

Guidelines for the Planning and Design of the IAEA 2016–2017 Technical Cooperation Programme

Contents

A.	Objectives	1
B.	Introduction	1
C.	Guiding Principles for Project Planning and Design.....	2
	Partnerships and Common Goals	3
	Cross-Cutting Issues — Gender Mainstreaming.....	4
	Obligations of Member States.....	4
D.	Criteria for Categorizing Projects.....	4
E.	The Project Concept and Design Phases	5
	Concept Phase	5
	Design Phase	6
	Additional Requirements for Regional and Interregional Projects	7
F.	Timeframe for the Preparation of the 2016–2017 TC Programme	8

A. Objectives

1. These guidelines set out the process for the development of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) technical cooperation (TC) programme for 2016–2017, and present the criteria that all projects must meet in order to ensure consistently high quality throughout the TC programme. The timeframe for the planning, design and approval of the 2016–2017 TC programme is included at the end of the document.

B. Introduction

2. The Secretariat works closely with Member States to ensure that the needs and priorities identified by them are appropriately reflected in the TC programme, and that project proposals are in line with TC quality criteria, namely relevance, ownership, sustainability, effectiveness and efficiency. The TC programme is developed according to the principle of shared responsibility by the country and the Secretariat, with the leading role taken by the country. The Country Programme Framework (CPF) process is a key means of identifying project opportunities that are aligned with Member States' priority national development areas. The TC programme is developed through a consultative process with stakeholders, using the logical framework approach (LFA) to identify development needs, gaps and priorities, and the results that should be achieved through the programme or projects.

3. In line with the IAEA's statutory mandate,¹ and relevant Board of Governors' policy documents, in particular the Medium Term Strategy 2012–2017 (IAEA document [GOV/2010/66](#)), the IAEA has emerged as a unique multidisciplinary organization in the United Nations (UN) system to address global challenges related to nuclear technology, including global energy security, human health, food security and safety, water resource management, nuclear safety and security, and non-proliferation.

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.”

4. In line with operative paragraph 3.3 of the IAEA General Conference resolution on strengthening of the IAEA's technical cooperation activities ([GC\(57\)/RES/11](#)), which welcomes the efforts of the Secretariat to rationalize the number of TC projects in order to increase programme efficiency and create synergies among projects, the project concept and design processes as well as the associated documentation were improved and streamlined during the preparation of the previous cycle.

5. The IAEA will continue improving the efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and transparency in all Major Programmes for the benefit of its Member States, and the TC programme will continue to be designed to respond to the evolving needs and priorities of Member States, aiming to achieve tangible socio-economic impact by contributing directly and in a cost-effective manner to the attainment of the major sustainable development priorities of each country.

6. Member States should prepare more complex, large scale projects (Category A) using the LFA as a management tool for design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects, in order to ensure full commitment by the participating countries, full support from the stakeholders, and close coordination and cooperation among the stakeholders. Smaller, simpler projects (Category B) will not require the same level of administrative work and oversight, and may be developed using the simpler procedure described in Section D of this document.

7. Member States are advised to use the Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) allocation of the previous TC cycles for national programmes as an indicative budgetary planning figure for the 2016-2017 cycle. This provides a realistic budgeting framework.

8. All potential projects must meet the TC central criterion established in *The Technical Co-operation Strategy: The 2002 Review* (IAEA document [GOV/INF/2002/8/Mod.1](#)), whereby "it addresses an area of real need in which there is a national programme enjoying strong government commitment and support". Partnerships with other entities that can contribute to the proposed project are strongly encouraged and should be sought and established as early as possible.

9. The TC programme continues to be fully supported by the Programme Cycle Management Framework (PCMF) platform (<http://pcmf.iaea.org/>), which facilitates the programming process and transparent interaction among stakeholders.

10. Detailed information on each stage of the programme preparation is available under the PCMF Help tab and the PCMF Reference Desk. This includes but is not limited to:

- Roles and responsibilities in the formulation of the TC programme, describing the different stakeholders and their roles and responsibilities in the preparation of projects;
- List of TC Fields of Activity where nuclear technology could offer competitive solutions to development issues;
- TC quality criteria, describing project design quality (as per the LFA). Specific additional requirements for regional and interregional projects are also included;
- Guidelines for identifying and consolidating partnership opportunities.

