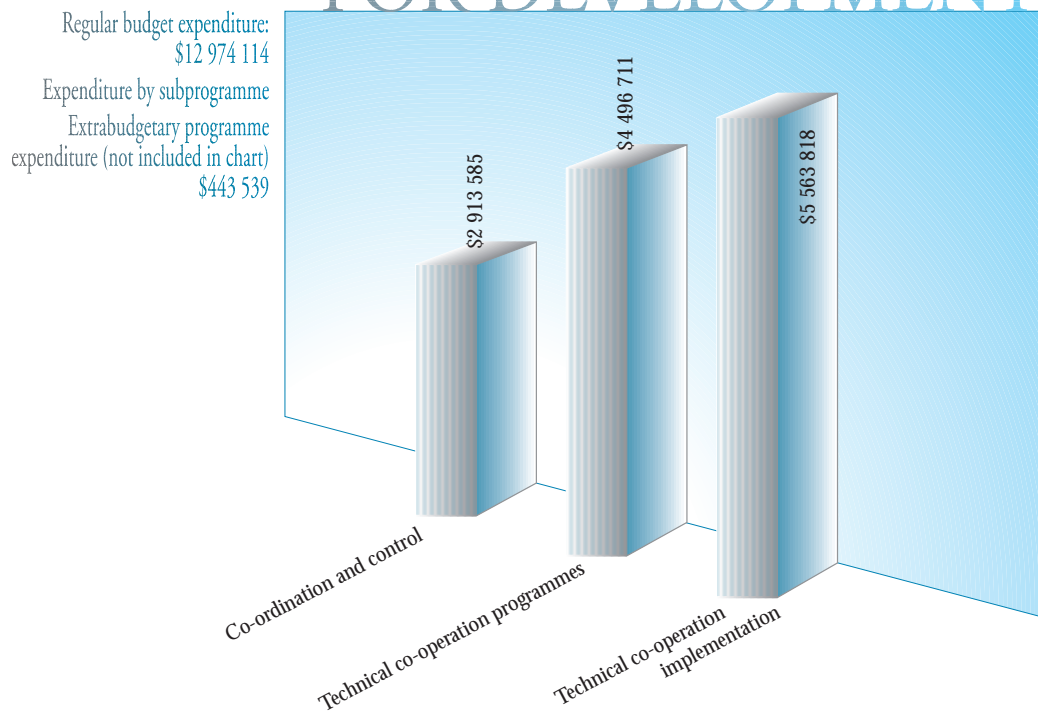


# MANAGEMENT OF TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT



The Agency's technical co-operation programme has moved in new directions recently, with the overall aim of improving efficiency and effectiveness. The programme now goes beyond technology transfer and capacity building to directly involving the end-users of nuclear technology in solving problems of sustainable human development. The two year programme cycle that began in 1997 reflects the experience gained over the previous two cycles with the Model Project concept and with the increased emphasis on involving end-users. For example, significantly more projects now have strong links to national development objectives.

Technical co-operation management faced changes in the working environment owing to several unique circumstances:

- The Agency introduced the 'Strategy for Technical Co-operation' to Member States at the Technical Assistance and Co-operation Committee (TACC) and the Board of Governors. On the management side, the new strategy calls for stronger collaboration within the Agency across a spectrum stretching from research, through adaptation-testing to

eventual application in projects. The main emphasis in technical co-operation projects remains on already proven methods. In addition, innovative nuclear techniques that promise significant benefits to Member States may be promoted through planning exercises and tested in pilot projects.

- The Agency's technical co-operation activities were restructured to make implementation of the strategy more efficient. The restructuring was carried out in a cost neutral manner, employing procedures such as the redeployment of staff members. The major change was the creation of a third Division, which strengthens overall management by bringing long and intermediate range planning under a mandate to harmonize the activities of the two operational Divisions.
- Third, an unexpected decline occurred in contributions to the Technical Co-operation Fund (TCF) from some traditional donors owing to local economic conditions. This led to uncertainty about the adequacy of resources to implement the programme approved by the Board and the consequent drafting of contingency plans to cope with potential shortfalls while minimizing the detriment to the Agency's programme.

## Co-ordination and control

In 1997, the focus of work was on six areas:

