

Quality Management of the TC Programme

Quality Assurance Section
Division of Programme Support and Coordination
Department of Technical Cooperation

Overview

- Brief background and history
- Quality throughout the TC programme cycle
- Processes and Tools for Quality
 - Quality reviews
 - Capacity Building
 - Monitoring & Evaluation
 - TC Best Practices

“Quality” in International Organizations



- Many multilateral and bilateral development organizations focus on quality and conduct QR of project designs, before funding. These practices are also known as “Quality-at-Entry” (QaE).
- Six quality standards are commonly applied: relevance, quality of design, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability (AusAID, AfDB, ADB, IFAD, etc.)

“Quality” in International Organizations



- AUSAid: “At a project level, *robust quality systems* will ensure that funding is directed to investments making the most difference. A key principle underlying the [performance] framework is that funding at all levels of the aid program will be linked to *progress against a rigorous set of targets and performance benchmarks*.”
- ADB: “Quality-at-entry has been a worthwhile exercise for *measuring and improving ourselves*”.
- IFAD: “Complementary to the improved Quality Enhancement process and at arms-length from the Programme Management Department, a *Quality Assurance process* is established that involves a *review of project designs* by the Office of the Vice-President (OVP) as a final step before loan negotiations and submission to the Executive Board.”

IAEA Policy Background



- GC59/Res/11: Section 3 on Effective execution of the technical cooperation programme
- IAEA Medium Term Strategy 2012-2017 (GOV/2010/66):
“*The Agency will promote best practices in project formulation, management, monitoring and evaluation*”
- Guidelines for the Planning and Design of the 2018–2019 TC Programme, paragraph 8
- OIOS recommendations, e.g.
 - IA2007011: Audit of TC’s Management/Internal Control Framework
 - IA2007014: Review of Field Projects

Some History



- QR assessment framework developed in 2011;
Retroactively applied on 2009-2011 projects
- TCP 2012-2013 to establish the baseline
- TCP 2014-2015:
 - Concepts phase, June 2012 (quality feedback provided)
 - Draft designs, January 2013 (quality feedback provided)
 - Final designs QR, April 2016
 - Consolidated QR, September 2013
- TCP 2016-2017
 - Draft designs QR January 2015 (quality feedback provided)
 - Comprehensive QR, October 2015

In the future...



- TCP 2018-2019
 - Quality Review of draft project designs
October/November 2016 (provide quality feedback)
 - Comprehensive Quality Review at the end of planning process

TC Programme Cycle Management



TC Quality Criteria



- Applicable across all phases of the TC programme cycle
- Applicable to all national, regional and interregional projects
- Based on project documentation developed using the Logical Framework Approach (LFA)



Relevance



Consistency with end-user's requirements, country needs, partners' policies

- Linkages to national development plans/programmes, Country Programme Framework (CPF) or Regional Strategy. Alignment with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).
- Addressing well-defined gap or priority development objectives;
- Nuclear techniques that are appropriate and sound, and which have comparative advantages over conventional methods.
- Continued national and international partnerships;
- Institutional and human capacity development efforts for technological self-reliance at national and regional levels;
- High prospects for outcomes and impact;
- Negative social and environmental effects avoided
- Other cross cutting issues (e.g. climate change risk mitigation/adaptation, gender equality) considered.

Ownership/Commitment



Effective leadership over programmes/projects at all stages

- Adequate human/financial resources
- Enabling environment (e.g. basic physical infrastructure, equipment maintenance, institutional capacity of counterpart institutions);
- Consultation with key stakeholders (stakeholder analysis);
- Well defined roles and responsibilities of national counterpart institutions and stakeholders;
- Project within the mandate of the counterpart institution;
- Indications of commitment from relevant authorities;
- Where applicable, government cost sharing and/or funding from other partners is ensured.

Sustainability



Continuation of benefits after completion of the programme/project

- Link to medium/long term goals and developmental activities, documented in Counterpart institution's strategic or business plan;
- Downstream mechanisms and modalities to ensure effective linkages between counterparts and end-users;
- Formal Partnerships with UN specialized agencies, international development organizations and non-profit organizations whenever required.
- Strategic partnerships with regional agreements;
- Use of national/regional expertise;
- Realistic budgets;
- Adequate physical and institutional infrastructure and human resources.

Efficiency



“Productivity” of the implementation process

- Adequate and realistic project work plan to ensure that project is implemented in time and with the planned resources;
- Well defined roles and responsibilities at the level of the project team;
- Regular project monitoring and follow-up mechanism;
- Adequate and realistic budget.

