



**CENTRAL ASIA REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION INSTITUTE
(CAREC Institute)**

Institutional Approach for Transformational Capacity Development Activities

By

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I. INTRODUCTION

The CAREC Institute marked eighth year of physical inception in 2023 since the establishment of its headquarters in Urumqi, capital city of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China in 2015. The Institute has grown in capacity to intensify its research, capacity building and knowledge management support to member countries for effective implementation of the CAREC Program and other emerging and relevant issues of regional cooperation. The Institute went through overall Midterm Review of Strategy 2018-25 in 2021 – to review and assess its strategic achievements and to align its approaches (based on new and innovative modalities) with evolving developments to achieve its core strategic goals, this paper aims to build on the experiences and lessons learned to propose an integrated approach to transform the Institute's capacity building interventions delivery. The approach also utilizes some of the feasible recommendations proposed by independent consultants on the effectiveness of the CAREC Institute's capacity building interventions. More importantly, this paper serves as a living document to adapt emerging and feasible capacity building modalities on constant and systematic basis to offer innovative and timely knowledge support to all member countries and stakeholders.

Until 2019, the CAREC Institute was offering traditional thematic capacity building activities heavily depended on the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the CAREC Secretariat Sectoral Divisions or other implementing partners' knowledge products and experts. Since 2020, the Institute has evolved to function on its strategic framework of knowledge generation, services, and management more self-sufficiently. The Institute has brought on board several PhD holding professional staff, including a Chief Economist, in addition to other recruitments. Also, the CAREC Institute has built an eLearning platform (with generous support from ADB), which has opened virtual venues to conduct various research, capacity building, and knowledge management activities from distance and in blended modalities. These new developments made it inevitable for the Institute to transform its knowledge support, particularly capacity building delivery approach to optimize effectiveness and impacts. Hence, a three-tiered integrated approach was envisioned and based on that the Institute has been delivering hybrid capacity development interventions in hybrid, cascading and systematic manners.

II. THREE-TIERED INTEGRATED APPROACH INTRODUCTION

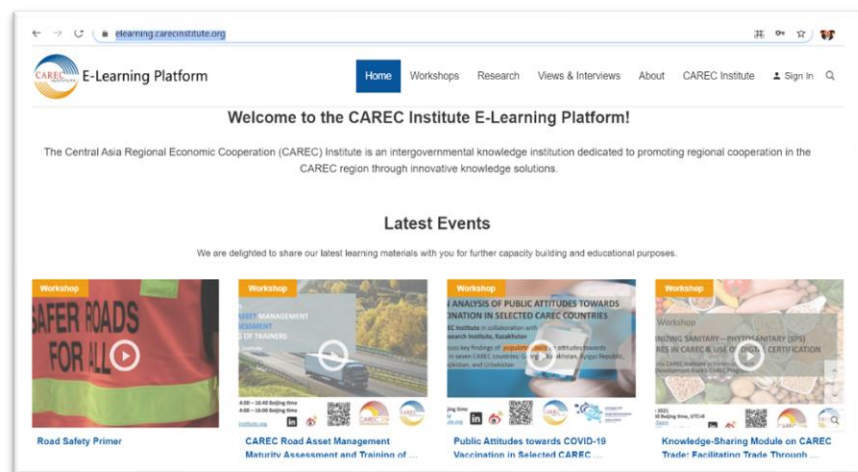
The first-tier shift of approach has been the blended learning modality. With a fully and functional eLearning platform in 2020 (with a highly equipped and stable IT foundation eLearning studio), the CAREC Institute has been able to shift its approach from fully traditional one-event-off face-to-face workshops to cascading and blended learning programs. The second tier has been research-based – to design capacity building interventions mainly based on the CAREC Institute research. The CAREC Institute has new professional staff on board, this capacity increase has positively impacted the Institute's knowledge generation outputs. Therefore, the Institute has shifted approach to deliver research-based capacity building interventions. This shift of approach has been

also institutionalized within the Rolling Operational Planning that take place in rolling basis annually. The third tier has been the aspiration of becoming a “Knowledge Broker” in the region, including at the CAREC Sectoral Coordinating Committee and Technical Meetings. Until recently, the CAREC Institute was heavily depended on CAREC Sectoral Divisions for planning its set of capacity building activities. While close collaboration with the CAREC Secretariat and Sectoral Divisions will continue and strengthen, the Institute has shifted focus on having firsthand stake in technical meetings across all priority clusters of the CAREC Program and relevant emerging areas of regional cooperation. Strong presence at technical gatherings hands the CAREC Institute the niche to design demand-based capacity building activities and to establish a horizontal working relations with the CAREC Secretariat, Sectoral Divisions, and other key implementing partners, including ADB and the Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI).

