RCA Medium Term Strategy for 2012-2017 and the Implementation Plan

Background

The Working Group appointed to extend the RCA Medium Term Strategy reviewed the current Medium Term Strategy, which is for the period 2006-2011 and drafted a Medium Term Strategy for the period of 2012-2017, covering three TC cycles.   The Working Group also drafted the Implementation Plan of the Medium Term Strategy.

Proposed Action

Approval of the annexed RCA Medium Term Strategy for 2012-2017 and its implementation Plan

**REGIONAL COOPERATIVE
AGREEMENT**

**INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC
ENERGY AGENCY**

**RCA Medium Term Strategy
2012-2017**

**Report of a RCA Working Group
27-31 July 2009**

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A. Background

The Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training (RCA) is an intergovernmental agreement established under the auspices of the IAEA. It is open to participation of any Member State in the area of South Asia, South East Asia and the Pacific or Far East. A Member State from one of these regions may become a party to this Agreement by notifying its acceptance thereof to the Director General of the Agency.   The text of the Agreement provides the fundamental framework and guidance for regional cooperation.

The RCA Guidelines and Operating Rules set out the roles and responsibilities, describe the conduct of meetings, and cover the processes for initiation, approval and implementation of projects.

This Medium Term Strategy for 2012-2017 sets out a revised Vision, Mission and a set of strategic directions for the RCA, as an extension of the Medium Term Strategy for the period 2006-2011.

B. RCA Strategic Plan Context

B.1. Vision

> **The RCA shall be recognized as an effective partner in providing nuclear technologies that enhance socio-economic wellbeing and contribute to sustainable development in the region.**

B.2. Mission

The mission is:

- To identify and implement nuclear technologies that address regional needs
- To encourage sustainability of nuclear technology capacities in RCA Member States and to ensure transfer of those technologies and associated technical know-how to end-users
- To coordinate cooperative research in applications of nuclear science and technology
- To promote the benefits of nuclear technologies and identify partners and funding mechanisms
- To develop regional networks for exchange of technologies, training and equipment

B.3. RCA Core Values

RCA members are committed to high standards of professionalism, safety and ethical behaviour in the use of nuclear technologies. These core values are fundamental in all RCA activities and underpin the way in which the strategic directions of the RCA Programme will be delivered.

- Safety, Security and Sustainability: *ensuring safe, secure and environmentally aware utilisation of nuclear science and technology and contributing to sustainable development within the region*

- Honesty, Openness and Integrity: *building trust and respect within the Member States and with all other stakeholders through effective communication*

- Collaboration and Responsiveness: *understanding stakeholders' needs, fostering cooperation and teamwork, embracing new ideas and recognising new trends*

- Competence and Professionalism: *striving to improve standards of expertise and delivery to our stakeholders*

B.4. RCA Governance

The RCA Guidelines and Operating Rules set out the general responsibilities of the RCA Chair, National Representatives, Project Lead Country Coordinators, National Project Coordinators and the RCA Regional Office. The RCA Medium Term Strategy 2006-2011 provided an enhanced role for the RCA Chair. However, in the past, this has not always been effective because the day-to-day management of the RCA requires significant time commitment, knowledge of the RCA and expertise. Furthermore, there is no designated person to represent the RCA in discussions with third parties.

Recommendation: In this context, the working group recommends that the RCA Chair should be appointed for a longer term, separately to the host country nomination process. The RCA Chair needs to have the ability, knowledge, resources and Government support and commitment to undertake this role. The NRM would still be chaired by the host country, where they are willing to do so.

- The National RCA Representatives act on behalf of their Governments and are responsible to them for the operation of the RCA within the terms of the Agreement. Their responsibilities within the Agreement are defined in the RCA Guidelines and Operation Rules.

- The RCA Chair, in conjunction with the NR of the host government for the NRM, shall provide advice and guidance on the conduct of the programme and shall take a proactive role in liaising with the RCA Focal Person and the Director of the RCA Regional Office to ensure effective management of the programme.

- The RCA Chair may represent the RCA with external parties.

- The RCA Chair shall consult the National Representatives on all policy, financial and strategic issues.

B.5. Strategic Context

All strategies are developed and implemented in a strategic context i.e. with reference to the context, requirements and constraints that affect the process. For this RCA strategy, the following context is considered relevant.