Effectiveness



Extent of achievement of the programme/project outcome

- Clarity, logic and realistic cause-effect relationship of project design elements (activities, outputs, outcome, overall objective)
- Clear formulation of project outcome in terms of change or improvement;
- SMART performance indicators (including baseline and target) at output and outcome level to facilitate monitoring of progress (output level) and to assess achievement of results at the closure of projects and beyond (outcome level).
- Proper identification of risks and assumptions: risk mitigation strategies.

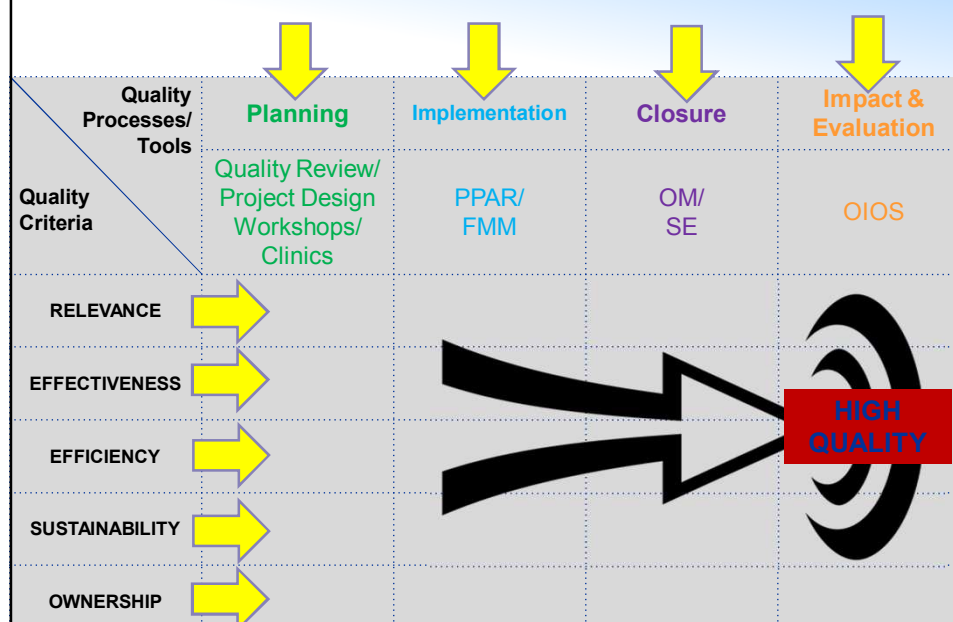
TC Central Criterion



Project addresses “an area of real need in which there is a national programme enjoying strong government commitment and support.”

- Projects that produce a tangible socio-economic benefit in an area in which nuclear technology holds a comparative advantage;
- Projects that clearly support an enabling environment for the use of nuclear technologies;
- Government’s commitment to sustaining the benefits of technical co-operation activities.

Quality throughout the TC Cycle



Processes and Tools for Quality Improvement of Project Designs

Quality Reviews

Purpose

Regular quality reviews of TC Programme to support effectiveness, efficiency and continuous improvement in the planning of the TC Programme.

- Feedback to the project teams in order to enhance quality of individual project designs.
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- Quality of the completed project designs;
 - Comparison with previous cycles;
 - Identify areas for improvement and lessons to be learnt for future TC cycle.

Scope and Methodology



Assessment of two aspects:


- Extent to which the project design document complies with the TC requirements;
- Extent to which the project design document complies with the Logical Framework Approach (LFM).



In 2015, we reviewed 80 % of the existing 648 new project documents.

Review Instrument – TC Requirements



Compliance with the TC Central Criterion. Extent to which it is met, the relevance of the IAEA role and the likelihood of sustainability.	Relevance, Ownership & Sustainability	The extent to which the project reflects and documents its contribution to solving a real problem, as part of an existing national programme supported by the MS on its own (see Problem Statement, linkages with CPF/RPF, past/present country efforts, project budget not only from TCF).
		In addition, for Regional/ Interregional projects, compliance with TC Policies for regional/interregional projects.
		The extent to which the project reflects the key role of nuclear techniques and/or nuclear technology and the relevant role that the IAEA TC programme plays.
		The extent to which the project reflects a proper implementation strategy, capacity of the respective CP institutions, roles and responsibilities and commitment/ownership from MS. (See Physical Infrastructure and Human Resources, Implementation arrangements, budget allocated from MS) - Are the inputs (from IAEA, MS and others) clear, complete and adequate/consistent with the activities to produce the project outputs?

