



Session 2

Presentation of the CARTIF Implementation Plan

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ADB Approach to Supporting CARTIF

Pillar 1 Secretarial Support

- Administrative coordination
- Negotiation Facilitation
- Documentation Support

Pillar 2 Mobilizing Assistance

- International Expertise
- Donor Coordination
- Stakeholder Engagement

Pillar 3 Capacity Building

- Negotiation Training
- Legal & Policy Analysis
- Advisory support for negotiating teams

Implementation Plan

1. Establishment of Governance and Coordination Mechanism

2. Preparation for the Zero Round of Negotiations

3. Zero Round of Negotiations

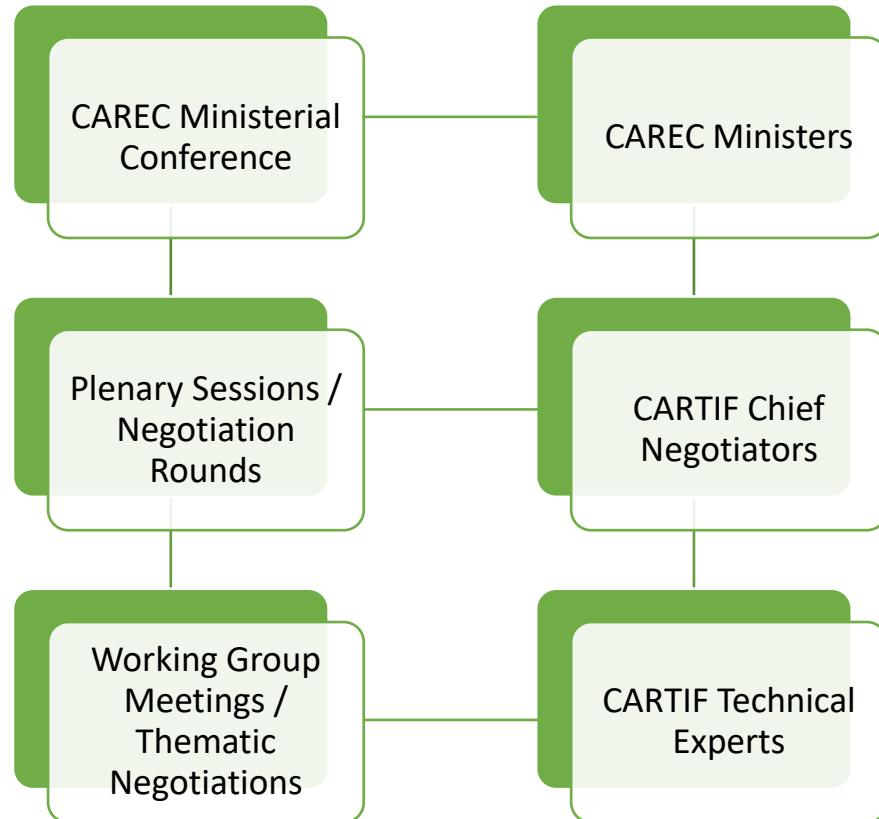
4. Establishment and Operation of Negotiating Working Groups

