emergency Grant Promising Practices Series*. Each review addresses a specific area of NEG management and has been written to emphasize the specific planning, design, and operational decisions that contributed to successful retraining and reemployment strategies.

- ✚ *Working Across Boundaries in Planning a Regional NEG Response*
- ✚ *Expanding NEG Training Capacity Through Partnerships with Community Colleges*
- ✚ *Aligning NEG Strategies with High Growth Sectors and Occupations*
- ✚ *Peer Support Systems that Strengthen Outreach and Participation*
- ✚ *Preparing for the Unexpected in Disaster Grants*
- ✚ *Establishing and Managing a Temporary Jobs Program*
- ✚ *Implementing Transition Teams to Lead the Dislocation Response*
- ✚ *Partnering with Organized Labor to Support Reemployment*
- ✚ *Coordinating Resources to Meet the Reemployment Challenge*
- ✚ *Using Data Strategically to Align Job Seekers and Occupational Demand*

PREVIEW

Neither natural disasters nor economic dislocations are constrained by geographic borders or program jurisdictions that comprise the workforce investment system. An effective NEG response is often contingent upon the ability of planners and practitioners to work across these boundaries. Successful collaboration across regions and states is driven by shared commitment to the provision of workforce services to dislocated workers and recognition that the end result is best achieved through a collaborative effort that entails leveraging resources across jurisdictional lines as well as aligning policies and systems.

Beyond commitment, collaboration requires a willingness to proactively identify and share resources, expertise, processes, and past experiences. Not only will this avoid unnecessary duplication, but it potentially enhances the speed of the response by avoiding “reinventing the wheel.” This blueprint will discuss how NEG projects are enhanced when grantees commit to collaboration and communication that span across traditional boundaries. These efforts may positively impact the following phases of a NEG’s lifespan, resulting in desirable outcomes that collectively contribute to the ultimate goal of the reemployment of dislocated workers:

- ✚ *Planning and Start-up.* Broader stakeholder base to support NEG planning; improved capacity to leverage community resources; and shared understanding of common issues and resource needs.
- ✚ *Program Design and Implementation.* Improved ability to access to affected populations and customize a response; more efficient and impactful use of system resources; greater access to training, education, and support resources; and greater consistency of services.

Learning from NEG Grantees: The following six exemplary NEG grantees initiated and implemented collaborative responses to natural disasters and major dislocation events that crossed different types of jurisdictional boundaries:

Florida. A series of hurricanes—Charley, Frances, and Ivan—crossed the State of Florida in 2004 causing widespread destruction. Working through the **Hurricanes/ Storms 2004** NEG, the Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) supported a collaborative response across multiple jurisdictions in a *statewide* response by leading regular conference calls with State stakeholders and representatives of Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIAs). The calls allowed for real-time communication and resource sharing among Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs). NEG Award Amount: \$69,266,299.

Mississippi. Hurricane Katrina devastated the Mississippi Gulf Coast in 2005. The State was awarded the **Hurricane Katrina** NEG to support clean-up and re-development through temporary employment and workforce training. Almost immediately, the State disaster response team from Florida came on site to share its resources and expertise with Mississippi. This *interstate* assistance helped to more quickly and efficiently reach and provide services to the dislocated workers. NEG Award Amount: \$95,000,000.

Missouri. In 2004, Ford Motor Company and Lear Corporation laid off a combined total of over 2,700 workers in the St. Louis metropolitan area. These workers lived throughout *a multi-county region that crossed multiple WIB program jurisdictions*. To most efficiently and effectively provide reemployment opportunities, the State of Missouri used resources from its **Ford/Lear Dual Enrollment** NEG to implement consistent policies and service delivery approaches across the four affected WIBs. NEG Award Amount: \$1,938,618.

Massachusetts. Five companies in the central Massachusetts region closed down during the summer of 2006, affecting over 300 workers. The State packaged a response into a single NEG project application, **Central Massachusetts Trade Dual Enrollment**. While the affected workforce stretched across a geographic area that included *multiple LWIAs and One-Stop Career Centers* State policies permitted the flexible use of training vouchers that allowed workers to access services closest to their homes. NEG Award Amount: \$927,957.