1) Shifting to Blended Learning Approach

The CAREC Institute, with the support of ADB, has developed an eLearning platform (<https://elearning.carecinstitute.org>) that has been functional since mid-2020. This has

opened virtual venues for capacity building interventions and other research and knowledge support-related activities. Since then, the Institute has recorded all delivered workshops and research conferences and uploaded on the platform for distance learning and further optimization by partners in the CAREC region and beyond. Based on effective resources management, the Institute devices virtual and in person mode of capacity building programs. While the Institute already had the know-how of delivering face-to-face capacity building events in pre-pandemic times, it has been acquiring practical experience in delivering innovative virtual workshops effectively. With combination of past and ongoing experience in different capacity building modalities, the Institute designs and delivers blended learning programs that engages target participants in full-cycle capacity building programs – mixture of virtual and face-to-face activities.



The limitations with the traditional approach were that interactions with participants would start on logistical issues (i.e., confirmation of flight tickets and hotel accommodation) at

the pre-workshop delivery stages. Such interactions were done through email or phone.¹ There was little post-workshop engagements with participants. After a physical workshop was conducted, there was no systematic venue for the participants and the CAREC Institute to remain connected on issues related to capacity building. In post-workshop delivery, some interactions would take place between participants and the CAREC Institute only on logistical issues of payments for change of tickets nature. Therefore, participants were provided with learning opportunities only when they arrived at the venue of a given workshop. There, they were suddenly bombarded with consecutive PowerPoint presentations and some discussions or policy dialogue without thorough pre-workshop reading and content preparations. The participants may have read the concept note of the workshop before attending it, but that was not enough to have them fully engaged in a systematic, effective, and full-cycle capacity building programs. Nonetheless, despite the limitations, the traditional approach was the only feasible choice for the CAREC Institute that was yet to develop an eLearning platform.

Now, with a fully developed and functional eLearning platform and physical distance learning infrastructures, the CAREC Institute has the best option available to build on past achievements and transform approach with modern learning systems. It is to transition into what is known as the blended learning approach or hybrid learning program. In this transformed approach, the target/nominated participants² will be engaged way before they arrive at the workshop venues whether virtual or physical. The CAREC Institute eLearning platform – a webpage with simple self-guide to all workshop details and educational materials, including video and PowerPoint presentations – will keep all interested participants involved in pre-workshop reading assignments and preparatory works as well as have them engaged with organizers and resource persons to start the capacity building or skill acquiring process as early as possible. Thus, participants will arrive at the workshop venues prepared and with practical questions or comments in mind to engage (with counterparts, organizers, and resource persons) in constructive discussions and policy dialogue at technical and policy levels.³

Similarly, the eLearning platform allows the CAREC Institute to keep the interested participants engaged in an everlasting learning process sustainably. Participants could watch pre-recorded lectures, download presentations, expert talks, reading materials and even continue attending virtual workshops relevant to their areas of interests and expertise. Therefore, blended learning approach or hybrid learning program is envisioned and is fully implemented. With this transformed approach, the Institute offers systematic, innovative, effective, sustainable, and full-cycle capacity building interventions. The platform offers various leverages to engage with nominated participants before, during and after capacity

¹ This was also time consuming for the CAREC Institute Capacity Building Division team who end up, at times, doing more logistical work than utilizing their main competitive advantages as capacity builders.

² The CAREC Institute sends request for nomination for the target participants to the CAREC countries national focal points. Member countries nominated participants and thus target participants are nominated officially.

³ Effective and constructive exchanges, knowledge sharing, policy dialogues and discussions in a capacity building event/workshop help participants acquire new knowledge and capacity. Having a group of senior government officials constructively engaged with one another and together with international experts/resource persons will bring many more positive spillovers and opens sustainable windows of learning opportunities given the virtual tools of instant communications (i.e., WeChat, WhatsApp, etc.). Among others, the government officials form professional networking groups in their areas of work and expertise to help one another, which in turn promotes cross-border or regional cooperation in the CAREC region.

building interventions. Communications and sharing of workshop materials are done virtually through the platform functionalities. While face-to-face policy dialogues could take place at workshop venues, follow-up virtual activities through eLearning platform. Overall, the blended learning approach will enable the CAREC Institute to utilize innovative modes of workshop planning and delivery implying complete cycle of capacity building for long-lasting and larger impacts on cascading basis.