C. Guiding Principles for Project Planning and Design

11. IAEA TC projects are designed to fill a well-identified national gap in expertise, capabilities or infrastructure, to address national development issues and to contribute to the achievement of socio-economic goals. IAEA TC assistance is needs-driven and is provided on the principle that the recipient Member State requires expertise (scientific, legal or managerial) or complementary physical facilities that necessitate the assistance of the IAEA to ensure the optimal utilization of nuclear techniques.

12. The IAEA uses the LFA as a standard tool for designing TC projects. Following the principles of results based management (RBM), projects should be designed to enable the clear definition of

responsibilities throughout project implementation, monitoring, evaluation and closure. The realization of outputs and achievements, sustainability of outcome, as well as monitoring and reporting, are the responsibility of Member States as the project owners.

13. Standardized reporting through Project Progress Assessment Reports and a closure report enables the monitoring and final assessment of project performance against relevant indicators. It is essential that baseline data be provided for such indicators, so that progress achieved throughout the project can be compared with the situation at the start of the project.

14. Projects should be as comprehensive as possible. Member States are encouraged to focus on a limited number of projects in one or two of their priority development areas, with SMART² outcomes and a high likelihood of achieving impact.

15. Given the finite resources of the TCF, projects are expected to be co-funded by Member States and/or development partners/donors. The potential source, nature and extent of funding should be indicated in the project concept and the project document. Government cost-sharing is expected for large procurement items.

16. Member States are responsible for the selection of project counterparts and institutions, and for ensuring that they are knowledgeable, capable, committed, active, dynamic and able to coordinate project development and implementation. It is expected that non-nuclear inputs and components that may be required for the integrity of the project will be delivered by the Government and/or through partnerships.

17. The Secretariat will ensure that only those projects where the IAEA has core competency and can provide appropriate expertise, and that are aligned with the thematic areas of the TC programme, are included in the 2016–2017 TC programme.

18. A systematic quality review will be conducted during the design phase to verify compliance with the IAEA quality criteria and requirements. The lessons learned from independent reviews, evaluations and audit reports, as well as from stakeholders' feedback on continuous improvement, will be incorporated into the process.

Partnerships and Common Goals

19. The process of planning the 2016–2017 TC programme provides an opportunity for advancing several strategic objectives. Among them is the closer integration with post-2015 UN development strategies. National authorities are responsible for ensuring that national plans and targets are integrated in relevant projects submitted to the IAEA. This will also provide opportunities to mobilize extrabudgetary support from donors.

20. Another important objective is the building of strong partnerships with relevant UN organizations, which is necessary if TC projects are to be effective in key areas such as human health, food security, and water resource management. The IAEA has already established partnership agreements with the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and foresees new agreements with the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Environment Programme. Member States also play an important role in partnership building and are expected to be actively involved in identifying potential project partners. Partnerships also enable the achievement of a third essential strategic objective, namely fostering collaboration and building confidence among national scientific, technical and regulatory institutions, and national development authorities. Many of the challenges faced by Member States, such as developing policies and practices to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change, require a solid foundation of

² SMART stands for 'specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound'.

science and technological adaptation/innovation. In formulating project plans, attention should be paid to achieving a full understanding of the cause and effect relationships through analytical processes that examine the problem, roles of stakeholders and potential impact. Member States are also encouraged to give due consideration to previous assistance provided by the Secretariat in this regard.

Cross-Cutting Issues — Gender Mainstreaming

21. In line with the IAEA policy on gender mainstreaming and the framework of the RBM approach, all results to be achieved will take into account gender-related impacts and benefits. Therefore, Member States are encouraged to make efforts to ensure that both men and women are equally able to participate in the design, planning and implementation of the TC programme/projects.

Obligations of Member States

22. IAEA Member States participating in the TC programme acknowledge that assistance provided by the IAEA is subject to the relevant conditions established in the IAEA Statute as well as to the decisions of the IAEA Board of Governors, in particular as set forth in IAEA document [INFCIRC/267](#). Member States agree to apply relevant agreements and health and safety measures.

23. Member States are reminded that cooperation with the IAEA is based on the Revised Supplementary Agreement Concerning the Provision of Technical Assistance by the IAEA (RSA) concluded between the IAEA and each Member State participating in the programme. The Board of Governors requires all Member States receiving technical assistance from the IAEA to have concluded an RSA.

24. In accordance with the terms of the RSA, Member States are reminded that they are responsible for obtaining the release from customs for goods and equipment supplied under the TC programme. 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; its insurance; and its installation and maintenance.

