

DRAFT GUIDELINES FOR COUNTRY PROGRAMME FRAMEWORKS

1. Introduction

The Country Programme Framework is based upon the outcome of the Policy Review Seminar in September 1994. The Seminar focused on three issues including the suggestion from Member States that Medium Term Country Plans would provide an optimal tool to ensure that the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme would be relevant to Member State's **sectoral** or national development objectives. The final report of the Seminar stated: "...it became clear that there is complete agreement on the principle that Agency assistance should be directed to activities which are directly linked and contribute to a country's development objectives and priorities." Based on these results the Secretariat should:

"work with Member States on the gradual establishment of country programme frameworks - covering at least two technical cooperation programme cycles - which, when they become available, would be presented to the Board as part of the documentation to be provided in conjunction with the approval of new projects."

The TC Department initiated CPF related activities in early 1995. Draft guidelines were issued in February 1995 and missions were fielded during the year in those countries where the information on national programmes and priorities available at the Agency was believed to be **insufficient**. In December 1995, the TC Evaluation Section was requested to evaluate the approach taken and the progress achieved to date. The main conclusion of the evaluation was that the CPF was seen as an end in itself, and an extra, separate exercise superimposed on "normal" responsibilities. The lack of an analytical process within the CPF was seen as a major limitation to its value to country programming on the basis of identified national priorities. New guidelines were formulated on the basis of the lessons learned and recommendations made by the expert group participating in the evaluation review. Experience was also gained in interactive programme planning by both the TC Department and national counterparts. However, in an effort to encourage flexibility and a less mechanistic approach, the subsequent guidelines were too simplistic and lacked clear schematic instruction for inductive-deductive planning outputs. A more systematic approach was sought in order to provide a more uniform and substantive planning outcome at the country level and to establish the CPF as a key **function** for Agency priority setting

2. Concept of the CPF

Although the CPF was conceived as a diagnostic planning tool to identify common priorities, it assumed an essential management function in the TC Strategy' as one of two key processes responsible for expanding the model project concept to the entire TC Programme. The TC Strategy calls for the CPF process to be in place for all Member States and formally approved by half of them by the year 2000.

The CPF is a descriptive planning process that provides a concise frame of reference for future technical cooperation with member states. As a programme management tool for the IAEA it reflects the commitment of member states to improve the quality and effectiveness of technical cooperation between these partners. It is intended to result in the identification of model

projects, but also establishes the focus of technical cooperation in more advanced member states and those pursuing nuclear power programmes. The ideal period of coverage is 4 - 6 years.

The CPF also responds to the requirements of the UN General Assembly' to ensure a co-ordinated response to the development needs as defined by the government. Where the CPF is not available, the Agency makes use of other planning mechanisms to prepare a coherent programme such as World Bank Country Profiles; National Development Plans; Sectoral Plans; national nuclear agency plans; and relevant UN and bilateral donor documents.

As a tool for policy dialogue, the CPF should reflect the objectives and actions recommended by the Board of Governors, the declarations of relevant international bodies, the lessons learned from past activities and the policies and practices of the IAEA.

2.1 CPF Objectives

The CPF is both a process *and a product*. As such, the CPF requires both operational and management objectives. The operational objectives of the CPF are:

- a) to strengthen TC project preparation by examining of the broader problem context experienced in member states, and the role of nuclear science and technology in a well defined solution;
- b) to ensure that the TC activities are linked to the national developmental objectives and priorities, and will contribute to them; and
- c) to build partnerships between IAEA counterpart organizations and other national authorities responsible for national social and economic development.

The management objectives of the CPF are:

- a) to ensure the effective integration of assistance provided by the IAEA into the development process of Member States, with enhanced accountability, on the basis of established priorities and plans;
- b) to provide the analytical context and pre-project assessment necessary to formulate model projects; and
- c) to facilitate the assessment and evaluation of the impact and sustainability of the IAEA assistance to member States.

2.2 Implementation Strategy

The CPF product:

- is prepared jointly by the Agency and the official counterpart organization in collaboration with government authorities that represent the national beneficiary structure for technical cooperation with IAEA.;
- identifies the demand for IAEA support in the Member State on the basis on national priorities, policies and plans elaborated by the government;

- is an instrument of policy dialogue between the government and the Agency and should reflect their converging views on common priorities pursued through IAEA support;
- should provide a common framework for assessing, programming, monitoring and evaluating the full scope of IAEA technical activities in Member States;
- should outline the Agency contribution to the development of the Member State over the next 4 to 6 years, [and indicate the level of resources required to provide that support];
- provides the conceptual - operational basis for formulating Model Projects; and
- is a record of all pre-project planning activities between the Agency and Member State.

