Guidelines for the Planning and Design of the IAEA 2020–2021 Technical Cooperation Programme

Contents

A. Objective

1. These guidelines provide the framework for the development of the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA's) technical cooperation (TC) programme for 2020–2021. They define roles and responsibilities, process and timeframe, and available services for the planning, design and development of the 2020–2021 TC programme.

B. Introduction

2. The IAEA is an independent international organization with a special relationship with the United Nations system. Its TC programme builds human and institutional capacities in Member States for the safe, secure and peaceful application of nuclear science and technology, in line with the IAEA's statutory mandate[1] and relevant decisions of its governing bodies. In so doing, the programme contributes to addressing the major sustainable development priorities of each country, with the goal of increasingly promoting tangible socio-economic impact. The IAEA works closely with Member States and supports them in their effort to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

3. The TC programme is based on the principle of shared responsibility between Member States and the Secretariat, with the lead role taken by the Member States. The projects in each country programme are developed through a consultative process that involves all relevant stakeholders, using the Logical Framework Approach (LFA) and the TC central criterion[2], to identify the priorities, problems and gaps that need to be addressed, together with the expected results to be achieved, taking into account available resources.

4. The TC programme cycle is aligned with the IAEA's Regular Programme to allow strategic allocation and leveraging of all available Secretariat resources (programme management, funding and technical expertise).

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[1] Under Article II of the IAEA Statute: "The Agency shall seek to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world. It shall ensure, so far as it is able, that assistance provided by it or at its request or under its supervision or control is not used in such a way as to further any military purpose."
[2] See IAEA document GOV/INF/2002/8/Mod.1.

C. Guiding Principles for Project Planning and Design

5. The IAEA Statute and the *Revised Guiding Principles and General Operating Rules Governing the Provision of Technical Assistance by the Agency* as contained in INFCIRC/267 comprise the IAEA's established guiding principles for the formulation of the TC programme. Programme formulation is also guided by relevant decisions of the governing bodies.

6. The TC programme is needs-based and demand-driven. Priorities are established at the national level based on Country Programme Frameworks (CPFs), where available, and national development/sectoral plans. At the regional level, programme priorities are based on regional strategic frameworks and regional profiles.

7. The CPF is a strategic programming tool that Member States are encouraged to prepare, in collaboration with the Secretariat. It defines development needs and priorities that can be supported through TC activities. The CPF provides a results-focused structure to the country programme, to which TC projects should be clearly aligned. CPFs reflect national development/sectoral plans, country specific analyses and lessons learned from past cooperation, and seek linkages with United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs). CPFs ensure that the application of nuclear technology is integrated with a Member State's existing development plans. Regional strategic plans, profiles and frameworks are key reference documents for the development of regional and interregional projects, ensuring alignment with defined and prioritized regional and interregional needs.

8. The Secretariat works closely with Member States to ensure that the needs and priorities identified by the Member States are appropriately reflected in the TC programme, and that project proposals are in line with TC quality criteria, namely relevance, ownership, sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness. In order to increase efficiency, significant consideration should be given to comprehensive projects with the potential for higher impact[3]. Member States are encouraged to give increasing emphasis to integrated, multi-year projects[4].

9. Partnerships with other stakeholders (including potential donors) that can contribute to the proposed project are strongly encouraged and should be identified, sought out and established early in the project design process.

10. In line with the IAEA Gender Equality Policy, all projects will take into account gender-related impacts and benefits. Therefore, Member States are encouraged to make efforts to ensure equal opportunities for both men and women in the management of the TC projects and in their implementation results.

11. The IAEA uses the LFA as a standard tool for the complete TC project life cycle. All projects should be designed to achieve results following the principles of results based management. It is essential that measurable and realistic results are defined using performance indicators and clear baseline information. These are necessary tools to measure progress and impact and will facilitate monitoring and reporting of results using the annual Project Progress Assessment Reports (PPARs).

12. The Regional/Cooperative Agreement Strategies and Regional Strategic Profiles (RSPs) are the foundation for the planning and formulation of regional projects. Project proposals should contain evidence that the support requested addresses common needs, is an identified regional priority, and is in line with the national development plans and priorities of the participating Member States.

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[3] See IAEA document GOV/INF/2002/8/Mod.1.
[4] See INFCIRC/267

13. Interregional projects can be trans-regional, set international standards, or enable the participation of candidates from developing countries in approved conferences, seminars and workshops. They can also be used for joint TC activities with an international entity. They contribute to wider knowledge and experience sharing among participating Member States and enhance technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC), South–South and triangular cooperation.

