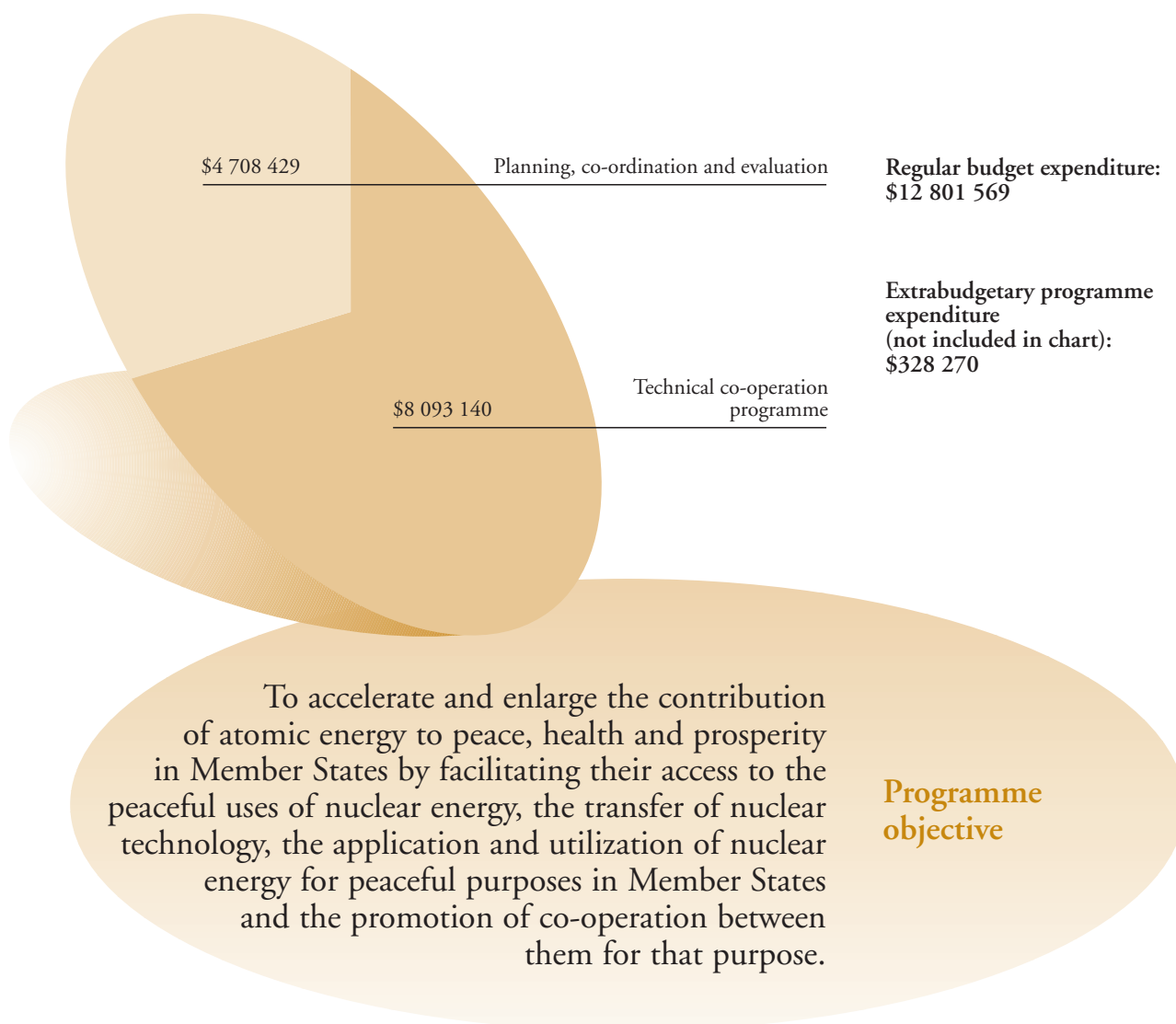


# MANAGEMENT OF TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT



This was the first year that the Agency planned and delivered its technical co-operation programme in the light of a newly approved 'Strategy for Technical Co-operation', with the focus on strengthening synergy on a variety of different levels. A major change was a reduction in the number of subprogrammes from three to two, i.e. 'Technical Co-operation Programme' and 'Planning, Co-ordination and Evaluation', and redeployment of staff into a structure that reflects the key

principles of the strategy. Key outcomes in the management of technical co-operation included the following:

- Finalization and approval of a new style programme for the 1999–2000 biennium. More than \$133 million of core programming plus \$51 million of 'footnote a/' projects were designed, discussed with the counterparts and later approved, including 59 new Model Projects.

