



CAREC Institute Revitalization Plan

National Focal Points' Meeting
15 October 2024



The CAREC Institute

- The CAREC Institute (CI) is an intergovernmental organization established to contribute to the CAREC Program through knowledge generation and capacity building.
- CI's main functions include conducting strategic research, providing innovative solutions, enhancing government officials' capabilities, and developing a network of research institutions in the CAREC region.





Key Challenges

Strategy of CAREC Institute: CI has delivered in all four areas of its operations—research, capacity building, knowledge management, and networking and partnerships. However, all four functions are currently constrained, and the progress is uneven.

The Mid-Term Review of the CI Strategy 2021-2025 found the Strategy too ambitious, with a mismatch between the multitude of priorities and CI's limited capacity and resources. There is also a lack of sustained and coherent leadership in implementing and monitoring the Strategy.

CAREC Institute country ownership, and financial sustainability and reporting: The sense of 'country ownership' in the CI is important but needs strengthening. Progress on deepening engagement with member countries has not yet been sufficiently developed. CI's financial sustainability remains a major challenge, as it is heavily dependent on core financing from the PRC and ADB. There is a need to expand and diversify CI's sources of funding.

Attraction of best talent and quality of CI's products: Attracting and retaining professional staff, including management, has been a major hurdle for CI. The prolonged limitations on international mobility due to the COVID-19 pandemic, insufficiently effective HR policy, and limited business and social services available for international staff at CI's current location have all contributed to this challenge. The challenges with attracting new and additional talents result in some issues with research and capacity building output quality.



Overview of the CI Revitalization Plan

Strategic and Operational Focus: The plan emphasizes new directions for enhancing the strategic and operational focus of the CAREC Institute. This includes aligning activities with the five priority operational clusters of the CAREC Strategy 2030 and addressing trending global and regional issues.

Country Ownership: Improving country ownership is a significant aspect of the plan. This involves ensuring that member countries have a more active role in the governance and management of the CAREC Institute.

Governance and Management: The plan aims to improve governance and management structures within the CAREC Institute. This includes updating the management structure and nomination/selection process for the CI Director.

Staffing and Financial Sustainability: Ensuring staffing and financial sustainability is crucial. The plan outlines measures to secure funding and manage resources effectively to support the Institute's activities.

Key Initiatives and Activities: The Rolling Operational Plan (ROP) for 2024-2025 highlights key initiatives and activities within economic monitoring and research, capacity building, knowledge management, and partnerships. The thematic focus areas include digitalization and sustainability, infrastructure and connectivity, and socioeconomic impact.



Overview of the CI Revitalization Plan

Capacity Building and Research: The Institute plans to conduct research and capacity-building activities around key thematic areas such as trade, finance, debt sustainability, climate change, and digital CAREC. The capacity-building activities will be tightly aligned with research activities, optimizing geographical outreach and utilizing e-learning capabilities.

External Communications and Partnerships: The plan includes efforts to enhance external communications, outreach, and advocacy campaigns. Building new partnerships with national media and other stakeholders is also a priority.

Effective and Stable Leadership: The plan emphasizes the need for merit-based, competitively selected and stable leadership [The CI Director is currently hired for two years, with Deputy Directors (DDs) for three years, and specific terms for Deputy Director One and Deputy Director Two].



Status of the CI Revitalization Plan

- The draft CI Revitalization plan was circulated to the CAREC National Focal Points on 5 September 2024 for their views.
- This will be discussed during the CAREC Governing Council Meeting on 9 November 2024 in Astana.