Virginia. In January 2006, Independence Air ceased operations and laid off over 3,000 workers in Northern Virginia. To provide the needed resources for the two affected WIBs to respond to this event, the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) applied for and received the **Independence Air** NEG. Upon grant receipt, the VEC quickly designated two local project operators and then helped broker conversations between the two WIBs to ensure consistent policies for all workers. Both project operators served local residents and coordinated service delivery for affected workers residing *throughout the country*. NEG Award Amount: \$724,808.

The experience of these grantees offers several promising practices in accessing assistance and coordinating services across boundaries:

- ✚ Communicate with stakeholders to allow for real time exchange of information and resources to address reemployment needs.
- ✚ Tap the expertise and experience of practitioners to replicate the features of policies and programs that have been successfully implemented elsewhere under similar circumstances.

- ✦ Coordinate outreach strategies, training policies, and service delivery systems across affected political boundaries or program jurisdictions.

COORDINATING A DISASTER RESPONSE THROUGH THE SHARING OF INFORMATION, RESOURCES, AND EXPERTISE

Sharing of information and expertise is critical to a timely and effective disaster response. Equally important is to avoid letting artificial jurisdictional boundaries slow down the flow of recovery efforts. As discussed in examples below, states can play an important role in facilitating cross-boundary responses.

Florida—Allocating Resources Across WIBs in Real Time: During a disaster event, quick dissemination of information helps local areas address immediate needs and initiate long-term recovery. This was critical in Florida in the aftermath of a series of back-to-back hurricanes that impacted every county in the State. NEG funds were initially distributed to all twenty-four WIBs in the form of a start-up allocation to ensure the immediate flow of resources; however, each WIB continued to face a set of conditions and challenges that were changing almost daily. This dynamic landscape reflected, for instance, additional insight gained from updated damage assessments, the ongoing work of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the area, and even additional damage from subsequent storms.

Florida's Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) recognized the critical importance of constant contact and communication in order to:

- ✦ Ensure the flow of consistent, current information to all WIBs;
- ✦ Allow for the efficient exchange of information across impacted jurisdictions;
- ✦ Ensure that NEG resources were allocated to the most pressing needs across the State; and
- ✦ Harness the collegiality that characterized the workforce development professionals in the State to respond to a natural disaster.

To create such effective communication, AWI led system-wide conference calls with representatives of all twenty-six WIBs on a regular basis. Calls started as a storm was approaching and occurred as often as twice a day during the height of the response. Conference calls systematically reviewed WIBs' updated damage assessments, progress in identifying temporary job sites, and recruiting workers as well as their expenditure profile relative to local needs. The net result was a real time review of needs and resources that resulted in sharing of staff (WIB to WIB and State to WIB), shifting of infrastructure (lending

of mobile One-Stop units), and actual redistribution NEG dollars which were de-obligated and re-obligated based on evolving local needs.

While system-wide conference calls may appear to be a simple, straightforward communication strategy, there were a number of factors that made this a particularly effective device for efficiently managing NEG and ancillary resources.

- ✦ *Visible executive leadership.* Each call was led by AWI’s Deputy Director. The active involvement of high-level State leadership was critically important in transforming a set of routine conference calls into a productive working group. Those at the local level understood that the information being given was the most current available and that it could be trusted.

Additionally, following the calls, the regional WIB directors were willing to aggressively implement emergency measures because they knew the support of the agency was behind them.

“It was critical to have Deputy Director Griffin leading the call. Her presence assured the regional WIB directors that they could trust the information that they were receiving, that it was timely and accurate.”

*- Larry McIntyre, Special Coordinator,
Florida Agency for Workforce
Innovation*

- ✦ *Inclusive group of participants.* All WIB directors and State stakeholders were invited to participate in the calls. While meetings were large and potentially unwieldy, it was felt that an integrated statewide response could not be orchestrated without full participation of those with decision-making authority.