2) Research-Based Capacity Building Interventions

By 2020, the CAREC Institute brought new professional staff on board, including an experienced Deputy Director Two, this capacity increase positively impacted the CAREC Institute's knowledge generation outputs. The increase in capacity and productivity in the Institute's knowledge generating divisions demanded a change of approach in the Institute's Knowledge Services – Capacity Building Division. As mentioned earlier, the CAREC Institute capacity building interventions were heavily depended on partners' knowledge products and experts⁴ until the arrival of new high-level professional staff. Hence, the new capacity building planning approach became to simply plan as many CAREC Institute research-based capacity building interventions as possible. This approach is institutionalized and linked with the Institute's Rolling Operational Plan (ROP), which takes place on rolling basis each year. Progress has already been made on this front. Starting in 2020, the majority of the conducted workshops are based on the CAREC Institute research projects, engaging CAREC Institute research staff as key resource persons in the workshops (i. e., water resources management, e-commerce, climate change, etc.).

Planning capacity building workshops based on its own knowledge products provides the CAREC Institute with the prospects and niches to undertake systematic knowledge support activities, as envisioned in its strategic framework of generate-serve-manage.⁵ It also brings added values where both products and experts are from the Institute. In addition, the Institute's Capacity Building Division obtains the flexibility and leverage of designing capacity building interventions in the most suitable mode of workshop delivery. Capacity building events could be designed for virtual, face-to-face mode of delivery or the mixture of both since the products and experts are from the CAREC Institute and discussions and planning can be done effectively and efficiently. Furthermore, this makes partnership with key implementing partners like ADB and ADBI more constructive, mutually beneficial, and attractive. Finally, this new approach is cost-effective for the Institute, as standard costs like honorarium, flight tickets and other associated finances applicable for external resource persons – brought from different regions of the world – no

⁴ The key implementing partner for the CAREC Institute has been the Asian Development Bank (ADB) since the Institute's inception. ADB has been helping the Institute with knowledge products and experts to deliver its activities.

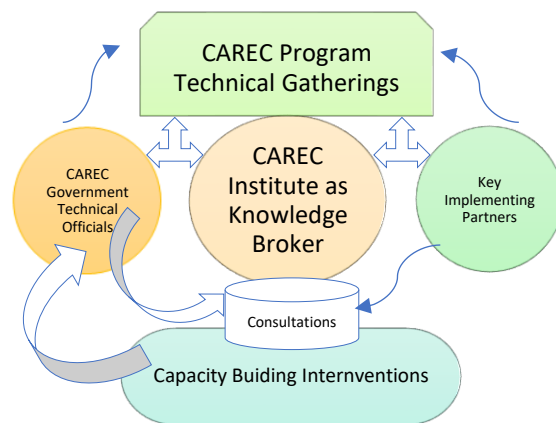
⁵ The CAREC Institute's strategic knowledge support framework is divided into three divisions: 1) Knowledge Generation (Research); 2) Knowledge Services (Capacity building; and 3) Knowledge Management (Sustainable Dissemination of Knowledge). In this strategic framework, a cycle of knowledge generation, services and management is envisioned.

longer apply. In this new proposed approach, the CAREC Institute builds in-house expertise by utilizing its own professional capacities while maximizes impacts.

3) “Knowledge Broker” at Technical CAREC Program Events

The CAREC Institute needs stronger presence at the CAREC Program sectoral technical events (virtual or physical) such as coordinating committee and thematic regional technical group meetings (RTGs) where sectoral and priority thematic areas of strategic issues, action plans and other planning amplifications are discussed at technical levels. Attendance in such gatherings offers the CAREC Institute with the leverage of positioning itself tightly with ongoing CAREC priority activities. It also provides direct interactions with important and relevant CAREC countries’ senior technical officials of different sector who are the primary targets of the CAREC Institute’s capacity building interventions. Additionally, collaboration with key implementing partners will start from there (top end of stream), which will not only help to avoid overlaps and dependency on partners but also navigate and leverage expertise and resources for collaborative and joint capacity building interventions with key implementing partners (i.e., ADB/CAREC Sectoral Divisions). The CAREC Institute, since 2019, has been actively engaged in reviewing CAREC Program’s strategic documents such as CAREC Energy, Tourism, Transport, and Digital strategies and providing constructive inputs. The Institute will continue its support on this front by highlighting its strategic roles in the implementation phase of CAREC sectoral strategies through research, capacity building and knowledge management interventions. Further follow-up collaboration will be needed to engage at coordinating committee and technical meetings to achieve tangible collaborative results.

