

# Management of Technical Cooperation for Development

## Objective

*To contribute to sustainable social and economic benefits in Member States and their increased self-reliance in the application of nuclear techniques.*

Some 80% of the Agency's membership consists of non-nuclear-power States. What drives countries to become members of the Agency? In many cases, major development challenges are key motivating factors. The Agency, through its technical cooperation programme, aims to enhance socioeconomic advancements in its Member States, by supporting the use of appropriate nuclear science and technology to address major sustainable development priorities at the national, regional and interregional levels. The programme is built around six thematic areas – human health, agricultural productivity and food security, water resource management, environmental protection, physical and chemical applications, and sustainable energy development. The programme also addresses safety and security issues of 'global good' that cut across all the thematic areas. The programme contributes to the achievement of several of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

The Agency's technical cooperation programme rests on 50 years of collaboration with Member States. It is unique in the United Nations system, as it combines significant technical and developmental competencies. All Member States are eligible for support, although in practice technical cooperation activities tend to focus on the needs and priorities of less developed countries.

## Strengthening the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme

In the first year of the 2009–2011 technical cooperation programme cycle, 453 new national projects, 124 new regional projects and 6 new interregional projects were initiated. At the same time, 351 projects were closed (including

9 cancellations). Active projects now total 1082, with an additional 256 in the process of being closed.

The Secretariat paid special attention to improving overall programme management in 2009. Throughout the first half of the year, a major 'fixing exercise' was undertaken in response to an internal review of the management of the programme. The exercise concentrated on several interrelated areas, which covered documenting standard operating procedures, streamlining processes and procedures, and establishing good practices and policies for project management. Key outputs include a draft operations manual, and a 'document repository' that provides a single entry point for all documents that guide the work of the technical cooperation programme. Improvements have been made in areas that are critical to the long term success of the programme, such as the development of project and programme indicators, and greater involvement with the United Nations system.

The IT strategy for technical cooperation was also reviewed in 2009, with a focus on optimizing support of programme delivery in an efficient and cost effective manner. In addition, the aim was to ensure that the technical cooperation programme can respond to changing IT and

programmatic contexts in the framework of the introduction of the Agency-wide Information System for Programme Support (AIPS).

The Agency implemented a three year technical cooperation programme cycle that would bring it into step with the Regular Budget cycle by 2012. This will allow the Secretariat and Member States to plan resources for the programme more strategically, and to provide leverage more effectively for all available inputs, including management resources, funding and technical backstopping.

## Managing for Impact and Promoting Quality

In line with ongoing efforts, the Agency focused on promoting quality throughout the technical cooperation programme. In particular, emphasis was placed on strengthening the tools for good

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project management and improving the results based approach, which has been in place in the technical cooperation programme since 1997 and in the Agency since 2002. The objective has been to increase the efficiency and the effectiveness of the programme, as well as to promote sustainability and long term impact.

Periodic Progress Reporting was introduced for project monitoring at both the output and outcome levels. This facilitates reporting by counterparts on a regular basis through the Programme Cycle Management Framework (PCMF) IT platform. The consolidation of experiences and recommendations cited in the reports will help to build institutional memory on the projects and to draw lessons for the future.

## Supporting the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

Two internal studies were carried out in 2009 to assess the degree to which the technical cooperation programme contributes to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These were important for two reasons: when Member States propose their country programme for the next technical cooperation cycle, it is likely that they will have the MDGs in mind; and in September 2011, the United Nations will hold a special summit to encourage efforts to achieve the MDGs. The studies were complementary: one concentrated on the Agency's overall approach to development; the other examined technical cooperation activities in specific thematic areas. The findings were encouraging. The study on the Agency's approach to development found that one third of the total portfolio of technical cooperation projects could be regarded as contributing directly and indirectly to the achievement of the MDGs, with another 16% contributing to the creation of an enabling environment for their achievement. It noted that while the MDGs may not currently be a main driver of the technical cooperation programme, the underlying tenets of the MDG framework are as important as the MDGs themselves, and can be applied effectively to the Agency's technical cooperation programme.

The study on thematic areas found a greater correlation between the MDGs and the objectives and activities of the technical cooperation

programme. It examined the Agency mandate and the technologies applied through the programme in the context of each MDG, and concluded that the Agency is making a contribution to six of the eight goals, namely, eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, reduced child mortality, improved maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, environmental sustainability, and global partnership for development.