The CPF process:

- should be a continuum with all phases of the project and programming cycle, including formulation, approval, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and not limited to the CPF document;
- establishes a consultation mechanism to enhance coherence of IAEA operational activities for development in the Member State and their integration with national priorities;
- modify the working arrangements and methodology between the IAEA and the government, and within the IAEA itself, on the basis of a collaborative and continuing dialogue to enhance relevance sustainability and comparative value of Agency programmes; and
- is formally approved by the government as an agreement in principle covering planned future technical cooperation between the Member State and IAEA and/or a project request form proposing TCF financing for a model project concept resulting from the CPF process.

3. Formulation of the CPF

The CPF process involves the establishment of consultation mechanisms involving all relevant partners of the IAEA/Member State Government relationship. This ensures that the CPF is recognized by all parties as a basic frame of reference and an obligatory step in the programming cycle with IAEA. The CPF process is managed as a project and therefore has similar characteristics including inputs/activities, outputs, outcomes and documentation.

The first step of the process involves programme review and assessment by the Agency. The second step requires conceptual analysis of where opportunities exist for improving existing activities or investigating new areas of cooperation. The third step involves consultation with national authorities and possible validation of programme assumptions. The fourth step involves programme development and pm-project planning leading eventually to project formulation and submission of project proposals for financing from TCF.

The following principles should therefore apply:

- the CPF process should be conceived as obligatory for both the Agency and Member State, becoming an integral part if not the principal means of the national process of formulating and appraising technical cooperation activities with the IAEA;
- the CPF process leads to a consensus work plan where each partner contributes substantially, with the strong involvement and leadership of the government, which has the responsibility confirming national priorities, and fostering the appropriate participation of government authorities;
- the involvement of the government should include the counterpart authorities in a lead position, line authorities, and other relevant national entities and where possible the involvement of representatives of the private sector and other elements of civil society should be encouraged;
- the involvement of the United Nations System Organizations should be pursued in those areas of activity appropriate to their mandate and to insure broad based government (ministerial) commitment to project sustainability;
- [the treatment of issues relating to availability, expectations, and options for financing the country programme will enhance the standing of the CPF as a national mechanism for prioritizing and planning technical cooperation;]and
- the CPF process should facilitate team-building both in the Agency and in the government;

The following are the key elements in a successful formulation of the CPF:

- the government's strong interest in using the CPF as a framework for IAEA-Member State relations and as a means to co-ordinate government support to individual components of the government's development actions;
- the timeliness of the formulation of the CPF and the harmonization of its outcomes with the biennial programming cycle for IAEA technical cooperation;
- the outcome of relevant Thematic Plans have been incorporated in the CPF process, particularly the preconditions necessary for successful national projects;
- the priorities assigned to the components of the country programme reflect a comparative assessment of opportunities to optimize the social and economic impact of IAEA TC;
- institutional arrangements reflect competent and responsible national authority capable of sustaining programme/project outputs;
- regional capability, particularly "centers of excellence" have been assessed in connection with national capacity building activities; and
- the process results in the formulation of new or additional model projects.

The World Bank and regional development institutions should be consulted in order to foster complementary links between the CPF and the policy/programme frameworks promoted by these organizations. Collaboration with these institutions underscores the objective of broadening the base of government commitment to IAEA technical cooperation, and provides an avenue for information gathering and exchange, research, policy analysis and operational activities. In this context, the CPF is the principal means for the Agency to discharge its Partner in Development responsibilities.

Opening communications with members of the donor community supporting Member State development (including bilateral, private sector and NGOs) provides an important orientation and focus for the CPF by integrating donor objectives into the CPF process and initiating opportunities for extrabudgetary financing.

Under this scenario, the CPF may provide a tool for assisting governments to better coordinate external assistance and facilitate dialogue between Agency counterpart organizations and governmental authorities, the UN System and the donor community.

4. Contents

4.1 The coverage of the CPF is determined by the government in collaboration and consultation with the Agency. The following components are suggested:

I. Programme Review

- a. lessons drawn from previous activities and experience, particularly TC evaluations and other programme assessments, provide the basis orientation for the CPF, along with the recommendations of the Board, mandates of the Technical Cooperation Programme;
- b. a detailed assessment of past and current technical cooperation between the IAEA and the member state, in particular effectiveness in achieving objectives, identification of possible model projects and any urgent unfilled national project or programme objectives;
- c. a review and appraisal of the country's scientific, technological and human resource capability, focusing primarily on major applications in sectors of social and /or economic significance as well as required infrastructure and institutional arrangements;
- d. national development priorities, plans and strategic frameworks, as identified by the government, which substantiates the demand for IAEA technical cooperation.