This shift of approach is in line with the recommendations of an independent study conducted on the effectiveness and impacts of the CAREC Institute capacity building interventions by an independent capacity building consultant. The report highlighted that the Institute’s target participants *“in the CAREC countries need multiple capacities to be able to drive regional integration processes forward. And there are multiple actors close to CAREC and CAREC projects and processes: The CAREC Secretariat, the ADB, national government institutions, private sector and civil society, national research institutions, and think-tanks. In this evolving landscape, the [CAREC Institute] should seek its place where it does not compete with others in the short and medium term, and where it can build a distinctive platform based on its evolving strengths.”* To this end, the research findings suggested that the CAREC Institute *“should consider assuming the role of a development*



entrepreneur⁶ and knowledge broker working to influence formal policy processes by i) enabling knowledge acquisition⁷ and learning by those involved in policy making and (higher-level) implementation; ii) involving a broader set of stakeholders in these knowledge acquisition processes. Successful development entrepreneurship in this sense builds on two assets that CI do not have at the moment: closeness to the policy processes, and agility enabling CI to capture the opportunities.”

By having a strong presence at the CAREC Program technical events along with key development partners and in the presence of the CAREC governments’ technical officials, the CAREC Institute will have the “closeness” and “agility” to plan and offer effective, coordinated and demand-based capacity building interventions to all stakeholders in areas of high priority. This also provides the CAREC Institute knowledge divisions with a direct access to the target participants (CAREC government representatives) in action to assess needs, consult and network with primary stakeholders. Furthermore, the CAREC Institute’s partnership with the CAREC Secretariat, Sectoral Divisions and other key implementing partners will become horizontal – with mutual constructive exchange of expertise and knowledge.⁸ This approach, overall, gives the CAREC Institute the closeness and agility it has been lacking to establish an effective role as the knowledge broker of the CAREC Program in the region.

4) Expected outcomes

The new approach is expected to achieve a systematic transformation of the CAREC Institute’s capacity building interventions and make them adaptive, effective, and flexible with agility and closeness to perform a knowledge broker role in support of primary stakeholders. On more specifics, the new approach is expected to achieve the following outcomes:

- The CAREC Institute’s current capacity building delivery approach is made flexible to design and deliver effective capacity development services utilizing innovative mode of delivery options while retaining effective responsiveness for the regional capacity needs and adaptive competitiveness.
- Stronger inter-divisional synergy in capacity building activities is achieved and the CAREC Institute functions are enhanced based on its original strategic framework to generate new knowledge, disseminate it, and manage all the knowledge outputs effectively.
- Capacity building interventions of the CAREC Institute are regularly discussed and planned at the CAREC Program technical meetings (at the end top stream) and stronger partnership and connections are made with key implementing partners

⁶ See www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/214851/governance-brief-28.pdf. The Governance Brief uses the parallel terms “change entrepreneur” or “development entrepreneur.”

⁷ The term “knowledge acquisition” is deliberately chosen despite its awkwardness because it focuses on the demand side, i.e., the user of the knowledge.

⁸ As the CAREC Institute is evolving, it has been heavily depended on the technical support of the ADB/CAREC Secretariat and Sectoral Divisions. It is time for the CAREC Institute to attain a stronger role as horizontal partners to these integral and key supporters to form mutually beneficial partnership.

and the target participants for holistic, demand-based, and effective capacity building interventions.

III. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT MODALITIES

Currently in Practice.

1) Knowledge sharing workshops, policy dialogues and roundtables

CAREC Institute has been intensifying and diversifying its capacity development portfolio by developing and implementing new modalities that have an increased quality and level of impact. Until recently, as an intergovernmental organization, CI's key target audience was solely government officials from member countries. All capacity development programs were designed to target that "traditional" group. The main methods that CI applied to engage with mid- to high- level officials were organizing regular knowledge sharing and policy dialogue seminars and workshops. Such undertakings may have been the best choice for the CAREC Institute at earlier stage of operation, but they did not have systemic character. They were delivered in ad hoc manner with smaller level of value added from CI. Currently, the process of initiation of new knowledge sharing and policy dialogue event completely reconsidered – abandoning one-time unsystematic events and moving towards research-backed and cascading capacity building programs. This approach has started to ensure quality and relevance of knowledge sharing and policy dialogue seminars through evidence-based and demand-driven research results.

As described in previous chapters the CI Capacity Development team developed cascading method of interaction with participants to ensure their active participation in a full cycle of learning process. Now, knowledge sharing, policy dialogue, and expert roundtable events are not considered just supply of knowledge to targeted group, but as important means for sustainable and meaningful communications with CI's expanding stakeholders. These events are used also to gather important information to further analyze country and regional capacity needs for regional cooperation, and thus, serving as important factor in developing practical and demand driven programs and learning materials. As part of this modality, CI, along with national and international implementing partners, has started designing and delivering country specific events to address knowledge gaps and needs of that country. Such programs, despite being country specific, focus on segments that are relevant to regional cooperation and integration.