- ✦ *Flexible and evolving agenda.* Sensitive to the evolving nature and demands of a statewide emergency, the call agendas shifted to reflect the current situation being faced by stakeholders. The frequency of the calls also changed, decreasing as the response moved from emergency to recovery. State leaders continuously gauged the response climate to ensure that the calls conveyed current, timely information without detracting from immense responsibilities and demands on staff time.

- ✦ *Open dialogue and communication.* The calls provided a venue for regional players to openly assess current circumstances and communicate their resource availability and pending needs. AWI’s effective leadership served to create a culture of collaboration and trust that allowed for candid conversations and willingness to support statewide rather than strictly proprietary interests.

Ultimately, the net result of this intensive level of communication was a workforce system that was able to function on more of a “just in time” basis. Both AWI and WIB

representatives feel strongly that this coordinated response helped to ensure that NEG resources were distributed to areas of the State with the greatest need.

Mississippi—A Neighbor’s Helping Hand: Hurricane Katrina tore through the State of Mississippi damaging or destroying much of the physical and economic infrastructure of the southern region of the State. Within days of the event, representatives from the State of Florida¹ were on the ground in Mississippi, providing in-depth technical assistance related to disaster response. The coordinator and a team of approximately fifty people traveled to Mississippi for two months to lend expertise and experience to the response effort. The team came with a simple mandate from their Governor: provide assistance as if the disaster had occurred in Florida. Service and expertise came in many forms, including:

- ✚ *Staff from local Florida UI offices.* This allowed the Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES) to better handle the high volume of UI paperwork (processing claims/checks).
- ✚ *A loaned mobile One-Stop Career Center office.* This provided greater flexibility to offer claims assistance where offices had been damaged by the storm.
- ✚ *Information Technology (IT) support to facilitate online UI registration.* The State of Mississippi had never previously processed web-based claims until it received assistance in connecting local offices to the Internet.
- ✚ *Access to out-of-state call centers.* This was orchestrated through an AT&T switch that allowed Florida and several other States to take information and claims data and then relay the information back to Mississippi at the end of each day.
- ✚ *Access to web-based library of resources to support the temporary jobs program.* The library provided easily adaptable examples of, for instance, waiver requests, work-site agreements, monitoring forms, etc.

State officials feel strongly that collectively this type of support both enhanced and accelerated Mississippi’s capacity to respond, whether it was completing the NEG application, responding to the onslaught of UI claims or responding to the immediate employment and restoration needs of local communities.

Florida’s ability to provide this type of cross-border collaboration and support exemplified the following principles:

¹ While Mississippi received assistance from a number of States, the Florida example is emphasized in that they offered a unique level of expertise in addressing natural disasters in the Gulf Coast region.

- ✦ *Think regionally.* While the two States do not share a border, they are both part of the larger Gulf Coast economy that has been historically impacted by tropical storms. This shared regional perspective fueled much of the impetus to work across artificial boundaries.
- ✦ *Respond first.* While state bureaucracies are often bound by policies and procedures, the circumstances demanded immediate intervention. Both States acted with the priorities and confidence needed to establish immediate collaboration and to address procedural implications as a secondary matter.
- ✦ *Document the experience.* Florida's AWI was able to provide interstate support efficiently because many of its prior experiences had been documented and organized.
- ✦ *"Pay it forward."* As readily as it was aided by Florida, Mississippi later extended a hand to the State of Iowa as it responded to the devastation brought by severe flooding in 2008. This willingness to "respond in kind" furthers the collaborative momentum and spirit that is needed to successfully address challenges in serving dislocated workers.