25. Member States should be aware that when proposed projects involve the supply of radiation sources or radioactive materials, the Secretariat will take into account the adequacy of health and safety standards, as well as the country's status regarding its radiation safety infrastructure and the implementation of the International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources. If applicable, this will include obtaining a statement of approval from the appropriate national regulatory authority in this regard.

26. Member States are requested to ensure that their information in the IAEA's Radiation Safety Information Management System ([RASIMS](#)) is comprehensive and up-to-date in order to facilitate the radiation safety clearance of project proposals.

27. Member States must pay national participation costs (NPCs) equivalent to 5% of the estimated core funding of the approved new projects, of which at least 2.5% must be paid before the commencement of the programme. The project start date should take into account the expected date of NPCs payment.

D. Criteria for Categorizing Projects

28. Further to paragraph 6 above, TC projects will be categorized as follows:

- **Category A:** Complex or large scale projects, usually aiming at **infrastructure and capability development** in the area of nuclear technology, techniques and applications, and possibly involving a strong component on procurement of equipment as well as human resources (HR).

- **Category B:** Simple or small scale projects, usually for conducting a **planning/feasibility study** or having **mainly an HR component** (training) for addressing pending gaps or needs, contributing to previous projects or specific activities.

29. Projects in Category A should have a clear and measurable outcome, linked and contributing to an ultimate socio-economic overall objective of an established national programme. These projects may have various inputs, funding sources and partnerships, as well as an adequate project implementation strategy. It is expected that the TCF contribution to projects in this category will start from an indicative threshold of €150 000 per TC cycle for national projects and €400 000 for regional projects.

30. Both national and regional projects in Category B will be designed with the necessary flexibility to support Member States to carry out unforeseen activities in specific areas and to meet contingencies during the implementation phase. It is expected that only one Category B national project will be included in a national programme. Likewise, only one regional project in category B will be included in the regional programme for each region, with a realistic budget to accommodate the cost of unforeseen activities and needs. Only in exceptional cases and with justification may more than one regional project in Category B may be included in the regional programme for each region.

31. On average, a national programme should be composed of one to three Category A national projects and one Category B national project. A regional programme will consist of around 10–15 regional Category A projects and one Category B project.

32. The Secretariat offers Member States comprehensive training for the planning and design of TC projects at the initiation of the programming process. Training may be delivered at IAEA headquarters, or in Member States at their request.

E. The Project Concept and Design Phases

Concept Phase

33. The concept phase aims to identify, select and prepare a limited number of high potential project opportunities consistent with relevant priorities, needs and objectives, where nuclear techniques and technologies can produce tangible results by contributing to national development priorities.

34. During the concept phase, comprehensive preliminary proposals are developed and supported by documentation to meet IAEA established criteria. A process of intensive dialogue and strategic thinking among stakeholders takes place to identify concrete areas where the TC programme can contribute effectively at both the national and regional level. It is essential that linkages to the CPF document, concrete national development programmes, and — where applicable — the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), are established during this phase and that partnership opportunities are identified as early as possible. Concrete partnership opportunities are further developed and consolidated during the design phase.

35. Following pre-planning consultations and dialogue, a limited number of concepts are submitted to the IAEA Secretariat by the National Liaison Officer through the PCMF platform in the form of a Country Programme Note (CPN), the template for which is available on the PCMF platform.

36. The CPN consolidates all proposed national project concepts, ranked according to priority, in a single document. It describes the preliminary in-country consultation and review process, and provides an overview of the proposed programme. This consolidated document encourages a clear focus on projects where the Secretariat can provide appropriate assistance, in fields that are aligned with the thematic areas of the TC programme. If necessary, and upon the request of the Member State, pre-planning missions and training on project design can be carried out to support the preparation of the CPN.

37. The Secretariat will appraise project concept documents submitted by Member States against established quality criteria. These criteria include preliminary project design quality elements (problem/gap analysis, stakeholders, preliminary objectives, and preliminary budget) as well as compliance with TC requirements (central criterion, role of nuclear technology, linkage to national development plans/programmes, safety infrastructure requirements).

38. The concepts for regional projects are developed through regional consultation and dialogue between the prospective participating Member States and the Secretariat. Pre-planning missions to support the preparation of regional project concepts can be carried out, upon request. The Regional Programme Note (RPN) is consolidated by the Secretariat according to regional priorities and policy guidelines.

39. The Secretariat will, in close consultation with Member States, proactively develop a limited number of interregional project concepts in line with the relevant established criteria and guidelines. These will include HR projects to support the long term education and training of young professionals in Member States, as well as support to fellowships to participate in established nuclear related events, such as the World Nuclear University and International Centre for Theoretical Physics workshops and training courses.