- The Millennium Development Goals
- The IAEA Medium Term and Technical Cooperation Strategies
- Regional priorities and policies agreed by the participating Member States under the Agreement; and new priorities that will emerge in coming years
- Perceptions of the RCA and more generally of nuclear science and technology
- Funding and costs, including the need to secure revenue and to attract partnerships
- Development and income generating opportunities
- International and national trends in nuclear science and technology
- The region's regulatory environment
- The need to create, manage, share and exploit knowledge more effectively

This strategic context is relevant in that it can guide or constrain the possible future directions.

B.6. Critical Success Factors

These are factors that affect the suitability of a project for inclusion in the RCA or affect the likelihood of success of the RCA programme. These factors effectively establish criteria that should be used to assess the suitability of a project prior to submission for approval, as well as provide criteria for indicating whether existing projects are suitable for continuation. In general, an RCA project should be based on clearly identified regional needs and benefit from regional cooperation.

The success factors for suitability of a project for inclusion in the RCA are:

- Projects should be 'needs driven' and benefit from regional cooperation;
- Projects should be of sufficient size to achieve high impact and measurable outcomes;
- Project design should include evaluation as a key component;
- Increasing use of regional networks and resources, wherever possible;
- Designed to enhance sustainability of national nuclear technology capabilities
- Built on adequate national resources, infrastructure and supported by national programmes;
- Choosing projects where a nuclear technique is a high value adding approach and technology transfer is a major focus;
- Taking into account the Technical Cooperation strategy and Millennium Development Goals;
- Avoiding duplication with other mechanisms (national projects, non-RCA projects and other agreements).

The success factors for achieving successful outcomes are:

- Strong and long term commitments from participating Member States;

- Adequate and assured funding;
- Projects which are well managed, monitored and regularly reviewed.

C. Strategic Directions

For the period 2012 to 2017, the Working Group identified the following five strategic directions for the RCA. Specific actions by the different RCA management levels are required for successful implementation of these strategic directions.

C.1. Ensuring effective Management of the RCA

- Continue to emphasise the roles and responsibilities of the National Representatives and the need for their enhanced involvement in the RCA, increased interaction with their National Project Coordinators and appropriate recognition by their respective governments.

- Encouragement of the Member States to enhance the effectiveness of an in-country RCA team to ensure successful implementation of agreed projects.

- Regular consultation between the National Representatives and the National Project Coordinators in their Member States to ensure that they are properly briefed for the National Representatives Meetings.

- Close liaison between the National Representatives and the RCA Focal Person prior to each National Representatives Meeting to ensure time for review of project reports from Project Lead Country Coordinators.

- Ensuring that the Project Lead Country Coordinators six-monthly reports contain information on major issues and constraints in implementing current RCA projects.

- Compilation by the RCA Focal Person of a list of those six-monthly reports that have been submitted by the National Project Coordinators to allow the respective National Representatives to follow up.

- Requests by the Project Lead Country Coordinators for information from the National Project Coordinators should be copied to the National Representatives of the respective country for assistance in expediting the process of reporting.

- Ensuring adequate documentation and recording of their projects, especially outcomes and successes, by Project Lead Country Coordinators.

C.2. Achieving greater impact for RCA projects

- Continue to maintain the emphasis on a small number of sectors that have a high focus on regional cooperation and are based on nuclear technology exchange and application. Aim for no more than 5 sectors.

- Aim for 2-3 projects per sector or 10 to 15 projects overall, to allow for flexibility to incorporate supplementary projects that address special needs of a smaller group of Member States or explore future priorities.

> **Recommendation:** In addition to core projects, introduce the concept of supplementary projects that address specific needs of a smaller group of Member States, provide further action to obtain full benefits from projects implemented in the past, and provide opportunities to explore future priorities.

- Establish a mechanism that allows Member States to participate in projects at different levels, depending on their experience and resources. These different levels of participation to be reflected in the project design.

> **Recommendation:** To introduce a more flexible system of project participation to generate optimum benefit for Member States. The criteria to be used should relate to whether the Member State has the necessary infrastructure, expertise and government commitment to enable full participation in the project. For countries without these requirements, but who wish to develop them, they should be able to participate in workshops and training courses for a limited period of time, but not be part of the technology transfer arrangements.

- Develop project-specific criteria at the project design stage to measure impact.

- Ensure during project implementation that all projects meet critical success factors and achieve planned measurable milestones and performance indicators. Identify actions for corrections.

- Ensure that National Representatives, following review at the National Representatives Meetings agree on corrective actions for projects that do not achieve their objectives.