- Increased synergy with international development organizations through Thematic Planning. A total of five Thematic Plans were completed during the year.
- Increased co-operation with counterpart organizations and other national institutions through regionally based meetings to discuss priority setting and design of Country Programme Frameworks (CPF's).
- Increased synergy between Member States through greater use of existing national technical and scientific capacity and a more substantive role for more advanced national institutions.
- Improved programme design and accountability through joint evaluations and reviews undertaken with the technical Departments.
- A healthy financial situation at year end despite a severe financial shortfall for the technical co-operation programme at the start of the year and uncertainty in pledges during the year.
- A more streamlined management structure without any loss of performance through better integration of programming and implementation within the two operational Divisions.

## Technical co-operation programme

The CPF process seeks to focus national programmes on a few well defined areas with the potential for significant impact. The process has strengthened institutional arrangements and fostered greater collaboration between national counterpart organizations and other national authorities. The process of integrating CPF's with Thematic Plans began during the year in the areas of groundwater management using isotope techniques and tissue banking using radiation sterilization. These planning processes are contributing to a more demand-led rather than supply-driven programme of technical co-operation.

To complement the CPF process, efforts were also made to improve the design of projects. Training courses and workshops for national liaison officers, national counterparts, project managers and technical staff helped strengthen their programme management capabilities by reinforcing their understanding of new project design standards and allowing them to gain practical experience in programme planning and partnership development.

The Agency expanded its programme in water resources management in Africa to include groundwater assessments in eastern and southern Africa in view of the acute water shortages afflicting several Member States, and the success and experience gained in North Africa under a Model Project. Consultations with Member States, the private sector, donors, United Nations sister organizations, and national water authorities led to the establishment of regional partnerships for two activities. The first focuses on the development and management of groundwater resources in fractured hard rock aquifers. The second investigates alluvial aquifer systems, where the issues of salinization, surface and groundwater interactions and resource management are of great importance. Discussions in December with the World Bank/UNDP/UNEP Global Environmental Facility (GEF) identified complementary activities, with a new GEF project to develop a sustainable development plan for the Okavango River Basin in southern Africa.

In the East Asia and Pacific region, the UNDP/RCA/IAEA project deals with five subprojects: access to clean drinking water; management of the marine coastal environment and pollution; air pollution and trends; electronic networking and outreach; and clean and energy efficient production processes. In electronic networking and outreach, agreements were reached on information management between programme partners and another UNDP funded project, the Asia Pacific Development Information Programme (APDIP), which is concerned with establishing an information technology capability in certain countries of the region. APDIP agreed to provide server capabilities for an RCA home page linked to national home pages, on-line technical catalogues, radiation protection distance learning courses and emergency preparedness. In addition, APDIP will conduct training courses for RCA members on information technology using their facilities and course materials. As a result, the Agency will only have to cover the costs of stipends and travel for participants.

Formulation of the Regional Programme in Europe followed a process of joint prioritization with recipient institutions, donors and outside organizations. One step in the process was the development of an 'Integrated Strategy for Assisting Member States in Establishing and Strengthening their Nuclear Safety Infrastructure'. This led to a high level of confidence from the donor community, which provided extrabudgetary support of \$2.8 million. Model legislation was also developed to provide a legal framework for

Member States seeking to meet the International Basic Safety Standards for Protection Against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources (BSS). In this regard, the Agency is currently assisting 14 Member States in Europe with legal and regulatory questions with the aid of this legal reference and check-lists.

The Agency's partnership with counterpart organizations in Latin America was strengthened with the convening of a Working Group on Technical Co-operation, National Strategy and the Country Programme Framework, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. National strategies, private sector and commercial interests, planning mechanisms, implementation modalities and institutional arrangements were examined. The importance of the CPF process at the preparatory stage of programme development was recognized, but it was also acknowledged that in some countries priority areas for technical co-operation are already sufficiently evident or well established and that a detailed CPF process may not be required. Among the important recommendations of the Working Group was a call for greater coherence and synergy among national, regional and regional agreement (ARCAL) projects. The Group drafted criteria to help guide countries in deciding the most appropriate modality to meet their requirements.