- The financing of technical co-operation occupied the attention of the Board of Governors throughout much of the year, with the Informal Working Group on the Financing of Technical Assistance meeting several times. Two meetings of the Standing Advisory Group on Technical Assistance and Co-operation (SAGTAC) examined a variety of issues aimed at strengthening technical co-operation activities. These included: impact assessments for Model Projects; subcontracting within the programme; technical co-operation with developing countries; enhancing the visibility of the programme; and allocation principles for the TCF.
- There was a growing recognition of the Agency's role as a partner and co-ordinator for activities relating to nuclear power and safety programmes in central and eastern European Member States, and in the newly independent States (NIS). Extra-budgetary contributions from the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the USA totalled \$1.2 million for related projects in these countries. Cost sharing contributions from the Czech Republic (\$1.4 million) and from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (\$300 000) were also successfully negotiated. Pre-project planning efforts for two sterile insect technique projects in Jamaica and Ethiopia focused on the means to secure large, multi-million dollar financial packages.
- Efforts continued to reinforce development partnerships once their potential was identified. For example, two new large scale collaborative projects were initiated with UNDP. In the Syrian Arab Republic, a three year project to remove uranium from phosphoric acid got under way, with contributions from UNDP and the host Government of more than \$2.3 million. And in November a new joint RCA/IAEA/UNDP programme was approved on promoting nuclear techniques related to air and water pollution and cleaner industrial processes. Other financing sources include Australia, Japan and the Philippines.
- China, Mali and Tunisia received Agency projects under UNDP's new technical support facilities.

These projects will link Agency technical co-operation to the wider development community. UNDP sectoral support, with similar objectives, contributed over \$200 000 to activities, including nuclear power planning in Indonesia and support to technical co-operation programmes in Africa and Latin America.

- In line with several resolutions of the Board of Governors, partnerships were also strengthened with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) and others. During an October Country Programme Framework (CPF) mission to West African Member States, links were created to the human nutrition and water resources management programmes of WFP, UNICEF and the World Bank.
- In 1997, significant efforts were made to harmonize the various computer systems and provide the correct transfers of data to both the ATLAS travel system and the Agency's accounting system.
- Since financial and statistical reports must be provided for the entire programme, a significant amount of preparatory work was done on a new reporting system which will provide project information both in the form of printed reports and on-line.

In order to help managers incorporate evaluation criteria in project formulation, a document entitled *Guidelines for Planning and Designing IAEA TC Projects* was prepared. These guidelines, which will also aid national liaison institutions in preparing project requests for the Agency's 1999–2000 biennium, emphasize careful planning and design quality. They also contain appraisal criteria for use by Agency staff for reviewing and selecting project proposals. The guidelines, which are consistent with the Agency's management improvement initiatives and draw on the experience of other technical assistance agencies, have been distributed to liaison offices in Member States and presented at various regional and national workshops on the design, management and evaluation of technical co-operation projects. They are one step in a systematic approach to managing for quality across what is sometimes called the project life-cycle. For example, there were recommendations that working procedures be developed to link identification of project opportunities through CPFs with subsequent project formulation and design. This has led to further revision of the guidelines for the CPF process.

The increased complexity of the programme manager's work is driving efforts to develop new, automated, information systems. The first two phases of a new Project Information Management System (TC-PIMS) have been fully completed, as has the development of a new system to aid in the selection and placement of experts. An automated procurement system is also fully functional. Many office automation and electronic communication features have been added to existing systems in order to streamline and simplify operations and produce better management and statistical information.

Testing began of a new Technical Co-operation Project Report Information Dissemination system (TCPRIDE), including access to project information utilizing the Internet and Intranet. This system will provide up to date data to staff members and Member State representatives about technical co-operation projects and will further improve communication and project related work flows.

The TCF is the principal source of financing for the Agency's technical co-operation programme. In 1996, 78.3% of the target for the TCF was pledged. At that time, it was estimated conservatively that for 1997 and 1998 the percentage would remain around 76.5%. However, as 1997 progressed it became apparent that actual new funds would be much lower (in the range of 69–70% of the target). In November, a contingency plan was forwarded to TACC and in the December Board of Governors meeting it was decided to approve the amounts already allotted for 1998, and to allow the overprogramming to 'float' for the first five months of 1998 (starting at an estimated 23%).

## Technical co-operation programmes

Measures were adopted to implement the new technical co-operation strategy in the preparation of projects at the national and regional levels for the 1999–2000 biennium. Improvements in project design and management, as well as the increasingly proactive role played by counterparts in recipient Member States, have facilitated programme implementation. Another major effort continued to close as many ongoing projects that have achieved their objectives as possible, thereby helping to reduce the overall administrative workload.

There were about 38 operational interregional projects, with 12 being completed before the end of the year. Seventeen interregional courses provided training to participants in the areas of nuclear power, nuclear safety, radiation protection and applications in agriculture, medicine and industry. Interregional activities carried out in 1997 were generally of three types: activities on new initiatives to apply Model Project principles to intercountry projects; activities on the implementation of programme planning mechanisms, including thematic planning, country reviews, CPFs and the strengthening of technical co-operation among developing countries; and enhancing project quality in terms of the design and formulation of activities relevant to countries in more than one geographical region.

The main activities in a major interregional activity, the Model Project on upgrading radiation protection infrastructure, concentrated on achieving a national working system of notification, registration, authorization and inspection of the radiation sources based on an appropriate legal and regulatory framework consistent with the international *Basic Safety Standards*.

Technical co-operation between developing countries, and between the three regional programmes AFRA, ARCAL and RCA, is another important objective of the interregional programme. A draft strategy providing guidance to advanced counterpart organizations to serve as training and resource centres was developed.

