



RCA 2024-2029 Medium-Term Strategy Drafting Working Group

Terms of Reference

November 2020

I. Background and Mandate

The Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (RCA) is an intergovernmental agreement established under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The RCA serves as a framework for its Governing Parties (GP) to collaborate through programmes and projects focused on the specific shared needs of its members and to promote and coordinate cooperative research, development, and training projects in nuclear science and technology.

The Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) is the key strategic document that outlines the GPs' vision, priorities and objectives for the Agreement, along with performance expectations. It also articulates how the RCA can effectively achieve these objectives using the resources, instruments and processes at its disposal.

Previous iterations of the MTS have covered periods from 2006-2011, 2012-2017, and 2018-2023. Recognising a new strategy will need to be agreed for the period 2024-2029, the 49th (2020) General Conference Meeting (GCM) endorsed the formation of the RCA 2024-2029 Medium-Term Strategy Working Group (the Working Group) to draft the document for approval by the National Representatives (NR) at a later meeting.

II. Purpose

The Working Group is tasked with drafting a MTS for the RCA for the period 2024-2029, to be presented to the RCA NRs for endorsement. The Working Group should also make recommendations for the NRs' consideration on arrangements as to how the RCA can best meet the objectives of the MTS.

III. Functions

The functions of the Working Group include:

1. Preparation of an MTS for the period 2024-2029 – including multiple drafts as required – for review and approval by the NRs;

2. Making strategic recommendations on the priority areas for the RCA in consultation with PAC, and as to on how the RCA can be operated in ~~the~~ most effective, efficient, and impactful manner;
3. Making recommendations to the NRs for their endorsement on any required updates of the RCA Guidelines and Operating Rules (GOR) and other relevant RCA documents related to strategic aspects of the RCA programme;
4. Preparation of regular Working Group progress reports and work plans for NR endorsement;
- 4.5. Engage with other RCA working groups as necessary to ensure efficient coordination of resources and completion of tasks; and
- 5.6. Undertaking other appropriate functions as directed by meetings of NRs.

IV. Matters to be considered in Drafting of 2024-2029 MTS

The MTS drafted by the Working Group shall consider the following:

1. The vision and mission of the RCA;
2. Objectives, ~~regional desired~~ socio-economic needs and desired impacts, global trends, strategic directions, and priorities for the RCA;
3. Financial, human, administrative and other resources available to the RCA for implementation of the RCA, from both within the IAEA and from other sources;
4. How performance of the RCA against the MTS should be measured, including identification of appropriate indicators and metrics;
5. Integration of the MTS into the broader RCA arrangements such as the GOR and the project design, approval, implementation and review processes;
6. Potential disruptive effects (e.g. global pandemics) and how their impacts on the RCA may be mitigated; and
7. Other aspects as necessary or as determined by the NRs.

V. Membership

NRs were invited to nominate members for the Working Group at the 42nd NRM and ~~again endorsed~~ at the 49th GCM. A group of ~~seven-nine~~ (98) members were identified from AUL, CPR, IND, JPN, MAL, PHI, ROK, SIN, and THA. The standing RCA Chair is also invited to participate in the Working Group. The RCA Focal Person, the Chair of the RCA Program Advisory Committee (PAC), and a representative of the RCA Regional Office (RCARO) are also invited to participate in the Working Group as

observers. The representative from AUL shall act as Chair for the Working Group. The representative from PHI shall act as Vice Chair.

Working Group members may be represented by alternates from the same GP, but it is preferable for each member of the Working Group to be available for its duration.

The Working Group shall aim to ensure that it has expertise available in the following areas to ensure a comprehensive consideration of all factors relevant to drafting the 2024-2029 MTS:

1. Knowledge and understanding of the RCA at policy, strategic and operational levels;
2. Sound understanding of the IAEA Technical Cooperation programme and how regional and national cooperative agreements related to nuclear science and technology operate within that framework;
3. Planning, managing and coordinating of projects, preferably in the RCA or otherwise related to nuclear science and technology; and
4. Nuclear science and technology and their applications, including, but not limited to:
 - a. human health
 - b. agriculture
 - c. environmental management
 - d. industry
 - e. energy planning
 - f. nuclear and radiological safety and security
 - g. other areas as identified

The Working Group shall periodically review its experience and capability to ensure that it has appropriate expertise within its membership. The Working Group may call in other experts from the IAEA Secretariat or other sources if a need for further expertise is identified.

VI. Term and Timeline

The Working Group will continue its work until approval of the 2024-2029 MTS by a meeting of NRs.

The Working Group shall provide drafts to meetings of NRs according to the following schedule:

1. Framework – 43rd National Representatives Meeting (NRM) – April 2021
2. First draft – 44th NRM – March 2022

3. Second draft – 51st GCM – September 2022
4. Final draft for approval – 45th NRM – March 2023

Drafts should be provided one month ahead of the meeting dates.

VII. Meetings and Reports

The Working Group shall meet as often as necessary, but at least once every six (6) months. Given the current COVID-19 global pandemic and restrictions on international travel faced by Working Group members, meetings will be held virtually, at least in the immediate term. The Working Group Chair will facilitate video-conferencing arrangements for meetings. The Working Group will keep the possibility for physical meetings under review.

The Working Group shall prepare reports of its meetings and work plans for review and endorsement by the NRs at subsequent NRMs and GCMs.