The importance of knowledge sharing workshops is affirmed by World Bank's findings that *knowledge sharing can lead to changes in the efficiency of policy and other formal incentive instruments, improving their clarity, legitimacy, and competence to tackle negative externalities. New knowledge about a given situation or how policy instruments alter stakeholders' behavior can lead to revision of those instruments (and thus changes in behavior). Knowledge can also lead to changes in the effectiveness of organizational arrangements, such as in operational efficiency or responsiveness to stakeholders. Such*

*adaptation or innovation on the part of organizations or groups within a given policy context can be triggered in response to new information or new requirements imposed by the external environment. For instance, following a series of South-South peer exchanges, a public sector agency may develop a new scheme for improving local service delivery.*⁹

2) Training of trainers' program and community of practice.

Since 2021, CI has successfully launched another type of capacity development intervention that has distinctively different modes of delivery than knowledge sharing workshops. CI believes that not only policy makers can serve as actors of change, but also technical staff known as “white collars” can and are contributing to the effective designing and implementation of various national programs and policies. They are the core actors in governance mechanism that play instrumental role in success or failure of national programs as they are actively involved in daily base operational and analytical processes. In order to effectively target that essential group, technical experts from the public sector, CI has developed a training of trainers' (TOT) program in highly technical segment of transportation system like Road Asset Management (RAM). This program was evolved from one of the CI's workshops on the similar subject, where participants requested for more detailed expert-oriented programs instead of general background workshops.

The TOT model is intended to engage experienced international and regional experts in coaching national experts (that are less experienced) on new and emerging technical topics or skills relevant to the focused field. A TOT workshop can build a pool of competent specialists who can then disseminate the knowledge to other people through direct knowledge transfer (seminars, training, etc.) or applying the knowledge in their professional activities. This would not only make them more effective at their jobs but also offer on the job training to their peers. During the training sessions participants received knowledge based on up-to-date data and best practices, completed various practical exercises, and interacted with other participants to move towards the formation of communities of practices.

The TOT has received with utmost interest from expert communities in member countries that paved the way for establishing the first of its own community of practice on RAM in the CAREC region. This platform allows expert community to build continuous knowledge cooperation that ensures peer-to-peer learning opportunities between countries. In fact, the CAREC Institute is in the process of exploring options in taking the RAM TOT graduates for an experiential learning study tour to a member country that is showcasing best practices in the field. Currently TOT on RAM is considered inaugural and flagship capacity development program, and nonetheless, CI is building on this experience to design other high quality and demand driven TOT programs in other topics relevant to CI's goals indicated in its strategic development plan 2018-2025 and beyond.

⁹ [World Bank, Capacity Development Result Framework, 2009](#)

Upcoming capacity development modalities.

1) Study tours and peer learning program.

The recent positive results in implementing its capacity development mandate has bolstered the appetite to explore other modalities that can further improve the quality of CI capacity development activities. Currently, CI is planning to implement a new approach – experiential learning study tours for shaping communities of practices in CAREC priority cluster areas. Although this undertaking is a new form of capacity building provision, but it is, at the same time, a logical continuation of TOT programs. This method will provide a good opportunity to effectively merge theoretical knowledge with practical evidence. The on sites visits of ToT participants will deepen their practical understanding of the pressing issues and offer them first-hand learning opportunity. The study tours will be designed to observe best practices that exist in that particular sector in one of the CAREC member countries and build direct state-state and expert-expert relations for further optimization of such lessons at regional levels. This element of South-South cooperation proved to be very effective practice in peer learning and regional cooperation as developing countries from same region usually share many similarities in both existing developmental challenges and perspectives. CI as a regional knowledge hub has all necessary means and mandate to encourage and promote such practical knowledge sharing to foster regional cooperation.

The important objective of this modality is to broaden the competence and outlook of technical staff from public sector to effectively pursue their professional activities armed with new innovative knowledge and skills. This activity will result in establishing a community of highly motivated and engaged regional experts, who will further disseminate the knowledge in their respective countries contributing to local, national, and regional development processes.

2) Online self-learning programs.