One major challenge in cross-border support of this magnitude is the financial burden potentially placed on the state sending the assistance. During disasters, states and municipalities often adapt or suspend rules and procedures to be able to provide assistance quickly. Now there are further mechanisms in place to allow for interstate assistance and reimbursement of costs. Specifically, the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) is an interstate mutual aid agreement that was developed out of the need to assist and coordinate resources across states in the event of a disaster. Administered under a FEMA-sanctioned compact, states can provide assistance knowing that they will be reimbursed by the impacted state. Working through a "Request of Assistance" approved by an EMAC Coordinator, officials from Mississippi did reimburse other States for their support in processing UI claims. While Florida was repaid for a portion of its expenses, many of its services were provided on a humanitarian aid basis in which no reimbursement request was submitted.

COORDINATING OUTREACH STRATEGIES, TRAINING POLICIES, AND SERVICE DELIVERY SYSTEMS ACROSS AFFECTED PROGRAM JURISDICTIONS

In addition to shaping an emergency response to a natural disaster, cross-boundary collaboration can also entail more deliberate levels of service integration to support the reemployment of dislocated workers. This is particularly critical when the dislocation is spread across a regional economy served by multiple WIBs.

While businesses are stationary and are located within a single workforce investment area, their employees often are not. Workforce professionals are often faced with the need to coordinate service delivery across multiple WIBs. Coordination is motivated by a number of factors, including:

- ✚ An objective to serve as many workers as possible;
- ✚ An intent to minimize workers' commute time to a One-Stop Career Center or training facility; and
- ✚ A responsibility to provide fair and standard benefits to all affected workers regardless of where they access services.

A continuum of service integration approaches has been implemented across the country; these approaches range from the state establishing regional policies with input from affected WIBs to the state serving as a facilitator of similar policies between independently operating WIBs. The three NEG profiles below—Missouri, Massachusetts, and Virginia—each involve the loss of a major employer in the local economy; a dispersed worker population throughout the region, State, or country; and a need to reach as many people as possible with outreach and training.

Missouri—Establishing Regional Policies to Foster Cross-Boundary Response: The State of Missouri and workforce staff from the four WIBs that comprise the St. Louis, Missouri, Metropolitan Area have a tradition of working collaboratively to address the needs of dislocated workers. The State has historically played a strong leadership role in convening stakeholders to inform the establishment of policies. This process was utilized during the implementation of the Ford/Lear Dual Enrollment NEG where dislocated workers were enrolled under both the NEG and the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program. Dual enrollment NEGs allow eligible participants to receive training provided by the TAA program as well as case management assistance and supportive services funded by the NEG. These NEGs implemented within a single region require increased collaboration among NEG staff and the TAA program; however, the level of collaboration needed increases dramatically when the implementation spans four workforce investment areas.

In preparing the NEG application, State officials convened representatives of all four WIBs to develop broad policies that were to govern the training and reemployment process and to ensure a consistent level of service in all workforce investment areas. After the award of the NEG, the agreed-upon policies were translated into a set of guidelines, which were distributed to all staff who would be talking with affected workers. The guidelines clearly outlined:

- ✦ Resources available for training;
- ✦ Ineligible training expenses;
- ✦ Areas of opportunity to coordinate with TAA funds; and
- ✦ Procedures for monitoring and tracking performance.

Periodic meetings were also held for case management staff working on the NEG in order to reiterate policies and clarify any issues that arose during implementation.

Financially, the State acted as the grant recipient and allocated resources to each of the affected WIBs according to the number of individuals who lived in its region. The allocation was done using participant home addresses that were gathered during the Rapid Response process. If, in the end, one region ended up serving more individuals than expected, it could request additional funds from the State to cover its expenses.

The coordination and policy-setting done at the State level allowed the affected WIBs to focus on service delivery rather than resource availability and service coordination. By having consistent services implemented throughout the region, workers were able to go to the most convenient One-Stop Career Center without being concerned that they could get additional benefits at a different location.

Massachusetts—Building Upon State Policy to Foster a Cross-Boundary Response: In 2006, a number of businesses closed in central Massachusetts, and the Central Massachusetts Trade Dual Enrollment NEG was awarded to provide workers from five of these employers with reemployment services. The challenge in implementing this particular NEG was that a large number of the affected workers were dispersed throughout an expansive rural area.