Review Instrument – LFA Compliance			 60 Years IAEA <i>Atoms for Peace and Development</i>
Clarity in the problem/needs/gaps analysis. Is the needs/problem /gap analysis clearly presented and documented?	Relevance	Extent to which the situation, problem, need/gap is clearly identified, analysed and documented (evidence and references).	
		Adequacy and clarity of the stakeholder analysis (clear identification of end-users, beneficiaries, sponsors, partners, and clearly defined roles and responsibilities).	
LogFrame cause-effect relationship: Has the objective analysis taken place? Are the hierarchy of results and the connection among different elements clear and logical?	Effectiveness	Clarity, consistency and logic of the Objectives Analysis, and its reflection in the LFM results chain from ACTIVITIES to OUTPUTS, to OUTCOME (also called Project Specific Objective) and to OVERALL OBJECTIVE (also called Development Objective).	
		Clarity and adequacy of OUTCOME (clear, realistic, relevant and addressing the problem identified). Does it provide a clear description of the benefit or improvement that will be achieved after project completion?	
		Clarity and adequacy of OUTPUTS (realistic, measurable and adequate to lead to the achievement of the OUTCOME).	
Indicators (SMART, targets and timeframe) and means of verification + realistic work plan (including deadlines).	Effectiveness & Efficiency	INDICATORS and MEANS OF VERIFICATION are SMART for Outcome and Output levels.	
Assumptions (risk) adequacy	Sustainability	Extent to which important external factors are identified and adequacy of assumptions made.	

Example of Feedback provided (I)				 60 Years IAEA <i>Atoms for Peace and Development</i>
 QUALITY REVIEW FEEDBACK FOR PROJECT DESIGN FOR TCP 2016-2017				Jan/Feb 2015
Country: [REDACTED] ProjectID: [REDACTED] Priority given: [REDACTED]				
Assessment Criteria	Topic / Question	Review Rating 0: Low/poor → 5: High/excellent	Feedback (Gaps/missing information/data, need for clarification, issues flagged for follow-up & specific recommendations)	
Clarity in the problem/need/gaps analysis. (Is the need/problem/gap analysis clearly presented and documented?) RELEVANCE	1. Extent to which the situation, problem, need / gap is clearly identified, analysed and documented (evidences, references).	4	The situation analysis is clearly described, with support from the radioactive waste management There is no reference to the CPF, but briefly to the previous TC project.	
	2. Adequacy and clarity of the stakeholder analysis (clear identification of end-users, beneficiaries, sponsors, partners, and clearly defined roles and responsibilities).	2	Not all Stakeholders have been identified and their role defined, (for example, ministry of environment, national emergency plan, etc.)	
LogFrame cause-effect relationship: Has the objective analysis / objective tree been developed? Are the hierarchy of results and the connection among different elements clear and logic? EFFECTIVENESS	3. Clarity, consistency and logic of the OBJECTIVE TREE, and its reflexion in the LFM results hierarchy from Activities to OUTPUTS, to OUTCOME and to OVERALL OBJECTIVE.	2	The narrative describes briefly the project overall and specific objectives while the Objective Tree is not available	
	4. Clarity and adequacy of OUTCOME (clear, realistic, relevant, addressing the problem identified). Does it provide a clear description of the benefit or improvement that will be achieved after project completion?	2	The proposed Outcome is a set of outputs and it should be improved.	
	5. Clarity and adequacy of OUTPUTS (realistic, measurable, adequate for leading to the achievement of the OUTCOME).	3	The proposed outputs are sound. The wording can be improved.	

Example of Feedback provided (II)