14. Given the limited resources of the Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF), projects are expected to be co-supported by Member States and/or development partners/donors. The source, nature and extent of support should be clearly indicated in the project document. Extrabudgetary contributions, such as government cost-sharing, are expected in particular to support large procurement items and should be clearly indicated in the project document.

15. Member States are advised to use the TCF allocation of the previous TC cycle as an indicative planning figure when budgeting TC projects for the upcoming cycle. Additional funding sources should be clearly identified for specific activities.

D. Roles and Responsibilities

16. Member States are responsible for the selection of projects to be proposed to the Secretariat based on the CPFs and existing RSPs. Only projects where well-developed, mature nuclear and nuclear-related techniques and technology hold a comparative advantage or complement conventional approaches will be considered.

17. Member States are responsible for the selection of counterpart institutions, project counterparts, regional project coordinators, project teams and partners, based on the needs and objectives of projects. This includes ensuring that the institutions selected have the required physical infrastructure, adequate human resources to implement the projects, and are supportive and committed to disseminating knowledge and the transferred technology at the national and regional level. Project counterparts should be knowledgeable and committed, have good managerial skills and be capable of coordinating project development and implementation. They are required to successfully complete the LFA online training, preferably prior to commencing a design process. Project management tools are available on the PCMF Reference Desk and InTouch+.

18. Member States are the project owners and thus responsible for progress monitoring and for reporting, the realization of outcomes, as well as ensuring sustainability of developed human resources and infrastructural capacity. This includes identifying and mitigating risks that may affect project implementation and desired impact.

19. The Secretariat actively supports Member States in all aspects of project design, including ensuring technical integrity and relevance of proposed projects and that financial planning is in line with project content. The Secretariat is also responsible for appraising project designs against established quality criteria and ensuring that comprehensive and timely feedback on all submitted draft project designs is provided to Member States through the Programme Cycle Management Framework (PCMF).

20. As needed and as appropriate, the Secretariat will coordinate with Member States on the provision of support for project planning, designs and development, such as (1) assistance for development of CPF and regional strategic profiles/frameworks, (2) pre-project assistance, (3) assistance for results-based project development, (4) upstream planning, (5) project programme review/assessment meetings, (6) training and induction courses for new National Liaison Officers/National Liaison Assistants, and (7) assistance for resource mobilization efforts. A full description of all TC programme services is available from the PCMF Reference Desk.

21. Member States are reminded that the Board of Governors requires all Member States receiving technical assistance from the IAEA to have concluded a Revised Supplementary Agreement Concerning the Provision of Technical Assistance by the IAEA (RSA). In accordance with the terms of the RSA, Member States are responsible for obtaining the release from customs for goods and equipment supplied under the TC programme in a timely manner. This includes the payment of taxes, where applicable; the transportation of equipment from the port of entry to the project site; any incidental handling, storage, or other related expenses; insurance; and maintenance.

22. Projects that involve the delivery of radiation sources (sealed sources, unsealed radioactive material and radiation generators) or related equipment are reviewed by the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security to ensure that the projects meet the requirements of Article III.A.6 of the Statute, which states that the IAEA is authorized to provide for the application of standards of safety for protection of health and minimization of danger to life and property (including such standards for labour conditions) to its own operation as well as to the operations making use of materials, services, equipment, facilities, and information made available by the IAEA or at its request or under its control or supervision. At the operational level, this review also ensures compliance with the recommendations of the Board of Governors (GOV/1999/67 and GOV/2001/48), according to which the provision of radiation sources or any equipment involving the use of radiation sources will be supported under the relevant projects only after the recipient country has met the principal requirements of the International Basic Safety Standards on the establishment of a national radiation safety infrastructure. Noting that the radiation safety infrastructure in a Member State can change positively or negatively throughout the implementation of a project, Member States are encouraged to consult and engage with their respective regulatory bodies on all projects that will involve the use of radiation sources and related equipment to ensure that the principal requirements of the International Basic Safety Standards are met.

23. The assessment of a Member State's radiation safety status is based on the evaluation of information stored in the web-based Radiation Safety Information Management System (RASIMS). For reasons of confidentiality, access to RASIMS is restricted so that Member States can only see their own national data. The information in RASIMS is sourced from both Member States and the Secretariat, and should be regularly updated by Member States. It is subsequently validated by Technical Officers. It is in the interests of Member States to ensure that information in RASIMS is accurate and up to date, as this is the tool that is being used to evaluate the radiation safety infrastructure prior to a Member State receiving radiation sources or related equipment.

24. Member States, with the exception of least developed countries, must pay National Participation Costs (NPCs) equivalent to 5% of the estimated core funding of the approved new projects. At least half of the NPCs, equivalent to 2.5% of the core funding, must be paid before project implementation begins. Early payment of NPCs is essential to ensure effective and timely project implementation. However, the project start date should take into account the expected date of NPCs payment.