## Country Programme Frameworks

In 2009, the Secretariat, together with Member States, strengthened efforts to increase the number of Country Programme Frameworks (CPFs). As a result, 19 CPFs were signed (on behalf of Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mauritania, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Tunisia), and a further 50 are in preparation. Valid CPFs are expected to facilitate national work and to provide a context for the preparation of the 2012–2013 technical cooperation programme.

In support of the Agency's efforts to align and provide leverage for its technical cooperation activities within the larger development

context, the CPF preparation process now makes extensive use of national development plans and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs). This helps not only to ensure that the application of nuclear techniques is integrated with existing development initiatives and plans, but also to identify areas where such techniques might be usefully deployed. The Agency's increased focus on alignment with United Nations activities was reflected when the Agency became signatory to seven new UNDAFs in 2009. At present, technical cooperation country officers (PMOs) are engaged in 22 ongoing UNDAF processes to ensure that programme activities are reflected in the UNDAF Action Plan Results Matrix.

## Coordination with the United Nations System and Other International Organizations

Concerted outreach and partnership efforts were undertaken vis-à-vis United Nations organizations to link the technical cooperation programme with

ongoing United Nations Country Team (UNCT) efforts throughout 2009. This involved general as well as targeted communication about technical cooperation activities, presentations of the programme to selected audiences, and collaboration with the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD to establish the level of Official Development Assistance (ODA) the Agency is providing to Member States. In May 2009, the DAC concluded that 100% of the Technical Cooperation Fund and 33% of the Regular Budget were in the category of ODA.

Linkages between the Agency's regional divisions for Africa and Europe and the regional bureaus of UNDP were established. Joint programming initiatives can now be identified more easily, as there is significant overlap in regional activities (e.g. health, food security, water, climate change and sustainable energy). In Central Asia, the Agency now provides the technical leadership for a multi-country programme coordinated by UNDP.

In Asia and the Pacific, RCA Member States, through the regional office in the Republic of Korea, have established collaboration with UNDP, which partially funded an RCA project on the mitigation of the coastal impact of natural disasters such as tsunamis using nuclear or isotope based techniques. RCA has also established linkages with the Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia, the Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia, and the Asian Regional Cooperative Council for Nuclear Medicine, with the aim of promoting regional cooperation in nuclear science and technology related fields.

## Member State Support for the Placement of Fellows

Fellowship placement and management institutions located in the host country play an important role in the Agency's fellowship programme, both with regard to administrative issues and in supporting reporting on the programme. In 2009, several contracts were initiated between fellowship placement and management institutions and the Agency. These included a contract extension with the United Kingdom's British Council at reduced rates, a contract extension with Germany's InWent — Capacity Building

International, and a new contract with the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), in Trieste, Italy, for the placement and management of Fellows and scientific visitors. Representatives of other placement institutions also visited the Agency to discuss the placement of Fellows in their countries and to investigate possible enhancements to processes and procedures. These institutions included: the Belgian Technical Cooperation (the implementing partner of the Belgian Development Cooperation); the Department of Atomic Energy, India; the Korea Nuclear International Cooperation Foundation, Republic of Korea; the Nuclear Energy Corporation of South Africa; and Argonne National Laboratory, USA.

## Regional Programming

The Regional Agreements and other Member State groups play a strategically important role in furthering the goals of sustainability and promoting horizontal cooperation. The approach of the African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (AFRA), for example, supports the Agency's technical cooperation objective of national ownership as outlined in the *Technical Cooperation Strategy*, and could contribute to paving the way for effective national execution, in view of the potential of regional agreements to facilitate the delivery of services. In 2009, AFRA's establishment of the Programme Management Committee, the Partnership Building and Resource Mobilization Committee, and the High Level Steering Committee for Human Resource Development and Nuclear Knowledge Management enhanced the implementation of the AFRA Agreement. Action was also taken to operationalize the AFRA Fund, to which several AFRA Member States have already contributed. It is expected that the AFRA Fund will attract substantial support from multilateral and bilateral development partners, thereby enhancing regional self-reliance.