- Require the Project Lead Country Coordinators to provide an annual report of project progress against milestones and performance indicators with recommendations for corrections, if necessary.

C.3. Developing nuclear technology capacities in RCA Member States that are sustainable and address identified socioeconomic needs

- Identify and transfer nuclear technologies, which are value adding and address ongoing needs.

- Develop relevant technical expertise in nuclear institutions to increase self reliance.

- Ensure effective regulatory control and safe and secure applications of nuclear technologies in all projects.

- Introduce mechanisms that provide for continuing interactions and support to nuclear institutions following completion of project activities and prior to project closure.

- Introduce a separately funded mechanism for project evaluation.

C.4. Enhancing the uptake of nuclear technologies and increasing the visibility of the RCA

- Develop a database of potential collaborative partners and other technical programmes for use by RCA Member States in project design and technology transfer.

- Produce a strategy for communication of the effectiveness and success of the RCA for distribution and presentation to the identified key stakeholders.

- Make better use of electronic networking, including investigating the feasibility of e-meetings to increase interaction within projects.

- Integrate   RCA websites to increase exchange of information and raise awareness of capabilities.

- RCA Regional Office to work with Member States to identify and engage potential funding agencies.

C.5 Ensuring that regional priorities guide the ongoing direction of the RCA

- Establish and maintain a regional profile that summarises the achievements of the projects as an ongoing record of major outcomes.

- Develop a set of regional priorities using a systematic process of collecting and analysing Member States needs.

- Ensure that the regional priorities guide the choice of projects and direction of the RCA over the period of the medium term strategy.

D. Performance Indicators

Performance indicators provide a mechanism to assess the success in implementing the RCA Medium Term Strategy. These key performance indicators are designed to be measurable, either through the evaluation of the performance of the RCA or through feedback from key

stakeholders. Where possible, progress against these indicators should be recorded in the RCA Annual Report.

- More active involvement of all National Representatives in management of the RCA programme – as evidenced by more timely response to requests and more direct involvement in the management of the activities in their respective countries.

- Continued improvement in the impact of projects on the identified socio-economic needs of the Member States, as evidenced by the number of end-users adopting the technology or benefiting from their outcomes, and the sustainability of the technology within Member States.

- Increase in the number of regional experts used for expert missions and training courses over the period of the Medium Term Strategy and enhanced use of the expertise within national institutions in addressing regional needs, as indicated by the number of institutions within the region providing analytical services for RCA projects.

- Increased use of the RCA website for exchange of information – all relevant reports to be posted on the RCA website.

- Increased use of non-IAEA resources in running RCA activities, as evidenced by the number of countries making, and the amount of, extrabudgetary contributions, and the amount of external funds obtained.

- Increase in the number of formal partnerships between RCA and other organisations.

- Increased awareness of the capabilities of RCA in the region – as recognized by requests to participate in international conferences and donor meetings.

- Increased evidence of the use of TCDC in RCA projects.

- Introduction and use of a process to report outcomes and successes of RCA projects at the National Representatives Meeting, following the end of formal regional activities.

- Implementation of an independent process for the evaluation of RCA projects.

- Increased number and quality of RCA promotional material.

E.   Conclusions

This Medium Term Strategy is put forward for adoption by the National Representatives. Following finalisation, it may be necessary to alter the Guidelines and Operating Guidance Rules of the RCA. More important, however, will be to consider the timetable and processes needed to implement the Medium Term Strategy.

Implementation Plan

Strategic Directions Action Plan

Action Plan/ Activity	Imple-menter	2009				2010				2011				2012				2013				2014				2015				2016				2017			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Strategic Direction 1 C.1. Ensuring Effective Management of the RCA																																					
C.1.1. Acceptance of the MTS and Implementation Plan as recommended by WG MTS.	GCM			▓																																	
C.1.2. Revision of GORs reflecting the accepted MTS Implementation Plan approved by NRM.	RCA FP						▓																														
C.1.3. Continue to emphasise the roles and responsibilities of the NRs and the need for their enhanced involvement in the RCA, increased interaction with their NPCs and appropriate recognition by their respective governments..	RCA Chair + NRs		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
C.1.4. The MSs should be encouraged to enhance the effectiveness of an in-country RCA team to ensure successful implementation of agreed projects.	NRs		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
C.1.5. The NRs should regularly consult with the NPCs in their MSs to be properly briefed for the NRM and GCM.	NRs					▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓	
C.1.6. The NRs should work with RCA FP prior to each NRM to ensure time for review of project reports from PLCCs.	NRs					▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓	