In the light of on-going global pandemic and development of new technologies the online learning programs are becoming very vital source of knowledge for both general and advanced users. The thematic variety of offered learning programs and methods of delivery varies in large quantity. The growing popularity of such programs is obliging CI to take steps to developing its own online programs. CI has gathered large amount of informational and knowledge resources that needs to be shared to larger audience in the region. The capacity development team of CI will explore optimal ways of designing relevant, unique, and user-friendly interactive online learning programs by examining and reviewing existing e-courses from other development partners.

The CI's eLearning Platform that was established with the support of the Asian Development Bank helped effectively pursue capacity development programs and opened new opportunities to enhance CI digital and online presence. This platform is used to develop and manage self-learning online courses.

Under the ongoing TOT program, CI has collected or will continue collecting enough useful information such as innovative techniques for analysis, self-guiding instructions, relevant statistics data, and case studies from the region and beyond. All those materials can be transferred eventually into online digital learning modules/materials (DLMs). For instance, the case studies prepared by former participants (alumni) of TOT programs will be used as learning materials and TOT alumni themselves can be engaged as resource persons for learners from their respective countries to provide guidance and support. These DLMs can be translated into major regional languages for broader access and use. They are also open for further optimization by national and regional implementing partners for educational and capacity building purposes. Following a series of expert peer exchanges, a government agency may develop a new system for improving service delivery that is mainstreamed through online training developed in cooperation with CI.

IV. EVALUATION METHODS FOR ON-GOING CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT MODALITIES

Monitoring, evaluation, and impact assessment of capacity development interventions are very challenging tasks. There is no one size fits all approach and many existing evaluation and assessment methods applied by other development partners are mostly difficult to adapt and sometimes even somewhat ambiguous. The effectiveness of those methods varies drastically, some of them being overly generalized and intuitive, others, on the contrary, being very time-consuming and financially expensive to conduct. However, understanding the importance of results measurement, which play a vital role for CAREC Institute's efficiency and quality of its knowledge services, the Capacity Development team is in need of developing CI-customized criterions to assess various capacity development modalities or replicated, where it is relevant, good practices from other development partners. Given limited financial and human resources in CI for capacity development, the key principles to adhere should be straightforward and optimal assessment tools and methods, and yet result-focused for the types of capacity development modalities that CI delivers.

CI has a clear mandate to support CAREC member countries to address existing knowledge gap in the region through meaningful value-addition. CI capacity development activities will play instrumental role in addressing key problems by concentrating its focus on specific issues through various modalities and modes of delivery. The CI set a direction to develop its own comparative advantage in capacity development with long lasting positive effect. At micro-level, all CI capacity development programs will be evaluated separately based on selected methods. In macro-level CI will monitor the development dynamics of those sectors that are focus areas of the CAREC Program's mandate through effective communication channels with government partners to identify direct or indirect effect of CI's knowledge support by capacity development and other interventions.

CI commonly uses as assessment tool for its capacity development activities multiple-choice short questionnaires on how CI's capacity development interventions were useful. The next step is to devise method to identify how capacity development services led to

participant's meaningful contributions to the positive changes in that field or sector that he/she works.

1) Knowledge sharing CB events.

Under the current approach almost all knowledge sharing events (workshops, policy dialogues, roundtables, etc.) are linked directly or indirectly to results of the research conducted by CI or jointly with other institutions/organizations. CI research agenda is based on CAREC Program's mandate endorsed by the high-level CAREC Ministerial Conference as well as the CAREC Institute Governing Council and that ensures for certain degree the demand driven approach used in CI's research and capacity development. For this type of modality, CI's target audience is mid to senior level government officials.

It is difficult to trace the immediate change caused by the knowledge sharing workshop because it takes time before the obtained knowledge can be transferred to an action plan and that action leads to positive results. Nevertheless, this impact assessment challenge should not be the factor to diminish the role of knowledge sharing, policy dialogue and roundtable meetings as vital source of knowledge and information for policy makers from member countries in drawing constructive lessons and conclusions for further feasible actions.

Evaluation of knowledge sharing events are conducted through a (widely used) standard post-event survey to identify events' relevance for the selected participants and quality of shared knowledge. Also, the information gathered by the post-event evaluation forms will be used to analyze capacity needs in that specific sector to develop higher impact technical training programs in the future. The post-event evaluation templates has been developed and available for internal use.

In order for CI to trace the impact of its capacity building activities with tangible results, capacity development team could organize follow-up meetings for earlier conducted workshops and policy dialogue roundtables, where participants will present their achievements and describe the contributive role of capacity development event that they participated. However, for CI organizing follow-up meetings for every workshop maybe financially costly. Thus, a selective approach focusing on those workshops that provided unique or specific policy recommendations that can be clearly attributed to CI's capacity development activities is needed.

2) Training of trainers' (TOT) program.