In Latin America, regional programming is undertaken primarily through the Regional Cooperative Agreement for the Promotion of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean (ARCAL), guided by the Regional Strategic Profile approved in 2007. In

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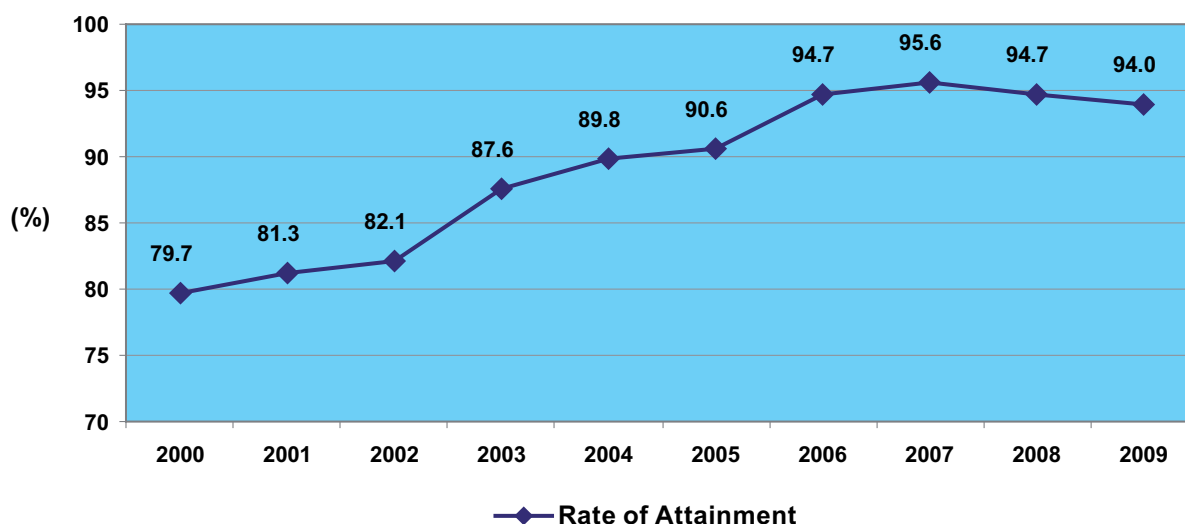


FIG. 1. Rate of attainment on pledges for the TCF, 2000–2009.

2009, the Secretariat and Member States decided to develop technical and management leadership in the region through more integrated national and regional programming and by utilizing the ARCAL management structure. In Asia and the Pacific, an important step forward was taken in December 2009 when National Liaison Officers from the region agreed to develop a Regional Cooperative Framework (RCF). The RCF is expected to help in the formulation of a more relevant regional technical cooperation programme for Asia and the Pacific that will complement the national programmes of Member States.

### Programmatic Indicators and Financial Monitoring

The Agency initiated a quarterly review of eight programmatic indicators in 2009 to measure how successfully the technical cooperation programme is implemented over the course of the year. The indicators include: financial implementation rate and net obligations (to measure timely financial performance); Member States with CPFs (to ensure that all Member States have a valid CPF); quantity and value of budget revisions (to measure the efficiency of programme budgeting); and number of projects closed (to ensure and encourage the timely closure of projects). Baseline data for the indicators have been established for 2008 and 2009, which will support their future review. This is

expected to improve the overall performance of the programme.

### Financial Highlights

Pledges against the 2009 Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) totalled \$79.9 million, not including national participation costs (NPCs) or assessed programme costs (APCs) against the target of \$85 million, with the rate of attainment at the end of 2009 standing at 94% (Fig. 1). Payments against the 2009 TCF, at the end of the same year, totalled \$77.5 million, with a rate of attainment (on payments) of 91.1%. The difference between pledges and payments (\$2.4 million) is mainly due to the receipt of 2009 TCF contributions in early January 2010. The use of these resources resulted in an implementation rate of 80.2%.

For the programme as a whole (therefore including extrabudgetary contributions, NPCs, APCs, in-kind contributions and miscellaneous income), new resources stood at \$112.2 million. Implementation for 2009, measured against the adjusted programme, for the TCF and extrabudgetary parts, reached a rate of 77.2%.

### Legislative Assistance

Faced with increased demand from Member States, the Agency further intensified its legislative assistance activities.

In particular, it organized six international and regional workshops. Further, the Agency provided country specific bilateral legislative assistance — essentially by means of written comments and advice in drafting national nuclear legislation — to 24 Member States.

At the request of Member States, individual training was also provided to several individuals, notably through short term scientific visits

organized at Agency Headquarters, as well as longer term fellowships, allowing individuals to gain further practical experience in nuclear law.

The Agency continued to take part in academic activities organized at the World Nuclear University and the International School of Nuclear Law by providing lecturers and funding participants through appropriate technical cooperation projects.