QUALITY REVIEW FEEDBACK FOR PROJECT DESIGN FOR TCP 2016-2017

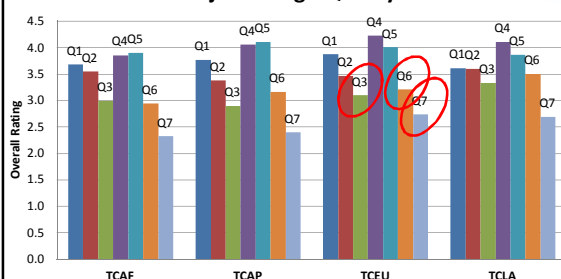
Jan/Feb 2015

Assessment Criteria	Topic / Question	Review Rating 6: Low/poor → 3: High/excellent	Feedback (Gaps/missing information/data, need for clarification, issues flagged for follow-up & specific recommendations)
Indicators (SMART, targets and timeframe) and means of verification + realistic work plan (including deadlines): EFFECTIVENESS & EFFICIENCY	6. INDICATORS and MEANS OF VERIFICATION are SMART for Outcome and Output levels.	3	Indicators and means of verification are not fully Smart and should be improved.
Assumptions (risk) adequacy: SUSTAINABILITY	7. Extent to which important external factors are identified and adequacy of assumptions made.	3	Some external factors and assumption can be improved. The risk management does not include the assumptions that may arise from environmentalists
Compliance with TC requirements (Ref. TCP Quality Criteria). Extent to which the Central Criterion is met, the relevance of the IAEA role and the likelihood of sustainability. RELEVANCE, OWNERSHIP & SUSTAINABILITY	8. The extent to which the project reflects and documents that it would be contributing to solve a real problem, as part of an existing national programme supported by the MS on its own (see Problem Statement, linkages with CPF/RPF, past/present country efforts, project budget not only from TCF). In addition, for Regional/Interregional Projects, compliance with TC Policies for regional/interregional projects.	3	Although the CPF was not mentioned, other national plans and the law were used to substantiate the proposal. But the CPF should be referred to in the final document.
	9. The extent to which the project reflects the key role of nuclear techniques and/or nuclear technology and the relevant role that the IAEA TC Programme plays.	5	The various nuclear and non-nuclear techniques are identified as well as the role of the IAEA
	10. The extent to which the project reflects a proper implementation strategy, capacity of the respective CP institutions, roles and responsibilities and commitment/ownership from MS (see counterpart mandate, resources, implementation arrangements, budget allocated from MS, work plan) - Are the inputs (from IAEA, MS and others) clear, complete and adequate/consistent with the activities to produce the project outputs?	3	The Project Implementation Strategy and Monitoring need to improve to clearly define the role and responsibility of each role player and to describe the managerial and administrative approach and methodology to be used. Moreover, the proposed two-year duration is not realistic in view of the magnitude of the work to be done as well as the many obstacles that may affect the smooth implementation of the project.

Individual questions TCP 2016-2017

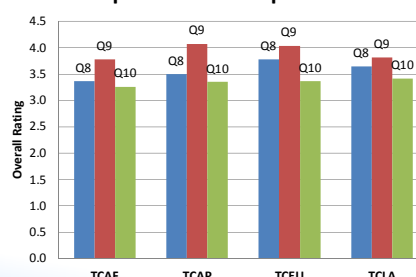


Project Design Quality



Q3: consistency and logic of objective tree
Q6: SMART indicators and means of verification
Q7: external factors, risks

TC Requirements Compliance TCP



Individual Questions TCP 2014-2015 vs TCP 2016-2017



Q4: outcomes
Q5: outputs
Q6: assumptions, risks

General Observations



- Nearly one third of all countries had significant numbers of reviewed projects with low project design quality.
- Deficiencies in the upstream work process: CPFs, strategic analysis, partnerships, UNDAF, SDGs
- Lack of understanding/experience in analysing risks and formulating assumptions.
- Transcription of problem/objective analysis into LFM
- Logic of LFM elements
- Still blank fields in the template, even after finalization
- Role of IAEA often only linked to inputs provided
- Regional Projects: Information on participating MSs incomplete
- Importance of continued capacity building: additional training approaches, e-learning, train-the-trainers

Recommendations



[Total of 52 recommendations]

Strategic planning level:

- Focus on strengthening upstream work and compliance with TC central criterion

Operational level:

- Improving implementation strategy and clarify roles/responsibilities of stakeholders

Training delivery

- E-learning, train the trainers, knowledge management and transfer

TC programming process:

- Review and revise project design
- Review of project design guidelines
- Only use one project template to be completed in different planning and design stages



Processes and Tools for Quality Improvement: Capacity Building

Practical Support during Design Phase



- **Project Design Workshops using the LFA**
- **Project Design “Clinics” / Consultations**
 - To help with design difficulties
 - Facilitate dialogue between PMO, TO and other stakeholders
 - Project specific
 - Assistance provided upon request
- **E-learning / Training of Trainer**

Types of Workshops



- **Sub-regional:**
 - A cluster of countries with similar attributes or issues, working on Thematic Areas
 - Possibility to network and establish contacts on a sub-regional level
- **National:**
 - Builds a critical mass of capacity in country
 - Possibility to work on all projects submitted by the country
 - Whole project team can participate