On-going TOT program is narrowly specialized capacity development modality that targets technical experts from public sector. For this type of modality, the evaluation tools allow to trace and assess participants' contributive impact or value-addition to the positive changes.

The evaluation of TOT programs will be based on assessment how trained specialists will disseminate and/or apply the knowledge in meaningful ways. The participants will be evaluated by the level of their operational, analytical, and/or managerial contribution to or influence on the activities relevant to the topic of the TOT program. Each activity performed by the TOT participants will be given a numeric coefficient depending on the scope and scale of impact (usefulness factor). This sample table below can be used for the assessment:

	Activities of a participant	Coefficient (used by CI)
1.	Organized training seminars for government officials and practitioners.	1-3
2.	Organized awareness raising events and/or open lectures for wider audience.	1-3
3.	Wrote analytical or explanatory articles for newspapers and journals and/or interviewed in mass-media (newspapers, TV, radio) on the topic.	1-3
4.	Prepared of written materials (peer reviewing or expert conclusions for legislative bills, policy programs, agency work-plans etc.)	3-6
5.	Served as adviser or member of working group for inter-agency (national or international) entities.	3-6
6.	Initiated/proposed new changes in improving existing legislation, policies, practices, international agreements etc.	6-10
7.	Leading new public or donor funded projects on relevant topic.	6-10
8.

This information will be collected from the participants after several months from the time of TOT meeting. The inputs from participants will be prerequisite for their selection for a follow up experiential learning study tour. In addition, for the above-mentioned inputs CI will ask to provide a brief country case study (600-1200 words) describing the one selected issue and participant's involvement or views in addressing that issue. The case study will be used for evaluation purposes and as reading materials for the online learning modules that CI is planning to develop in the future.

V. ORGANIZATION OF CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Capacity development framework should be based on certain principles that are relevant and specific to the organizational needs and capabilities. Those principles are to serve as core element of capacity development activities of CI and should remain unchanged as

guiding norms for future activities. CI Capacity Development team identifies critical principles for effective delivery of capacity development modalities.

1) Prioritizing the quality over quantity

CI Capacity Building Division needs to be selective in delivering capacity development events and programs by putting major emphasis on quality of offered services. In order to improve the quality, the CI needs to develop additional measures to enhance the characteristics of designing and delivering the capacity development modalities by introducing hybrid and cascading methods in organizing knowledge sharing roundtables and workshops that are backed by evidence-based research findings. The approach previously applied in CI in which organizing one-time and stand-alone events are currently completely out of use. This principle allows also to use optimally CI (financial) resources by delivering fewer but impactful capacity development services.

2) Focus on sustainability and impact

Any knowledge provided by the CI that generated high interest and demand from audience needs to be upgraded to tailor-made capacity development modalities to ensure long lasting impact through effective usage of that knowledge in policy planning. For instance, CI workshop that generated greater interest among participants will be further examined to convert it into a ToT program and develop online learning materials. Also, workshops and training programs are delivered with region-wide focus, can be re-designed for country-specific needs. This principle allows to reach greater level of sustainability of CI's research-capacity development nexus by converting theoretical knowledge into practical application.

3) Optimal use of labor and time

CI's relatively compact Capacity Development team thrives to reach professional excellence by ensuring quality of services and fulfilling internal institutional procedures. An effective distribution of workload among capacity development staff will guarantee dedicative attitude among its staff by exerting more efforts on innovative ideas in delivering services and knowledge products. Therefore, the internal documentations of pre- and post-events are to be optimized and template-based approach will be used to minimize the time of staff spent on internal procedural requirements so that the bulk of their time will be used to focus on external audience's needs. This principle stipulates the idea of minimum of internal bureaucracies and maximum of subject focus.

4) Audience-centered approach

Capacity development team developed close engagement methods with its targeted audience before, during, and after capacity building and training events to ensure their understanding of the materials and their interactive participation in discussions. CI will further enhance feedback gathering mechanisms through follow-up events and effective communication techniques.

5) Evolutionary development approach ~~over revolutionary excesses~~

CI capacity development team needs to strategize the effective use of its allotted budget by making consistent steps avoiding unnecessary expenses. In order to ensure consistency, all the capacity development modalities are designed as part of one continuous process. Both current modalities being offered by CI and the planned future modalities are all originated from one another. Although CI Capacity Development will continuously search for innovative and effective capacity building approaches, however the new modalities in the futures will be designed and implemented only if capacity development team has sufficient expertise and confidence for their good quality deliverance. This principle also allows to systemize the institutional expertise of CI and obtain comparative advantage in focused fields and issues.

