



## CAREC 2020 Mid-Term Review: Country Consultation Meeting

7 April 2016, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

### Background

The Mid-Term Review (MTR) of CAREC 2020, the long-term strategy for the CAREC Program, was endorsed by the Senior Officials of CAREC in the lead up to the 14<sup>th</sup> CAREC Ministerial Conference held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, in September 2015. The MTR will be based on comprehensive consultations with member countries at both sector level (at working group meetings) and at national level. This national consultation meeting will take the form of a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) amongst government officials, think tanks, private sector and CAREC secretariat to review the current status of CAREC activities in the region and discuss future priority areas for regional cooperation and new possibilities to strengthen regional integration under CAREC. The FGD will also consider continued relevance of the CAREC strategy in the face of changing circumstances, national priorities and development plans of member countries. The outcome of these discussions is expected to be a shared understanding between the Kyrgyz Republic and CAREC secretariat on recommended strategic, implementation and institutional refinements to the CAREC program over the remaining period of the CAREC 2020 strategy and into the longer term.

### Proposed Agenda

<b>7 April 2016 (Thursday)</b>	
11.30–12.00	Registration (Venue: TBD)
12.00-12.20	Welcome Remarks <i>Rie Hiraoka, Country Director, KYRM</i> <i>Vicky C.L. Tan, Director, CWRC, CWRD</i> <i>Government Official (TBC)</i>
12.20-13.40	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>Session 1: Introduction to the Mid-Term Review (MTR): refining alignment of regional strategy to changing national context</b>	
The CAREC secretariat will provide the background and objectives of the MTR, the methodology, and the way forward. Changes in operating environment of CAREC in terms of evolving global and regional challenges and opportunities will be reviewed. The government will provide an overview of how the changing environment has impacted national priorities and plans. The discussion will assess and identify directions for improved alignment between regional (CAREC) and national strategies and priorities.	
13.40-14.30	Introduction to the MTR <i>Pradeep Srivastava, Principal Economist, CWRC, CWRD</i>  Global and Regional Challenges and Opportunities

	<p><i>Robert Wihtol, ADB Consultant</i></p> <p>Implications of changing circumstances on national priorities and plans and on regional cooperation under CAREC, <i>Ministry of National Economy (20 minutes)</i></p> <p><i>Discussion</i></p>
<p><b>Session 2: Role of Transport and other Infrastructure Initiatives in CAREC</b></p> <p>With numerous large-scale initiatives in infrastructure development (One Belt, One Road (OBOR), Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), Japan, Korea, etc.), how should CAREC position itself? What steps should CAREC take? Can CAREC move from transport corridors to economic corridors providing a wider range of support? The Almaty-Bishkek Corridor Initiative provides a model for leveraging connectivity with highly productive economic activities. But does such a model have wider applicability in the region?</p> <p>Should the CAREC strategy include upgrading technology-based institutions, improving access to industrial finance for technological development, and strengthening production linkages between small and large firms along the supply chain?</p>	
14.30-15.20	<i>Discussion</i>
15.20-15.40	<b>Coffee Break</b>
<p><b>Session 3: Relevance of the CAREC Agenda</b></p> <p>Do the twin objectives of increased trade and enhanced competitiveness remain relevant? Are there complementary objectives that should be pursued, or even prioritized? How can the CAREC agenda be broadened to address current and future needs? Does the strategy need to go beyond promoting infrastructure and connectivity? How can CAREC support economic diversification? Can CAREC play a role in supporting education, skill development, job creation and strengthening of regional labor markets? Are there other areas in which CAREC could play a role?</p>	
15.40-16.30	<i>Discussion</i>
<p><b>Session 4: Institutional Challenges (External)</b></p> <p>The new financial and infrastructure initiatives bring new players into regional cooperation in Central Asia. How should CAREC respond to the new initiatives? Should it collaborate, compete, or adapt its product portfolio (to be complementary)? Should CAREC position itself as coordinator for the new initiatives? What changes in the CAREC institutional framework are needed to adapt to these new developments? Can CAREC develop a framework to coordinate bilateral and multilateral initiatives with national development plans? Can CAREC be the vehicle for regional value chain development?</p>	
16.30-17.20	<i>Discussion</i>
<p><b>Session 5: Institutional Challenges (Internal)</b></p> <p>How can CAREC enhance the effectiveness of its institutions? How can the role of the working groups, SOM and Ministerial Conference be improved? What next steps should be taken with the CAREC Institute? And how can the role of the CAREC Secretariat be strengthened?</p>	
17.20-18.10	<i>Discussion</i>

### **Session 6: Beyond CAREC 2020?**

Now is also the time to think ahead, beyond the current strategy, and lay the groundwork for CAREC 2030. What is our vision for the region and regional cooperation by 2030? Looking ahead, what strategic work should CAREC carry out in 2017-2020 to pave the way for the future, beyond 2020?

18.10-18.40	<i>Discussion</i>
18.40-19.00	Wrap up session <i>Vicky C.L. Tan, Director, CWRC, CWRD</i>  <i>Closing remarks by the Government official (TBC)</i> <i>and Vicky C.L. Tan, Director, CWRC, CWRD</i>