"It isn't customer friendly to insist that workers go to one central site to access reemployment assistance. They need options that allow them to determine where they will access services."
 - Catherine Daniels, Grant Administrator/Planner, Employment Training Resources

In fact, many affected workers lived between thirty and fifty miles from their previous place of employment. If workforce development services were to only be offered in a centralized location, as was the common practice, the population's geographic dispersion was less likely to take advantage of them. In response, the project operator, Workforce Central Career Center, and State officials adopted an established voucher program so that a geographically dispersed

set of providers could deliver the needed services. The vouchers were used to hold enrollment spots for individuals who would not receive services directly from the project operator. By pre-establishing a number of vouchers to be set aside for individuals who lived outside the core commuting area, the NEG project operator was able to substantially increase the breadth of its outreach and recruitment efforts.

Ultimately, five different One-Stop Career Centers delivered voucher-based services using the following basic procedures:

1. In order to be compensated via a NEG voucher, a One-Stop Career Center that has a NEG-eligible individual contacts the project operator.
2. The project operator determines if there are sufficient resources within the voucher allocation to enroll the worker in the grant.
3. Those who are enrolled in the NEG using a voucher at a remote One-Stop Career Center are eligible for all NEG services regardless of where they receive them.
4. When a worker is enrolled in the NEG using a voucher, the One-Stop Career Center he/she is working with can invoice the project operator to help defray the cost of providing services.

Although it does not deliver all of the services, the project operator retains ultimate responsibility for the outcomes of the grant. In order to more closely monitor performance at voucher sites, new oversight reports were added to the State's centralized data management system, the Massachusetts One-Stop Employment System (MOSES). The reports track staff interaction with each dislocated worker, specifically whether an individual had been contacted or received services within the past thirty days. The reports also allow managers and the project operator to monitor One-Stop Career Center productivity and ensure consistent implementation of grant benefits. If voucher sites are not achieving expected outcomes, the project operator is able to engage them in a discussion of potential methods for improving performance.

While the use of vouchers is a straightforward program feature, a number of factors made this a feasible and effective strategy for delivering services across multiple jurisdictions:

- ✚ *Centralized management database.* The State's previous investment in its centralized data management system, MOSES, was critical to operationalizing the voucher system. In MOSES, the project operator can track individuals and ensure that they are receiving the full set of services available to them; in general, it is the centralized tracking system that allows for sufficient coordination and record-keeping to maintain trust between the project operator and the voucher sites.
- ✚ *Precedent for using vouchers.* Vouchers had been used successfully in several previous layoffs in the State of Massachusetts and in conjunction with NEGs. This previous experience created the precedent for vouchers and demonstrated how to maximize customer choice in terms of where workers receive assistance.

- ✚ *Flexible state policies.* Staff from the State’s Department of Workforce Development Division of Career Services (DCS) have created a flexible policy environment that allows for the use of vouchers without requiring that they be used in every dislocation event.
- ✚ *Readily available technical assistance.* When vouchers seem to be a desirable approach, DCS provides project operators with a sample contract and training policy guidelines, as well as technical assistance on how to effectively implement a voucher system.

Virginia—Brokering Collaboration to Support a Cross-Boundary Response: The State of Virginia faced a unique dislocation event when Independence Air announced it was closing and that over 3,000 workers would be dislocated. Two WIBs, located in close geographic proximity to the Dulles airport where Independence Air had been based, were identified to help provide dislocated worker assistance as project operators.

The State played a strategic role in applying for the NEG and in helping to broker consistent workforce service policies between the two WIBs. Instead of State officials defining policies with local input, as was the case in Missouri, their aim was to broker communications between the two WIBs to ensure policy alignment so that workers would receive a consistent level of training and supportive service benefits. Aligned efforts included:

- ✚ *Resources available for training.* While each WIB established its own training reimbursement maximum, the State ensured that the caps were similar.
- ✚ *Support services.* Similarly, the State ensured that consistent support service policies were established by both WIBs.
- ✚ *Coordinated marketing and outreach effort.* A joint marketing campaign was coordinated that included letters, brochures (see exhibit “*Is Your Career Ready for Take Off?*”), and emails sent to all dislocated workers who could be served by the multiple One-Stop Career Centers operated by the two WIBs.