5. Text-Based Negotiations

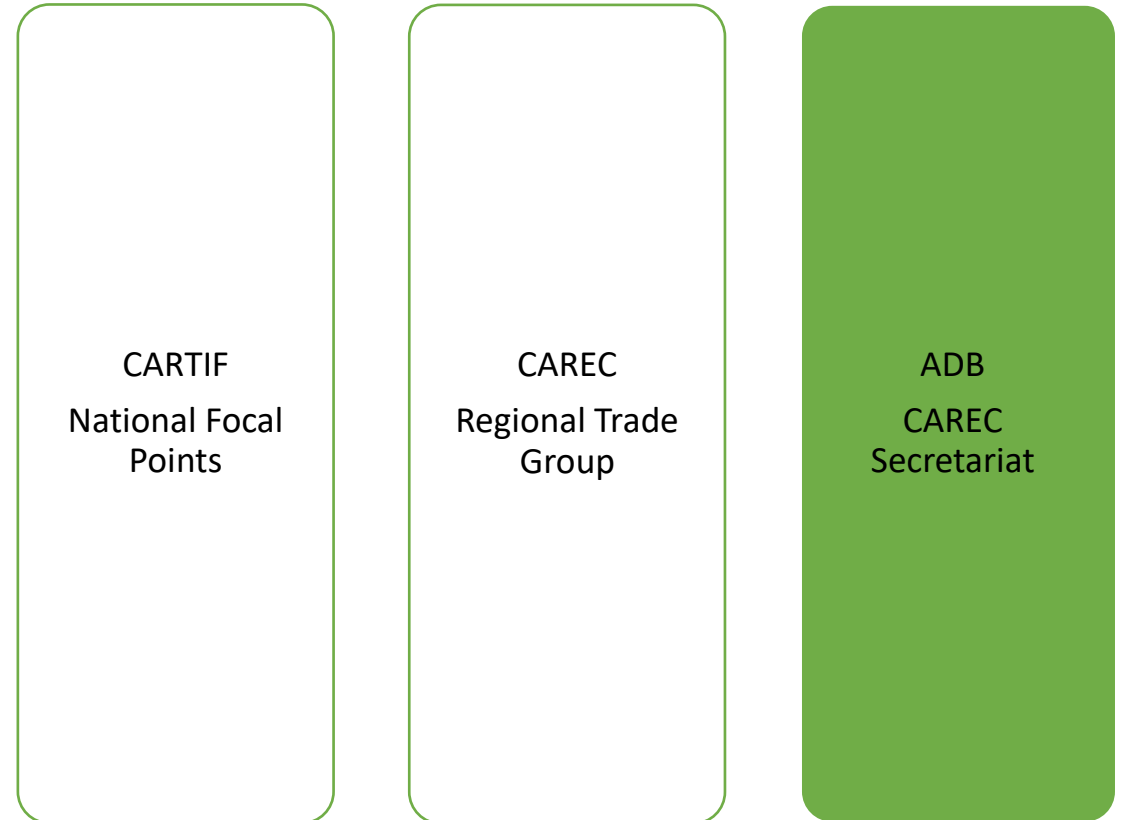
6. Monitoring, Reporting and Ministerial Oversight

7. Targeted Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

Governance



Coordination



1. Establishment of Governance and Coordination Mechanism

Designation of National Focal Points and Negotiators

Each CAREC country is invited to formally designate:

- a national CARTIF focal point responsible for inter-ministerial coordination and liaison with the CAREC Secretariat; and
- chief negotiators, lead negotiators and technical experts for each CARTIF negotiating area.

This step is essential to ensure coherent national positions, continuity of participation, and effective engagement across multiple negotiating tracks.

1. Establishment of Governance and Coordination Mechanism

Confirmation of Negotiation Architecture

Negotiations will be conducted through:

- a central process covering the CARTIF Framework Agreement; and
- dedicated thematic Working Groups (WGs) corresponding to each initial protocol.

The Regional Trade Group (RTG), supported by the CAREC Secretariat and ADB, will coordinate the overall negotiation process, ensure consistency across negotiating tracks, and facilitate reporting to senior officials and Ministers.

2. Preparation for the Zero Round of Negotiations

National Readiness and Scoping Consultations

ADB will support voluntary national-level consultations aimed at:

- rapid assessment of readiness for participation in CARTIF negotiations (interview based);
- identifying national priorities, sensitivities, and sequencing preferences;
- high-level mapping of obligations under applicable international or regional agreements.

These consultations will help countries prepare informed negotiating positions and will guide the design of targeted technical assistance.

3. Zero Round of Negotiations

Objectives of the Zero Round

The zero round will serve as a technical and confidence-building phase, with the objectives to:

- familiarize negotiators with the CARTIF architecture and content;
- clarify the scope and ambition of each negotiating track;
- identify preliminary areas of convergence, divergence, and flexibility;
- agree on negotiation working groups, modalities, timelines and documentation practices.

No binding commitments or text-based bargaining will take place during this phase.

3. Zero Round of Negotiations

Zero-Round Meetings

The zero round will consist of:

- a plenary session addressing the Framework Agreement; and
- separate technical sessions for each initial protocol.