Design Phase

40. The design phase aims to further develop the selected project concepts into comprehensive projects, supported by relevant documentation, that meet quality criteria. In this process, the counterpart is responsible for project planning and design in close cooperation with the Programme Management Officer (PMO) and Technical Officer (TO). During this phase, the project implementation strategy, budgets and work plans are developed. SMART indicators for project monitoring, achievement of expected results and sustainability of outcomes are defined. Potential partnerships with other entities identified during the concept phase are consolidated and documented and, where applicable, the participation of partners in the design phase is sought.

41. During the design phase, the national, regional and interregional project concepts that are moved forward to the design phase are fully developed and documented by the project design team (counterpart, PMO and TO), using the LFA to produce a comprehensive project document that complies with the TC programme's quality criteria. Relevant templates are available on the PCMF platform.

42. If necessary, and upon the request of the Member State, pre-project assistance and country missions by PMOs/TOs, as well as training on the LFA methodology, are organized to support the preparation of project designs. These missions focus on the development of complex or large scale, more comprehensive, multi-funded projects, and on projects aiming to support least developed countries (LDCs) or new Member States.

43. During the design phase, all projects undergo appraisal by the PMO and TO, and the feedback is used by the counterpart to improve the quality of the project, if needed. In addition, a systematic review takes place for quality assurance purposes, to measure project design compliance with the established criteria and to provide relevant feedback to the project design team. The results of the appraisal and review are used by the Secretariat in the final approval process. Positively appraised project designs are included in the complete TC programme that is submitted to the Board of Governors for approval.

Additional Requirements for Regional and Interregional Projects

44. Regional and interregional project concepts can be submitted by any group of Member States within or outside an existing Regional/Cooperative Agreement, or by the IAEA Secretariat, bearing in mind the established quality criteria for these project types.

45. Regional TC projects are also expected to make a clear contribution to addressing the national development priorities of participating countries, and will be screened and appraised accordingly. The TC central criterion is the main element for considering participation in a regional project, and hence, project documents should contain evidence that the requested support is a declared regional priority or in line with the national development priorities of the countries participating in a particular regional project.

46. The interregional projects aim at addressing global priorities across regions. The Department of Technical Cooperation prepares a consolidated Interregional Programme Note (IPN) which incorporates the interregional project concepts that have been positively appraised. The IPN is made available on the PCMF platform.

47. As part of ongoing efforts to streamline, rationalize and improve regional TC programming, technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) or South–South cooperation (SSC) are given priority, in particular with regard to support to LDCs and countries with limited nuclear capacity. TCDC/SSC should be the main mechanism to reduce gaps between developing countries within the regions.

F. Timeframe for the Preparation of the 2016–2017 TC Programme

Activity	Responsible	Deadline
Issuance of Guidelines (note verbale)	Secretariat	January 2014
Country pre-project missions by PMOs/TOs in support of CPN and RPN/IPN preparation (as required)	Secretariat	May 2014
Submission of CPN and project concepts (national and regional)	Member States Regional/Cooperative Agreements	31 May 2014
Feedback on CPN	Secretariat	15 July 2014
Preparation of RPN and consolidation of regional concepts	Secretariat	30 August 2014
Preparation of IPN and interregional concepts	Secretariat	30 August 2014
LFA training in support of full project design and documentation (as required)	Secretariat	February 2014– March 2015
Draft national and regional project designs submitted via the PCMF platform	Member States	15 December 2014
Snapshot quality review of 20% of project designs	Secretariat	January 2015
PMO/TO feedback on each draft project design to Member States	Secretariat	28 February 2015
Final national and regional project designs submitted via the PCMF platform	Member States	28 March 2015
Interregional project designs entered into the PCMF platform	Secretariat	28 March 2015
Division of Planning and Coordination: consolidated quality review of project designs and recommendations to Regional Divisions	Secretariat	May 2015 (3 weeks)
Editing by the Communication Team	Secretariat	1 July 2015
Incorporation of recommendations and uploading TC programme via the PCMF platform	Member States	15 July 2015
Clearance of the proposed TC programme	Secretariat	31 July 2015
Issuance of TC programme documents to Member States	Secretariat	October 2015 (5 weeks prior to the Technical Assistance and Cooperation Committee's [TACC]'s meeting)
Review by TACC	Member States	November 2015
Approval by the Board of Governors	Member States	November 2015