About the Northern Virginia SkillSource Centers

The Northern Virginia Workforce Investment Board (NVIWIB), through its SkillSource Centers, works with businesses to identify training needs and employment opportunities in the region while linking training services to job seekers.

Rapid Response Services

The SkillSource Centers, in partnership with the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), offer Rapid Response Services in response to mass layoffs or business closings within a community. Rapid Response Services are available to affected employees and include career planning, training, financial guidance, job placement assistance, unemployment benefits and much more.

The SkillSource Centers and affiliates are conveniently located throughout Northern Virginia.

Visit www.mySkillSource.org for information about the SkillSource Center nearest you, or call 703.523.5400 (TTY: 703.822.5318).

Is Your Career Ready for Take Off?

If you lost your job due to the closing of Independence Air, we can help. Just visit one of our Northern Virginia SkillSource Centers for:

- Job search assistance
- Resume reviews
- Interview preparation
- Aptitude/Vocational tests
- Job placement
- Training

Visit www.mySkillSource.org for information about the SkillSource Center nearest you, or call 703.523.5400 (TTY: 703.822.5318).

Within these general parameters, the State of Virginia successfully acknowledged the diversity of cultures across the two affected WIBs and allowed each to adapt its approach according to its own strengths. By not mandating an identical approach, the State ensured that the services delivered fit within the existing organizational structure and culture, which ultimately allowed for the most efficient roll-out of services.

The Independence Air event moved beyond regional collaboration between two WIBs to include coordination of services across State boundaries as well. This became necessary as the Rapid Response planning team determined that a substantial portion of the affected pilots and flight attendants did not, in fact, live in Virginia, but rather, throughout the country. A system had to be put in place that would allow these individuals to access available services and benefits outside of Virginia.

There was not an established method for the two project operators to compensate One-Stop Career Centers throughout the country for providing intensive services to NEG-eligible individuals. They decided to coordinate as needed to ensure that individuals received the services and benefits for which they were eligible. Generally, workers would call one of the two One-Stops and be offered two ways of receiving service:

- ✚ *Referral to a local One-Stop Career Center.* Dislocated workers could be referred to a local One-Stop Career Center at a convenient distance from their home. The project operator in Virginia was readily available to the local One-Stop staff to discuss the benefits available under the NEG and help process paperwork for enrollment in training. The local One-Stop provided intensive services, and training costs were reimbursed by Virginia.

*"Because the employees affected by the Independence Air closing are representative of the entire Northern Virginia Metro Region, we are asking that all NEG resources be used in a regionally collaborative approach. Recruitment and marketing efforts should direct affected workers to any of the One-Stop Career Centers within LWIA's 11 and 12."
- Project Operator Funding Award Letter from Virginia Employment and Training Commission*

- ✚ *Receipt of phone-based services from a project operator.* The alternative offered to workers was to receive all services over the phone, including assistance with the development of a training plan as well as with the completion of the paperwork needed to enroll in training. This approach was practical for many Independence Air workers because they were pilots looking to enroll in a specific training course that would enhance their credentials for rehire in the airline industry.

REEMPLOYMENT THROUGH NEG PROMISING PRACTICES

Collaboratively **working across geographic boundaries and program jurisdictions** can effectively serve to maximize the reemployment of dislocated workers. The importance of cross-boundary collaboration is crucial in the planning and start-up as well as the design and implementation phases of project. During the planning and preparation phases, active coordination across WIBs or states broadens the overall resource base and increases the likelihood of a regionally integrated NEG response. In turn, this increases the overall capacity of NEG project operators to reach and enroll dislocated workers and provide targeted and convenient services.

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