



CAREC Institute's Strategy and Results Framework 2021 – 2025

Khalid Umar, Chief, SPD

9 June 2022



Content

01 What is Strategy?

02 Introduction to CI Strategy

03 Process and Rationale for Strategy
2021-2025

04 The Global and Regional Economic
Landscape

05 Recommendation and Strategic
Priorities and Actions



What is a Strategy and Why we need it?

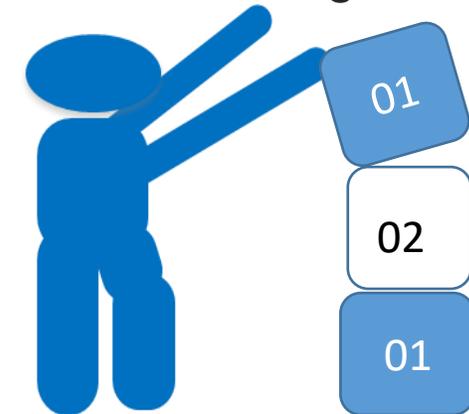
HBR defines strategy as:

“ a set of guiding principles that, when communicated and adopted in the organization, **generates a desired pattern of decision making**. A strategy is therefore about how people throughout the organization should **make decisions and allocate resources** in order to accomplish key objectives.”

Strategy consists of a set of principles and rules that provides a clear roadmap. It defines certain integrated actions that people should take and prioritize to achieve organizational goals.

No Strategy means:

- Confusion among employees about organizational goals
- Promotion of short-term thinking,
- Unclear objectives
- Resources are not properly allocated



In short, a headless chicken trying to find a peaceful corner in the room!



Key Milestones

The CI functioned **virtually** from the CAREC Secretariat at ADB headquarters in Manila.

01

02

The CI started **physical operations in March 2015** in Urumqi, XUAR, People's Republic of China (PRC).

In December 2016, the Fifth Governing Council (GC) meeting mandated the CI to **develop a strategy**.

03

CI's **Inter-Government Agreement (IGA)** entered into force on 24 August 2017.

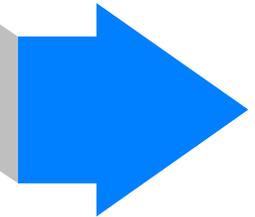
04

The CI's inaugural **Strategy 2018-2022** was developed and adopted in 2018.

05

MTR in 2020. The 11th GC in July 2021, mandated the CI to **prepare a forward-looking Strategy 2021-2025**.

06





Introduction – Strategy 2018-2022

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Strategic Goals

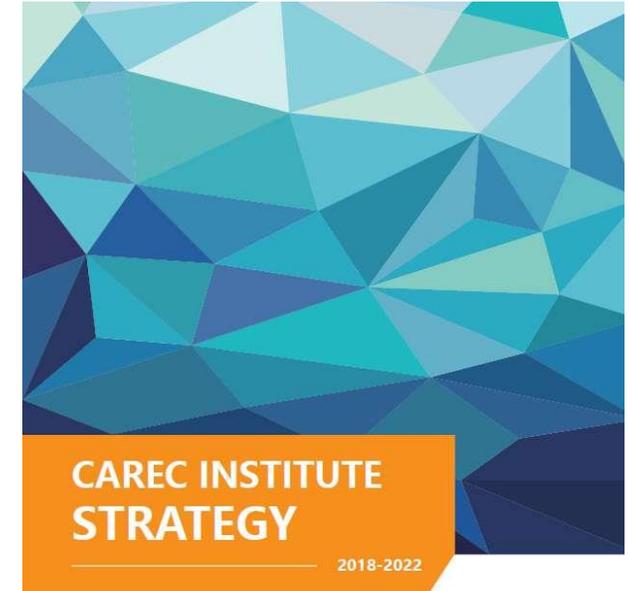
Objectives

Institutional Strengthening

- Enhancing Organizational Capacity
- Augmenting Human Resources
- Achieving Financial Sustainability

Operational Excellence

- Advancing Research
- Upscaling Capacity Building
- Strengthening Knowledge Management
- Promoting Partnerships and Networking