CREATION OF CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

As a regional knowledge hub, CI's capacity development functions primarily focused on sharing recent and topnotch knowledge and providing technical training programs. The operational capacity of CI cannot allow to conduct sectoral and institutional (organizational) capacity assessments in member countries and, as a result, CI cannot pursue large scale and complex capacity development projects in similar way that bigger organizations such as ADB, WB, and UN agencies are undertaking. CI has found it own niche in capacity development field to address the capacity needs in CAREC countries, which are complementary to the national efforts and, at the same time, unique by design and delivery methods.

In its capacity development agenda CI put utmost emphasis on demand-driven approach and tries to achieve continues effect of its capacity development activities. The knowledge sharing roundtables and workshops serve as key source of information to design next steps of capacity building services. The approach of designing capacity development modalities that derived from more general topics to narrow specific training programs have shown to be effective.

CI's Capacity Development team developed procedural steps for effective administrative arrangement and organization of capacity development events and modalities.

- Building effective feedback and information collection mechanisms through communication with audience.
- Analysis and processing of gathered information against capacity needs.
- Formulating relevant capacity development activities through various suitable modalities.
- Identifying target audience among mid to senior government officials and technical level officials.
- Implementation of capacity development program and events.
- Evaluation of capacity development program and/or events.

KEY ELEMENTS OF ORGANIZATIONAL PROCESS

1) Pre-event preparation

Concept Note or Activity profile

Depending on the scope and scale of the capacity development program and event, the Capacity Development team will develop either concept note or profile activity. The concept note is advisable to use when it is necessary to describe a new approach with more specific details. If the event or modality is part of already existing program or conceptual framework, then the shorter standardized one-page activity profile is used.

Budget estimation

The budget estimation will follow standardized format with list of items that include various customary expenses. The budgeting format in excel sheets is attached is available in internal CI's files.

Nomination of participants and invitation letters

After target groups for capacity development program or event is identified, the capacity development unit will send out participant nomination request letter to the national focal points in member countries. When suitable candidates are nominated, the invitation letters and visa support documents are issued and sent directly to candidates.

Logistics arrangements

The logistics affairs will be implemented by an assigned administrative staff, who will support capacity development unit with airfare bookings, venue and accommodation reservation, and other relevant administrative activities.

2) Post-event activities

Uploading event materials to the E-learning webpage.

Every knowledge sharing workshop and roundtables generates knowledge materials such as presentations, notes, hand-outs, policy briefs, blogs etc. These materials will be posted in the CI website after checking for politically sensitive content and adding CI legal disclaimer. The materials posted on the website are accessible for a general audience.

Preparation of post event report.

The objective of the post event report is to capture key highlights of the capacity development event emphasizing interesting findings and best practices. The report serves both internal document for institutional memory and knowledge product for external audience. The report should not be descriptive and long, but rather precise and illustrative with infographics and meta data.

Preparation of post event evaluation.

The evaluation of capacity development activities will follow the modality-specific evaluation methods described in M&E framework chapter. The results of evaluation will be used internally to analyze the results and draw conclusion for further use.

VI. ANNEX: BLENDED AND HYBRID LEARNING PROGRAMS

Three-Phased Cascading Full Cycle CB Interventions	
Sample Format	
Output (CB Program in a Given Priority Area)	<p>Virtual Engagement (Pre):</p> <p><u>Phase I:</u></p> <p>Based on a transformed and hybrid approach, the CAREC Institute delivers blended workshops to target participants in a three-phased cascading capacity building cycle. 1st phase is the generation of research-based digital learning materials (DLMs) virtually – recordings of expert presentations and discussions that are customized and uploaded on the CAREC Institute E-Learning Platform (https://elearning.carecinstitute.org/).</p>
	<p>Face-to-Face Engagement:</p> <p><u>Phase II:</u></p> <p>2nd phase is virtual or face-to-face capacity building engagements after materialization of 1st phase generated DLMS and other educational materials. Also, in this phase further generation of learning materials takes place through livestreaming of virtual/physical events and their recordings will be customized, uploaded, and ran on the E-Learning platform. At the end of this phase, assessment for potential training of trainers (ToT) will be made and follow up actions planned.</p>
	<p>Virtual Engagement & Follow Up Activities (Post):</p> <p><u>Phase III:</u></p> <p>3rd phase is organization and running of all generated learning materials in each priority area and continuous virtual engagements with target participants and all stakeholders for further capacity building and knowledge sharing through the CAREC Institute E-Learning Platform. Also, follow up experiential learning tours mainly to graduates of ToT programs will be organized.</p>