During the initial phase of an interregional Model Project on sustainable technologies for managing radioactive waste, specialists from Brazil carried out the conditioning of radium-226 sources in Guatemala, Nicaragua and Uruguay. In addition, hands-on training was arranged on the treatment and conditioning of low level solid and liquid wastes, including the grouting of spent sealed sources at the existing waste management facilities in Chile and Turkey.

Under a Model Project on sustainable utilization of saline groundwater and wasteland for plant production, sites were selected in seven participating countries for a study of soil and groundwater effects on agriculture. Some suitable salt-tolerant species were introduced. Efforts at co-operation and support from other agencies have led to positive responses from the Islamic Development Bank and FAO.

There were approximately 254 operational projects in the Africa region, with 60 projects being completed

before the end of the year, corresponding to an adjusted programme of approximately \$17.8 million. This represented approximately 22% of technical co-operation resources. The adjusted programme for regional activities, including AFRA, was approximately \$7.5 million, representing more than 40% of the total resources available for the Africa region.

In the East Asia and Pacific region, there were about 250 operational projects, with approximately 64 projects being completed before the end of 1997. This corresponded to an adjusted programme of approximately \$12.1 million, including the RCA programme, and represents approximately 15% of total resources.

Under the RCA programme, negotiations with UNDP for financial support for a project on better management of the environment and industrial growth concluded with the agreement of UNDP to provide \$1 million for three years.

There were about 105 operational projects in West Asia, with approximately 17 projects being completed before the end of 1997. This corresponded to an adjusted programme of approximately \$9.2 million, representing approximately 11% of the technical co-operation programme. Training and co-ordination with counterparts continues to be a high priority, with the basic professional training course on radiation protection being conducted for the first time in Arabic. Following the instructions of the Board of Governors, the Agency was made responsible for technical co-operation activities with the territories under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority.

In Europe, there were approximately 236 operational projects, with approximately 51 projects being completed before the end of 1997. This corresponded to an adjusted programme of approximately \$17.5 million, representing about 22% of the programme. The number of countries receiving direct assistance increased to 26.

The highest share of the region's programme was for the support of nuclear safety and nuclear power, at 42% of the total. The proportion of the programme dedicated to human health rose sharply to 21%, up from 4% in the previous cycle. Legal assistance to the NIS continued to be a high priority topic. Although there is no regional agreement in Europe, activities with regional characteristics became an important feature of the programme in 1997, attracting 33% of the resources allocated to the region.

A determined attempt was made to introduce cost sharing in projects, a new concept in country programme planning. This resulted in additional contributions by a number of countries, totalling about \$1.7 million, towards their own projects. Another notable achievement was the extrabudgetary support the programme attracted: more than \$2.5 million was contributed by donor countries to the programme in Europe. At the same time, the amount of funds for Model type Projects increased to more than 50% of the regional programme for Europe.

There were about 279 operational projects, with approximately 70 projects being completed before the end of the year, in the Latin American region. This corresponded to an adjusted programme of approximately \$14.3 million, representing about 18% of the technical co-operation programme.

Increased emphasis was given to regional co-operation, resulting in a restructuring of the ARCAL programme. The process of modifying the programme to be based upon agreements between governments continued without difficulty. The basic documents covering this agreement have been adopted by all members of ARCAL and are being used in the preparation of the 1999–2000 programme.

One of the major problems facing the region is the lack of contributions to the TCF, coupled with arrears in the payment of assessed programme costs and regular budget assessments. This situation was discussed with all Latin American delegations. A number of letters have also been sent to national counterparts on this issue. The Agency is actively encouraging the payment of current and delinquent contributions. At the same time, Latin American countries are being urged to assist in financing technical activities through cost sharing.

## Technical co-operation implementation

The Agency supports expert services, fellowships and training courses to help meet the personnel requirements of technical co-operation projects. Member States also supply staff and conduct their own training activities. The restructuring of technical co-operation activities resulted in a leaner implementation management structure. A number of Professional staff

were thus released from tasks associated directly with project implementation and assigned various tasks, including support work within the operational Divisions and the strengthening of concepts and planning functions. The 1997 programme saw a significant increase in experts and a decrease in fellowship training. The number of scientific visitors, as well as that of training course participants, remained essentially constant.

Full utilization of the new automated procurement system, revised policies and streamlined procedures resulted in a record number of orders and dollar volume of orders issued, and improvement in the quality of purchase orders and contracts. The procurement level for 1997 (around \$4 million) significantly exceeded the 1996 level.

Introduction of the Field Procurement Management System (FPMS) and improvements in the performance and user-friendliness of the client-server system resulted not only in enhanced productivity but also in the improved quality of the entire procurement process. By reviewing the equipment items frequently required for projects, the Field Procurement System (FPS) sought to carry out consolidated tenders for the most commonly procured equipment based on standard specifications, thereby eliminating repetitive bidding.