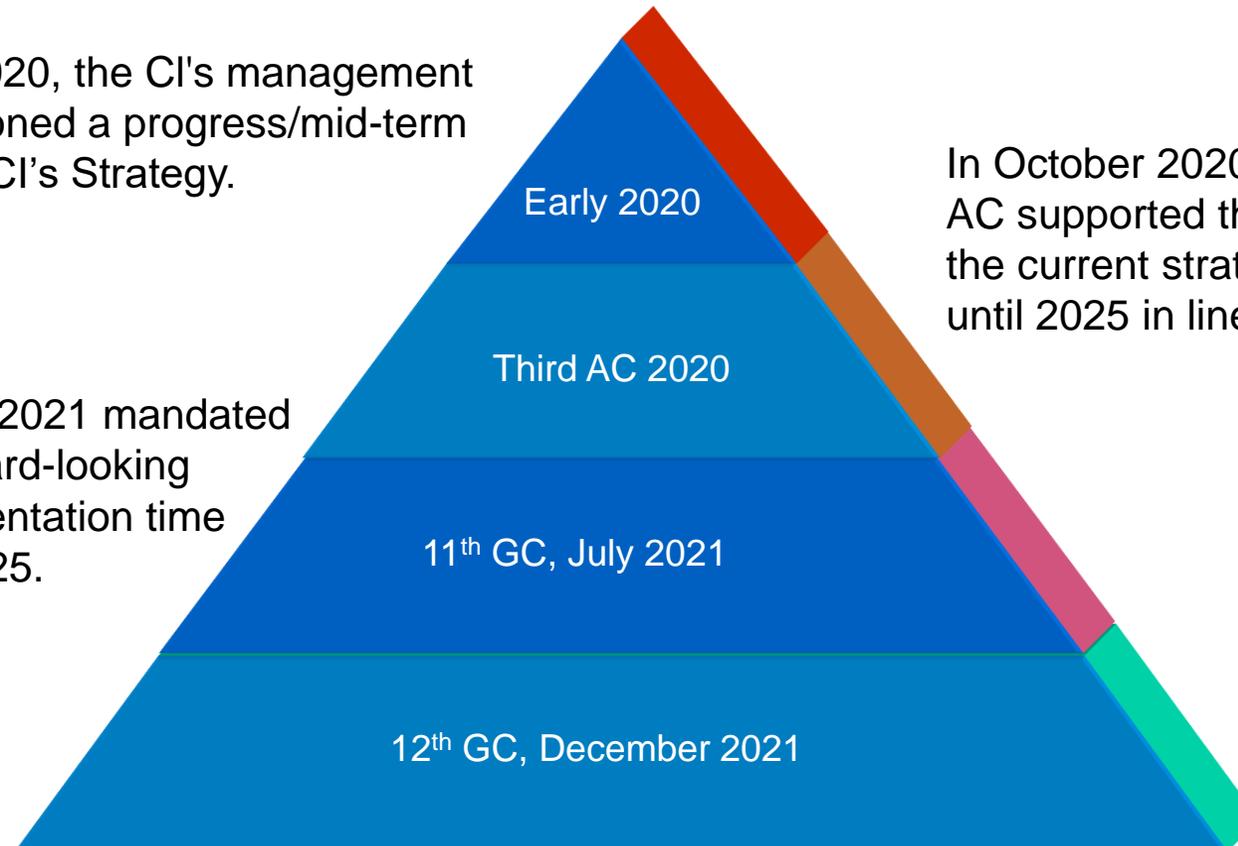
Process and Rationale for Strategy 2021-2025

In early 2020, the CI's management commissioned a progress/mid-term review of CI's Strategy.

In October 2020, during the 3rd AC meeting, AC supported the ADB's proposal for updating the current strategy and extending its term until 2025 in line with CAREC Strategy 2030.

The 11th GC meeting in 2021 mandated the CI to prepare a forward-looking strategy with an implementation time horizon from 2021 to 2025.

On 9 Dec 2021, 12th GC meeting provided comments and feedback on Strategy 2021-2025, which was fully endorsed in March 2022.





Mid-term Review of CI's progress and new Strategy Formulation

In early 2020, the CI's management commissioned the **progress review** to measure progress during 2018-2020 against the targets enshrined in the strategy, to address emerging challenges, and to reap benefits from the new opportunities in the region

Background

Aimed to evaluate the CI's institutional and operational readiness with the view to i) improving the CI's institutional capacity; ii) understanding the nature and extent of the impact of COVID-19 ; iii) considering options for extending the implementation timeframe

Objective

Gathered the necessary information and data;
Collated candid input and feedback from member countries;
Triangulated the internal and external feedback

Methodology

Review used mainly three parameters:
Mission and Guiding Principles;
Strengthening institutional Capacity;
Delivering Knowledge Services

Implementation Progress of Strategy 2018-2022

The Mid-Term Review



Rationale for new Strategy 2021-2025

Progress: The CI has i) adopted necessary financial, HR, administrative and operational policies, rules, procedures; ii) achieved institutional efficiency; iii) adopted proper organization-wide planning processes: ROP, work plans, annual budget cycles, recruitment plans, iv) forged knowledge partnerships, and v) enhanced the quality and quantity of knowledge product.