E. Project Planning and Development Process

25. The planning and development process begins when the Secretariat issues a note verbale to the Member States, together with these Guidelines. Member States should then start internal discussions on topics and issues to be addressed through the TC programme during the 2020–2021 TC cycle. Member States are requested to refer to the Country Programme Framework and/or national development plans in their internal project identification process, as well as the TC Quality Criteria, according to the timeframe outlined in Section G. Member States are encouraged to engage all relevant stakeholders when developing proposals for the next TC cycle. A list of proposed projects using the Country Programme Note (CPN) template should be submitted

through the PCMF IT platform. For Secretariat support in this process, please refer to Section F of the Guidelines.

26. Regional and interregional project proposals can be submitted by any group of Member States within or outside an existing Regional/Cooperative Agreement bearing in mind the established TC quality criteria, and after consultation with relevant regional/interregional stakeholders. Regional TC projects are also expected to make a clear contribution to the national development priorities of participating countries, and will be appraised accordingly. The IAEA Secretariat may also submit relevant regional and interregional projects based on information available to it on existing needs, trends and in close consultation with Member States.

27. The proposed programme for a Regional/Cooperative Agreement is submitted by the Chair of the respective Regional/Cooperative Agreement in accordance with the planning process and identified timeframe. These programmes, together with regional TC projects outside an agreement, will be consolidated by the relevant Regional Division to form the overall regional TC programmes. The Secretariat will also be responsible for consolidating the interregional TC projects into the overall interregional programme. The submission of the Country, Regional and Interregional Programme Notes (CPN, RPN, IPN) through the PCMF IT platform initiates the project planning process. The early stages of the project design provide time for interaction between Member States and the Secretariat.

28. It is expected that National Liaison Officers, Programme Management Officers, Technical Officers, project counterparts and potential cooperation partners will work together on the design of projects selected by Member States from their initial Programme Note list taking into consideration the feedback provided by the Secretariat. Member States are encouraged to draw on the Secretariat's services described in Section F below for support in the country programme and project preparation process. Feedback on designs will be provided to Member States by the Secretariat via the PCMF IT platform.

F. Services

29. The TC programme is fully supported by the PCMF IT platform (http://pcmf.iaea.org/), which facilitates a transparent planning and design process, and provides information and references on services available throughout the process. The PCMF IT platform also facilitates interactions among all stakeholders. The PCMF Help tab and the PCMF Reference Desk provide additional resources, including:

- The Logical Framework Approach;
- TC Programme Quality Criteria, describing project design quality;
- List of TCP Fields of Activity where nuclear technology can offer competitive solutions to development issues;
- Roles and responsibilities in the formulation of the TC programme;
- TC Programme Planning and Design Glossary;
- Strategic Guidelines on Partnerships and Resource Mobilization (GOV/2015/35;
- Guidelines on submission of Project Progress Assessment Reports (PPARs);
- Information about InTouch+;
- Quality Checklist for PMOs, NLOs and CPs.

G. Timeframe for the Preparation of the 2020–2021 TC Programme

Phase	Activity/Milestone	Responsibility	Deadline
Concept/ Programme Note Phase	Issuance of Guidelines (note verbale)	Secretariat	January 2018
	Submission of Country Programme Note (CPN) via PCMF IT platform	Member States	30 April 2018
	Submission of Regional and Interregional Programme Note (RPN/IPN) via PCMF IT platform	Member States/ Secretariat	31 May 2018
Design Phase	Engagement with Member States through TC Programme Services	Member States/ Secretariat	continuous
	Submission of draft national project designs via PCMF IT platform	Member States	31 August 2018
	Submission of draft regional project designs via PCMF IT platform	Member States/ Secretariat	14 September 2018
	Submission of draft interregional project designs via PCMF IT platform	Secretariat	28 September 2018
	Technical and programmatic review	Secretariat	16 November 2018
	Submission of feedback to Member States	Secretariat	14 December 2018
	Quality enhancement with feedback to Member States	Secretariat	March 2019
	All project designs finalized and submitted via PCMF IT platform	Member States	17 May 2019
	National programme acknowledgement	Member States	12 July 2019
Approval Phase	Clearance of proposed TC programme	Secretariat	31 July 2019
	Quality review	Secretariat	September/October 2019
	Issuance of TC programme documents to Member States	Secretariat	October 2019
	Review of TC programme by the Technical Assistance and Cooperation Committee	Member States	November 2019
	Approval of TC programme by the Board of Governors	Member States	November 2019