Sub-regional Workshops

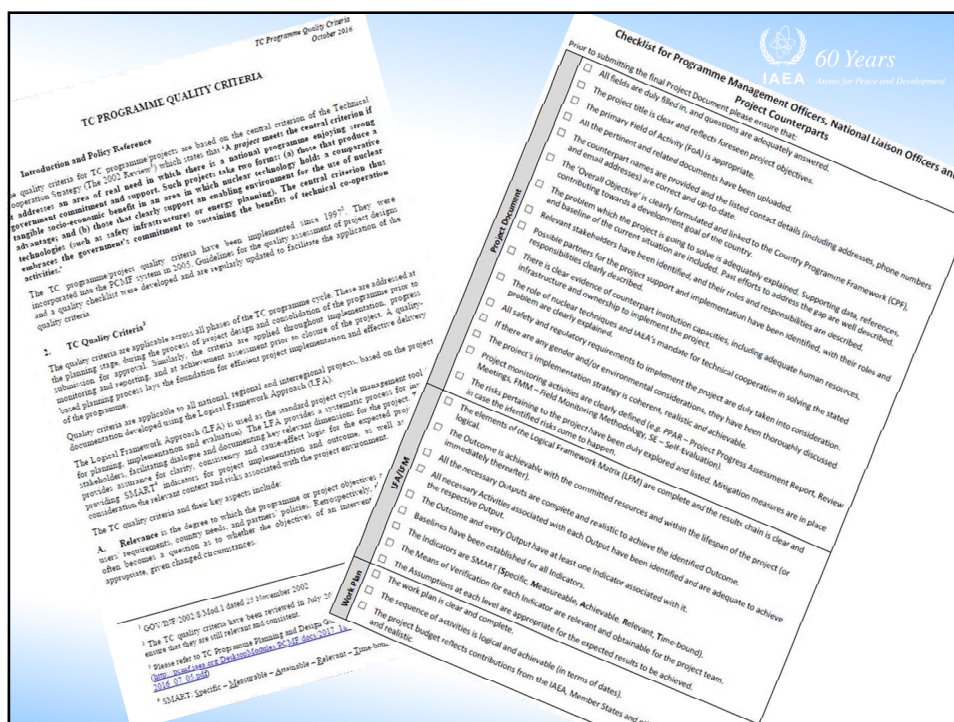


- **Working groups formed by thematic area:**
 - Food & Agriculture
 - Human Health
 - Safety and Security
 - Water and the Environment
 - Nuclear Energy
- **As a group participants agree and select project they want to work on**
 - Facilitator available for individual consultation for non-selected projects

National Workshops



- **Working groups formed by project proposals and/or thematic areas**
 - NLO / NLA
 - Counterparts and their team
 - Future generations
- **PMO co-facilitates**





M&E in Quality Management



- Project monitoring is an integral part of results-based management (RBM).
- Important to measure progress in achieving results and to report on results achieved
- Key principles in quality management (QM) (according to ISO9000 & ISO9001 standards) include:
 - Evidence based reporting and decision making and
 - Continual improvement

Why M&E of TC Projects?



- Quality is to be applied at each stage of: (i) planning; (ii) design; (iii) implementation and (iv) evaluation.
 M&E contributes to ensuring quality during implementation and of results achieved.
- Need to measure and report results (outputs and outcomes) achieved by the TC programme
 M&E enables to systematically measure results (outputs & outcomes) achieved and better document these.

Why M&E of TC Projects?



- Increased demand from MS and donors for showing evidences of how the TC contributes to successfully addressing development challenges in the recipient MSs (impact)
 M&E helps to provide evidence of TC successes in the MSs; this facilitates resource mobilization for the programme;
- M&E allows to identify lessons learned and to incorporate these for continual improvement

Principles of M&E of TC Projects

- Applying guiding principles
 - **Timeliness** in the completion of planned activities: deadlines follow-up
 - **Measuring and report of outputs achieved**: using SMART indicators
 - **Analyse progress** towards **achieving** the expected outcome
 - Highlight **lessons learned** for continual improvement
- Applying relevant tools at different stages

TC – M&E Tools





Best Practices Initiative



BEST PRACTICE

an example of a standing policy, strategy, procedure, process, tool, technique or method that supports enhanced compliance with relevant performance indicators in the effective and efficient delivery of the objectives of a TC task.

- Co-ordinated documentation and dissemination of relevant Best Practices
- Central to managing knowledge and experience of stakeholders in the TC programme.
- Supports on-going sharing of learning and innovation, networking and establishment of communities of practice

Best Practices Initiative



- Third round 2015/2016
- 11 Best Practices identified in 2012 and 2013
- Range from technology transfer to procurement to project management.

www.iaea.org/technicalcooperation/programme/Quality/Best-Practices/



Thank you!