Remaining Challenges: i) Still new institution, concerns with financial sustainability and recruitment of high-skilled staff; ii) COVID-induced work practices and settings; iii) fulfilling the knowledge needs of member countries (respond effectively to the pandemic-induced knowledge requirements of member countries).

Way forward: Developing a new strategy and reprioritize CI's approach and efficiently deploy available resources to help member countries.





The Global and Regional Economic Landscape

Evolving Economic Landscape

1. Multifaceted Uncertainties;
2. The Afghanistan Factor and its Implications;
3. Strained Fiscal Accounts and Rising Inflation
4. Uncertain Better Recovery;
5. Digitalizing the Economy;
6. Converting Transport Channels into Economic Corridors
7. (Not explicitly numbered in the image)
8. Sustainable Energy, Climate Change and Agriculture;
9. Water and socioeconomic development in Central Asia;
10. Weak Social Safety Nets;
11. Pressure on the Health Sector
12. Deploying Unconventional Policy Tools;
13. Governance and Accountability





Implications for Regional Cooperation and Integration



01

Clogged Border
Crossing Points



02

Low Trade
Integration



03

Return Migration
and Shrinking
Remittances



04

Low Participation
in Value Chains



Strategy 2025: Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles

Vision

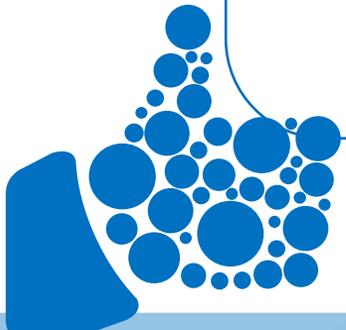
- Leading knowledge center promoting economic Cooperation in the CAREC region for shared and sustainable development

Mission

- To enhance the quality and effectiveness of the CAREC Program by providing evidence-based research and CB services, dissemination of knowledge products, and network with research institutions

Guiding Principles

- Alignment with CAREC program;
- Consistency with international best practice;
- Transparency;
- Balance and fairness;
- Equitability;
- Collaboration.





CI's Strategic Priorities until 2025

Mission and Guiding Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deepening Engagement with Member Countries
Institutional Strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attracting and Retaining Technical Talents• Diversifying Financial Resources• Ensuring Conducive Working Environment
Achieving Operational Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategizing Operational Priorities• Enhancing Quality of Research and Expanding Research Portfolio• Revitalizing Capacity Building Approach – Developing an E-Learning Platform• Adopting an Innovative Knowledge Management Approach• Improving Partnerships and Networks• CPMM• Adoption of Digital Approaches• Quality Assurance Framework (QAF)





Strategic Priorities and Actions: Mission and Guiding Principles



Deepening Engagement with Member Countries

- Increase the frequency of physical interaction with national focal points (NFPs) from once in a year (during GC meeting) to at least twice a year
- Conduct regular country consultations with NFPs, sector committees/line ministries and ADB's country directors to keep abreast with evolving country development context combining virtual communications and face-to-face interactions
- Request feedback on specific CI products as soon as they are disseminated





Strategic Priorities and Actions: Institutional Strengthening

02

Attracting and Retaining
Technical talent

- Strengthen recruitment process by engaging a professional **head-hunting agency** to reach out to the maximum number of potential candidates
- Nurture **staff skills** for delivering strategic objectives
- Design and support **need-based staff trainings** for honing existing skills and acquiring emerging skills
- Promote **interdivisions learning** and communication environment
- Strengthen sectoral and technical skills for developing **organizational niche**
- Update **staff compensation and benefits package once every three years**, consistent with market trends
- Introduce a **360 degree staff appraisal** mechanism

03

Diversifying Financial
Resources

- Optimize financial sustainability (**FSWG**) **working group** platform to fast-track negotiations for financial commitment
- Negotiate with the PRC and other potential member countries to shift from annual contribution **to multi-year replenishment cycle**
- Ensure effective **oversight of financial resource management** by a well-functioning budget and audit committee (BAC)
- Establish a **resource mobilization team** and equip it with necessary tools and techniques
- Develop a comprehensive **resource mobilization strategy** for reaching out to potential donors and partners for co-financing of activities
- Explore **product-wise funding** from governments and other funders for flagship products such as think tank forum, CPMM, and CRII

04

Ensuring Conducive
Working Environment

- Promote the use of **ICT** and ensure uninterrupted supply of **high bandwidth internet**
- Obtain access to authentic and credible **research journals and databases**
- Accelerate and conclude negotiations with Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan for opening a **satellite office / regional hub**
- Intensify negotiations with local authorities to grant **privileges to the staff as stipulated in the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)** and Host City Agreement (HCA) with XUAR and Urumqi Government.