Meetings will be held in hybrid format to ensure broad participation and will be facilitated by ADB with the support of international experts.

4. Establishment of and Operation of Negotiating Working Groups

Formation of Working Groups

Dedicated Working Groups may be established for all, selected or group of protocols.

Participation will be open to negotiating parties, with the option for other CAREC countries to participate as observers.

ADB will assist in preparing, organizing and facilitating the WG meetings.

5. Text-based Negotiations

Following the zero round, Working Groups will move to text-based negotiations. Revised draft texts will be prepared by CAREC Secretariat with the support of the international experts iteratively to reflect:

- written comments and proposals from participating countries;
- bracketed language where positions differ;
- areas of convergence and options for flexibility.

ADB-supported experts will assist in consolidating drafts and ensuring coherence across protocols.

6. Monitoring, Reporting and Ministerial Oversight

Progress will be monitored through:

- regular reporting by Working Groups to Chief Negotiators;
- consolidated progress reports prepared by the CAREC Secretariat with ADB support.

Key milestones and outstanding issues will be reported to the CAREC Ministerial Conference for guidance and political direction, in line with the Bishkek Declaration.

7. Targeted Technical Assistance

Negotiator Training and Skills Development

Modular training programs covering:

- negotiation techniques and drafting skills;
- comparative experience from relevant international agreements.

Thematic Deep-Dive Workshops

Protocol-specific workshops to:

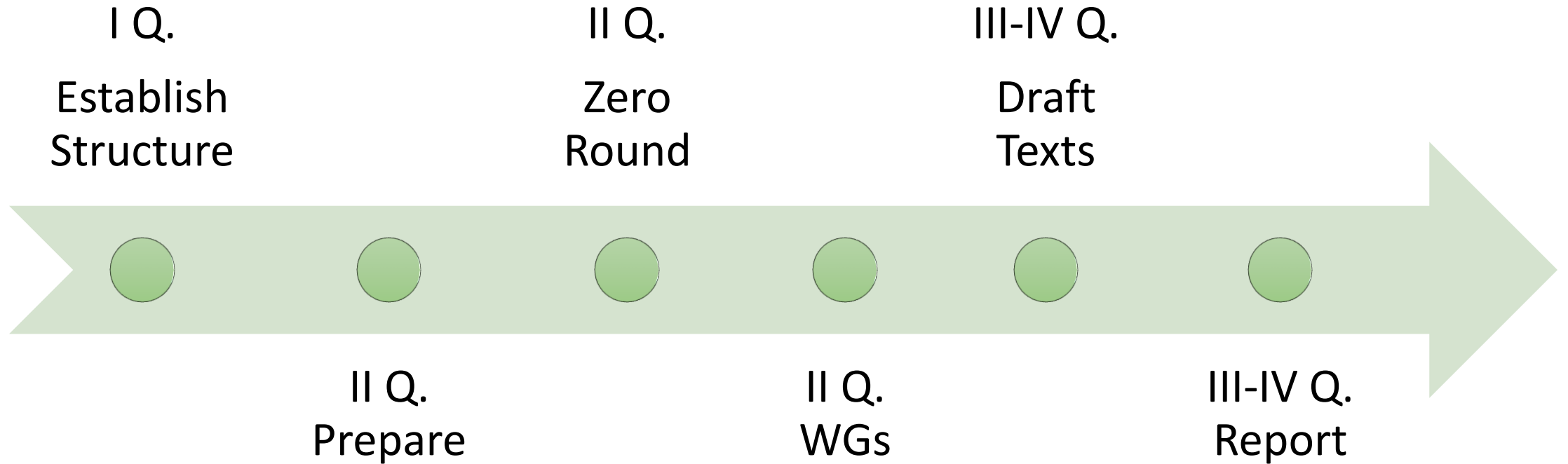
- explain substantive disciplines and implementation implications;
- present international best practices adapted to CAREC realities;
- facilitate peer learning among CAREC countries.

Tailored Country-Specific Support

Tailored assistance, including:

- legal and regulatory gap assessments;
- advisory support for non-WTO members and acceding countries;
- support in formulating national negotiating positions.

Negotiation Implementation Timeline



Thank you!