Member States in Latin America and the Caribbean were assisted in elevating the ARCAL programme from an agreement between institutions to the level of a Government Agreement. The necessary consultations and related documents were completed by August and approved during the meeting of the Board of Governors in September. So far, 12 Member States from the region have signed the Agreement.

In West Asia the regional programme was formulated to include the more direct involvement of Member States and relevant regional organizations. Efforts were made to improve management of sterile insect technique (SIT) related projects for the control/eradication of the Mediterranean fruit fly (medfly) in a subregion consisting of territories in Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority. The Agency held a meeting in Vienna in October at which the possibility of carrying out the projects in a co-ordinated manner, for increasing the efficiency of programme delivery and promoting co-operation between the counterparts was discussed. These deliberations led to a joint communiqué expressing the common intent of all three parties to co-operate in the control of the medfly within the scope of Agency projects.

## Planning, co-ordination and evaluation

Thematic Planning has the goal of improving synergy between the Agency and outside organizations, and between Member State institutions. Five Thematic Plans were completed, covering: neonatal screening for childhood diseases; child nutrition investigations; tissue banking; groundwater management; and screwworm eradication.

The Agency used the project selection criteria that resulted from the Thematic Plans as a basis for its evaluation of project proposals for the 1999–2000 project cycle. They also led to the redesign of two CRPs, one on isotope aided studies of nutritional factors associated with chronic and degenerative diseases during ageing and the other on the development and validation of isotopic and complementary tools for the nutritional assessment of household food security in developing country populations.

The Thematic Plan for SIT eradication of the New and Old World Screwworm resulted in the identification of new research priorities and partnership roles. These include: strain development, genetic sexing and molecular biology in co-ordination with the United States Department of Agriculture and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization in Australia.

A serious shortfall in expected resources for the Technical Co-operation Fund led to an unexpected overprogramming level of almost 25% at the start of the 1998 approved programme. While this exceeded the limit on overprogramming established by the Board, it was agreed to allow the overprogramming rate to "float" for the first half of 1998 in order to permit the Secretariat to reassess the programme, employ strict financial controls and appeal to Member States for support. In response to appeals, several Member States pledged new funds and many increased payments to cover arrears for assessed programme costs, although not all promises of funding were converted into actual pledges by the end of 1998. As a result, the programme ended the year with modest overprogramming of less than 7%.

One management priority realized during the year was improving information exchange and the work planning environment. The intranet application designated TC-PRIDE (Project Information Dissemination Environment) became operational. Designed to

improve information exchange and work planning, TC-PRIDE provides comprehensive data on all current technical co-operation projects, including those just approved in the 1999–2000 programme. It is interactive with all of the major databases used in the Agency's technical co-operation programme and therefore requires no special updates of its own. One source of these data is the new contact information system, which provides an authority file for all personnel and institutes, along with the corresponding addresses. This system facilitates the fostering of contacts and information exchange with all institutes and personnel dealing with projects. It has proven particularly valuable for interregional and regional projects which often involve a large number of national contact points.

Efforts to standardize the procurement of project equipment items resulted in standing offers with global suppliers covering 54 items. A comparison of the standing prices against the average prices prevailing prior to the introduction of standing offers indicates a total saving of \$1 million, up from \$600 000 in savings achieved in 1997. Additional economies of 36 to 84% were realized in administrative time and effort for typical procurement actions. While savings for these selected items may not increase indefinitely, the results achieved from the exercise demonstrate the value of standardized procurement, which will be extended to other procurement items.

Efforts to ensure quality management of procurement activities included a survey of major suppliers to the Agency's technical co-operation programme of computer equipment, nuclear instrumentation, radiation therapy and analytical and laboratory equipment in order to prepare for possible Year 2000 (Y2K) problems.

In order to manage procurement more efficiently and improve the Agency's database of service providers, a registration form was sent to 77 institutions/companies around the world. The information was used to expand the scope and process of comparative assessment for procurement.