Strategic Priorities and Actions: Achieving Operational Excellence

05

Strategizing Operational Priorities

- Earmark bulk of **resources around key thematic areas** to promote regional cooperation and integration (RCI)
- Follow the **organic principle for topics selection** around the thematic areas and the most relevant topics that emerged in the backdrop of COVID-19 for research and capacity building interventions
- Pay special attention to **human development**—particularly learning new technologies and capacity building in the health sector, and social safety nets
- Adopt a **demand-driven approach within the CI's comparative advantages** for the selection of topics for research and capacity building
- Pursue **fully funded projects within any cluster** for ensuring financial sustainability and building research portfolio

06

Expanding Research Portfolio

- Augment **sector expertise in research**, at least in the thematic areas
- Recruit two international staff (IS) and two secondees with sectoral expertise
- **Increase the research budget** in proportion to the total operational budget
- While continuing effective collaboration with external experts for research, the CI will **accelerate its in-house research capacity** with continuously increasing proportion of published papers by the CI's own research team in comparison to externally commissioned papers
- Ensure to tailor research output **responding to country-specific research needs** within the CI's comparative advantages
- **Deepen research partnerships** with regional and global institutions for co-financing and co-producing research products under the CI's research focus
- Become a **focal point of research network organization** around CAREC-relevant topics



Strategic Priorities and Actions: Achieving Operational Excellence

07

Revitalizing Capacity Building Approach—
Developing an E-Learning Platform

- Earmark **necessary financial and human resources** for the robustness of the e-learning platform
- Enhance and strengthen the **cascade training model** for exponentially increasing training outcomes
- Follow **research-centric approach** to capacity building
- **Implement blended capacity-building approach**— combining face-to-face and online training—and gradually increase the proportion of online training in comparison to the physical training modality.
- Develop **impact evaluation/feedback mechanism** to trace the impact of training on policymaking in member countries
- Venture into **project management training**
- Customize training for **various levels of government officials**—junior, middle, and senior
- Identify and **collaborate with national training institutes** in member countries for reaching out to a wider audience

08

Adopting an Innovative Knowledge Management Approach

- Place greater emphasis on **quality assurance and more customization** of knowledge products with strong engagement of CAREC region experts
- Adopt a **demand-driven knowledge management approach**, considering country-specific knowledge context within the CI's comparative advantages
- **Deepen engagement with the CAREC Secretariat** for developing high-demand, high-impact knowledge products for the consideration of the CAREC Ministerial Conference (MC)
- Design a mechanism for **strengthening interdivisional knowledge coordination** for an integrated approach to knowledge management
- Leverage technology to **improve dissemination methodology** and channels for reaching out to relevant stakeholders; use channels popular in CAREC countries
- **Increase financial, human, and ICT resources in knowledge management**
- **Organize knowledge management** for easier navigation
- **Approach relevant stakeholders**, the academic community, and the wider public as well as focusing on government officials



Strategic Priorities and Actions: Achieving Operational Excellence

09

Improving Partnerships and Networks

- **Undertake an assessment of current partnerships** to identify and articulate potential synergies
- Prepare **structured criteria for partnerships** and cooperation arrangements
- Make partnerships more **CI research focus driven**
- Review the **design, approach**, and organization of the flagship think tank development forum
- **Operationalize CTTN blog** for a meaningful exchange of best practices and ideas among think tanks and universities
- Fast track efforts to **transform think tank talk series into an attractive platform** for sharing research findings

10

CPMM

- Acquire **financial and human resources** necessary for the complete transition of CPMM from the ADB to the CI by 2025
- Hone **capacity of CPMM** task force
- **Deepen network and engagement** with key CPMM operational partners in all member countries

11

Adoption of Digital Approaches

- **Acquire cutting-edge tools and technologies** essential for delivering state of the art knowledge services
- **Package the CI's experience** with adoption of ICT tools and share with regional think tanks
- Identify **digital adoption gaps** in member countries and engage with national training institutes

12

Quality Assurance Framework (QAF)

- **Strengthen publication board** and set up an **external review mechanism** for research output
- Develop and adopt a **quality assurance framework** that should, at the minimum, include standards and guidelines
- Designate and empower a **quality assurance committee/team**



Thank you!

spd@carecinstitute.org

