

Technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC)

The challenge...

Over the past two decades, many African countries have attained some level of expertise and experience in the fields of nuclear applications, and the peaceful application of nuclear energy to address certain developmental challenges has increased. However, the level of nuclear technology and skills varies from country to country in the region. One key challenge is related to the inadequate role of the beneficiary country in planning and implementing of projects in relevant priority thematic sectors. In addition, differences in the objectives and goals of partners, and their non-alignment with the national development plans of the beneficiary country, pose another notable difficulty.

The project...

Several AFRA countries have established excellent facilities covering most of the nuclear and related techniques promoted under the IAEA technical cooperation programme. Through cooperation, these countries are expected to assist less advanced countries in the region. AFRA has also recognized regional designated centres in many key areas, which are expected to play a major role in this project. The AFRA project aims to promote triangular cooperation between three key actors. This will provide an opportunity for channeling the programmatic synergies of the different actors cooperating to achieve a common development objective, in order to increase the effectiveness of technical cooperation.

The role players in triangular cooperation includes: a pivotal actor such as an international organization (e.g. the IAEA or a group of Member States operating under an agreement (AFRA)) which shares the technical expertise and experience and promotes regional cooperation; a donor country or a group of donor countries; and a recipient or group of recipient countries with common development needs. The established AFRA framework gives ample opportunity for donors to focus on the specific issues and development needs affecting the region, such as nuclear safety and nuclear security, human resource development, and the strengthening of regulatory infrastructure.

The impact...

Outreach and collaboration among AFRA States Parties in the form of technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC), and the sharing of infrastructure and facilities, has resulted in several 'win-win' situations in the past. It has also led to the growth of mutual respect and understanding, benefitting the region as a whole. Through the efforts of its new management structure and operational guidelines, the TCDC modality as applied within the AFRA agreement will generate independence through inter-dependence using regional skills, capacity and infrastructure. The partnership of a pivotal actor is expected to reduce the burden of project management on the shoulders of a donor, and to ensure the successful implementation of the project according to realities on the ground. In addition, this will reduce project costs and will provide an opportunity for a pivotal actor to share knowledge and materials with minimum resources.