Action Plan/ Activity	Imple-menter	2009				2010				2011				2012				2013				2014				2015				2016				2017			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
C.1.7. The PLCCs should ensure that six-monthly reports contain information on major issues and constraints in implementing current RCA projects.	PLCCs + NRs+NPCs			▓	▓	▓	▓			▓	▓			▓	▓			▓	▓			▓	▓			▓	▓								▓	▓	
C.1.8. The RCA FP to compile a list of those six-monthly reports that have been submitted by the PLCCs to allow the respective NRs to follow up.	RCA FP + NRs		▓			▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓		▓			
C.1.9. PLCCs should copy their request for information from the NPCs to the NRs of the respective country for assistance to expedite the process of reporting.	PLCCs	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
C.1.10. PLCCs should ensure adequate documentation and recording of their projects, especially outcomes and successes.	PLCCs	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Strategic Direction 2C.2. Achieving Greater Impact for RCA Projects																																					
C.2.1. Acceptance of the proposed thematic sectors and number of projects.	GCM			▓																																	
C.2.2. Acceptance of mechanism that allows MSs to participate in projects at different levels, depending on their experience and resources	GCM		▓																																		
C.2.3. Development of project-specific criteria at the project design stage to measure impact.	PLCCs WG					▓																															
C.2.4. Ensuring during project	PLCCs	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓

implementation that all projects meet critical success factors and achieve planned measurable milestones and performance indicators. Identify actions for corrections.	NRs										

Action Plan/ Activity	Imple-menter	2009				2010				2011				2012				2013				2014				2015				2016				2017			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
C.2.5. Requiring the PLCCs to provide an annual report of project progress against milestones and performance indicators with recommendations for corrections, if necesssary.	PLCCs			█				█				█				█				█				█				█				█				█	
Strategic Direction 3 C.3. Developing Nuclear Technology Capacities in RCA Member States that are Sustainable and Relevant to their Socio-Economic Needs																																					
C.3.1. Acceptance of need for mechanisms that provide for continuing interactions, and support to nuclear institutions following completion of project activities and prior to project closure.	GCM		█																																		
C.3.2. Development of mechanisms that provide for continuing interactions, and support to nuclear institutions following completion of project activities and prior to project closure.	FP with PLCCs					█																															
C.3.3. Introduce a separately funded mechanism for project evaluation.	FP	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Strategic Direction 4C.4. Enhancing the Uptake of Nuclear Technologies and Increasing the Visibility of the RCA																																					

Action Plan/ Activity	Imple-menter	2009 Q1	2009 Q2	2009 Q3	2009 Q4	2010 Q1	2010 Q2	2010 Q3	2010 Q4	2011 Q1	2011 Q2	2011 Q3	2011 Q4	2012 Q1	2012 Q2	2012 Q3	2012 Q4	2013 Q1	2013 Q2	2013 Q3	2013 Q4	2014 Q1	2014 Q2	2014 Q3	2014 Q4	2015 Q1	2015 Q2	2015 Q3	2015 Q4	2016 Q1	2016 Q2	2016 Q3	2016 Q4	2017 Q1	2017 Q2	2017 Q3	2017 Q4
C.4.1. Develop a database of potential collaborative partners and other technical programmes for use by MSs in project design and technology transfer.	RCARO					▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
C.4.2. Produce a strategy for communication of the effectiveness and success of the RCA for distribution and presentation to the identified key stakeholders.	RCARO					▓																															
C.4.3. Make better use of electronic networking, including investigating the feasibility of e-meetings to increase interaction within projects.	PLCCs	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
C.4.4. Report progress on centralization of RCA websites to increase exchange of information and raise awareness of capabilities.	RCARO + MAL + FP					▓																															
C.4.5. RCARO to work with MSs to identify and engage potential funding agencies.	RCARO + MSs	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Strategic Direction 5 Developing strategic priorities for the RCA																																					
C.5.1. Conduct of Survey	FP + NRs				▓																																
C.5.2. Regional Profile	FP + MSs + Consultants					▓																															
C.5.3. Regional priorities	WG					▓																															

Action Plan/ Activity	Imple-menter	2009				2010				2011				2012				2013				2014				2015				2016				2017			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
C.5.4. Aligning future projects with priorities	NRs																																				