II. Analysis

- e. updated status for the radiation safety country profiles¹⁵ established jointly by the TC Department and the Department of Nuclear Safety;
- f. a sectoral review of United Nations and bilateral development activities, particularly the multilateral development banks in order to foster complimentary links between the IAEA sponsored programme of activities and the policy/programme frameworks promoted by these organizations;
- g. conclusions resulting from problem analysis examining cause and effect, providing a comparative assessment of options, reasoning a justification for programme activities;

III. Programme Framework

- h. the product of analysis of ongoing national programmes resulting in, a set of 4-5 end-user specific problems where nuclear science and technology can possibly provide or contribute to an effective and efficient solution, and prepare a logical framework outlining the cause and effect relationship according to the guidelines for Planning and Designing IAEA TC Projects (July 1997);
- i. implementation strategy including institutional arrangements;

- j. application of lessons learned from TC evaluations and other programme assessment activities in national programme planning; and
- k. [the level of resources required to implement the activities presented in the CPF. - New Concept]

4.2 Steps in the identification of new national programme activities:

- a) IDENTIFY a fundamental, significant development issue and national programme or policy context;
- b) ELUCIDATE the characteristics, elements. or attributes of the issue that are relevant to NS&T;
- c) CONSULT Thematic Plans, evaluation reports or relevant technical documents;
- d) RAISE AWARENESS with counterparts and relevant government authorities regarding the importance of the issue and technical requirements, validate assumptions, and place it on the CPF agenda;
- e) APPLY technical knowledge and analytical skills necessary to understand the issue and verify cause-effect logic (LFA);
- f) EXPLORE alternative solutions to the problem;
- g) SELECT a solution to the issue within a specific social, political, and economic objective defined in national plans or policies;
- h) FOLLOW UP and involve major stakeholders in draft project framework;
- i) EVALUATE the prerequisite conditions for and expected impact of IAEA involvement, and;
- j) PREPARE project outline with national authorities for formal submission of project proposal.

5. Follow-up phases (to be further developed)

5.1 Approval of the CPF

5.2 National commitment to the activities identified through the CPF process is demonstrated by either formal approval of a CPF document by the appropriate national authority, or by the signed submission of model project proposals for TCF financing that occurs as an outcome of the CPF process. An approved CPF reflects the mutual obligation of IAEA and the member state to meet the operational and financial requirements concomitant to the activities and framework identified..

5.3 However, as a product of continuous consultation between IAEA and the government, and a record of all pre-project planning activities, the CPF document provides guidance for future country programming regardless of status.

5.4 Reporting requirements

Performance reporting is a fundamental requirement for discharging accountability for the achievement of strategic objectives. As a project based activity, the TC Department is accountable for CPF performance against targets and objectives. It discharges this responsibility through performance reporting contained in the annual TC Annual Report. However, it was originally envisaged that CPFs would be submitted to the Board for information, and the possibility exists that the submission of CPFs could replace the

proposed two-year TCF programme as the method of approval. This would offer several advantages for planning, feasibility and formulation of projects outside the constraining time frame of six months from the deadline for project proposals submissions to submission of the two-year programme for Board approval

5.5 Project formulation (guidance and support)

Project formulation is guided by standards reflected in the document “Planning and Designing IAEA Technical Cooperation Projects” dated July 1997. Policies and procedures are reflected in the relevant administrative and operational manuals prepared by the TC Department, relevant techdocs prepared by Technical Divisions, and the outcomes from evaluation and audit reports. When available, thematic plans provide a synthesis of this information and guidance as well as a compendium of best practices, the basic components and characteristics of related national programmes, project formulation criteria, information about UN system objectives such as TCDC and gender in development and country specific findings and propositions for possible follow-up and validation at the country level.

5.6 Monitoring and evaluation in the framework of the CPF

The CPF process has been established in order to achieve a specific set of characteristic changes in country programming. Criteria must be developed to continuously improve the management process and decision making leading to country programmes. Such criteria should be based upon relevance - in relation to defined priorities, effectiveness - in producing intended results - and efficiency - as in adding value or being economical in a cost-benefit sense, and impact on National Programmes measured as in sustaining the characteristic values of forward planning

5.7 Success criteria (MPs vs focused country programme)

Success is measured by the model projects approved as part of the TCP when the impetus for project design and planning is reflected as an event in the CPF. Eventually, all projects should be derived from this process, and therefore appropriate benchmarks are the percentage of projects that conform to model project standards

5.8 Convergence of CPF and Thematic Planning

The two planning mechanisms, CPF and Thematic Planning are intended to be complimentary and reinforcing. Thematic Planning is the NS&T prescription for a set of problems and conditions experienced in member states; CPF is the diagnostic tool to validate that the prescription is relevant with good prospects exist for sustainability and impact because pre-conditions will be met. This symbiosis provides a institutional feed back that helps leverage key learning from the planning process The resulting synergy completes the transition from a more passive role in planning project proposals to active advocacy based upon time tested and demonstrated technical packages validated and adapted for national conditions.

5.9 CPF and National Partners

By applying best practices, knowledge about broader problem context and identifying the roles and responsibilities of major stakeholders, the CPF process facilitates linkages between government authorities and empowers IAEA counterpart organizations to reach new constituencies with technical support services and products. It also opens avenues to pursue partnerships with NGOs and private sector as well as the international community of interests in national development.

5.10 Progress toward a Programme Approach

In the longer term, the CPF process will facilitate progress toward transition from project based to programme based technical cooperation. This approach seeks to promote a systemic basis for integrating the three basic components of NS&T: research; validation-adaptation; application in priority sectors such as water resource management, human health, environmental management, radiation protection, waste management. This process is further facilitated by Thematic Planning

5.11 Centers of Excellence

The TC objective underlying implementation of the centers of excellence concept is that more advanced national organizations will increasingly play a more significant role in providing technical and managerial services to member states in their respective regions and possibly beyond. This is a natural outcome of capacity building in nuclear science and technology. In fulfilling this objective the TC goal evolves from promoting social economic impact in member states to empowering national organizations to meet the demand for technical services within a region: in effect taking nuclear technology to the marketplace.

This emphasis on technical self-reliance and sustainability should play a role in future country programming, particularly where national counterpart authorities are experiencing financial and other constraints that potentially jeopardise their critical responsibility for monitoring and controlling radiation sources. The center of excellence approach provides the next *step* for strengthening technical cooperation and a unifying objective for the Agency's promotional activities that facilitates the shift from technology transfer to the partner in development paradigm. Technical cooperation that promotes successful applications of technology as an investment in national self-sufficiency, and develops counterpart expertise as potential profit centers will maximize the contribution of nuclear science and technology to sustainable national development and achieve the General Conference's objectives in GC(42)/RES/15

6. Methodology and Criteria

6.1 Priorities

Since resources for country programming are limited, decisions must be made about priorities. Priority setting for technical cooperation reflects demand, performance and confirmed "value" for a technology package. A priority setting process must establish and critically compare priorities according to an agreed methodology and criteria. Four primary steps form the basis for organising decision-making, objectives, process, structures and procedures necessary to develop a comprehensive and well-reasoned process at the country level. This process also applies intellectual rigour that compels unified action and reduces the likelihood of omissions

that could undermine the CPF process. The following questions should be assessed before the CPF process is consummated:

6.2 Steps

1. *Identify stakeholders.* Priority setting is a process involving collaboration and team work. It is also a process that results in some degree of subordination: old priorities are replaced by new. At the country level:

- who leads the process within the specified field of activity?
- who has the responsibility for key decisions?
- who are the main stakeholders?

2. *Defining programme objectives and options.* Programmes for which priorities are being defined have objectives. Objectives are normally reflected as statements of results not yet achieved. The application of technology to produce expected and characteristic results require the exploitation of opportunities, within limitations, and should at the conclusion of activities produce positive and sustained consequences. Some considerations:

- what analysis is required on the nature of problems in the programme or sub-programme?
- what contribution does the programme or sub-programme make to defined development objectives in Member States; to the mission of the Agency; to developmental activities like poverty alleviation, food security, environmental sustainability?
- who are the constituents of programme or sub-programme outcomes. benefits, and how do they reach the problem holder'?
- who are the public and private advocates and what is the basis for their legitimacy?
- what options exist for dealing with problems and opportunities within the programme or sub-programme?
- what are the risks?

3. *Choosing activities.* Priorities are guided by standard methods that quantify criteria according to rank, precedence and comparative value. These methods vary from the simple criterion of cost-benefit to scoring and weighting systems and mathematical hierarchy models. The point of this exercise is to establish some order of preference and gain confirmation.

- what categories of criteria to consider: performance, opportunity, mandate efficiency criteria?
- what mechanisms for involvement by stakeholders?
- how to validate priorities?
- how to evaluate the process?

4. *Resources.* Priority setting forms the basis for determining programme content, for operational planning and resource allocation. Priorities that are set should be implemented. Therefore:

- how should priorities be translated into resource allocations?
- how should the Agency deal with activities that will not be financed from available TCF resources?

6.3 Criteria

7. Example of a CPF Report