



Progress brief

Year 1 of the 2024–2026 cycle

IAEA Comprehensive Capacity-Building Initiative
for SSACs and SRAs (COMPASS)

I COMPASS



Overview

The effectiveness of IAEA safeguards implementation depends on the capacity of State or regional authorities responsible for safeguards implementation (SRAs) and their systems of accounting for and control of nuclear material (SSACs) to fulfil their obligations. However, many States face challenges, such as limited legal frameworks, inadequate technical expertise and insufficient resources. In some cases, SRAs lack the authority or tools needed to oversee SSACs effectively or meet the requirements of safeguards agreements and additional protocols.

In addition to the IAEA's existing training programmes, it became evident that many States could further benefit from more sustained, tailored assistance to address their unique and evolving challenges. To meet this need, in 2020 the Director General launched the IAEA Comprehensive Capacity-Building Initiative for SSACs and SRAs (COMPASS) as a wide-ranging mechanism to support States in sustainably building SSAC- and SRA-related capacity. By bringing together safeguards support activities into a single, multi-year framework, the initiative enables a more structured and efficient approach to provide safeguards assistance to States. COMPASS provides dedicated, phased support tailored to national priorities, ensuring that States receive guidance aligned with their specific needs. Moreover, the initiative fosters peer-to-peer learning by facilitating knowledge exchange between partners and participating States, strengthening cooperation in the safeguards domain.

During its pilot phase (September 2020– March 2023), COMPASS provided demand-driven assistance to seven participating States (Guatemala, Jordan, Malaysia, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Uzbekistan). This multifaceted safeguards-related support spanned from legal and regulatory frameworks, to training, information technology (IT) infrastructure and procurement, while also fostering collaboration through the involvement of partner States. Partner States provided financial and in-kind support while guiding participating States in enhancing their safeguards systems. The assistance provided during the pilot phase resulted in the adoption of new laws, regulations and/or procedures across the seven States, and increased technical capabilities to strengthen their SSACs and SRAs¹.

Following the successful conclusion of the pilot phase, COMPASS has now transitioned into its first regular cycle and has been added to the IAEA's safeguards capacity-building portfolio. However, its implementation is still dependent on the availability of extrabudgetary resources.

In January 2024, four countries started to receive tailored assistance under the new COMPASS phase: Bangladesh, Bolivia, Cameroon and Ghana.

¹ Short summary on the Pilot Phase of COMPASS: www.iaea.org/publications/reports/annual-report/2023/in-focus/compass

Progress achieved

Following the selection of the four aforementioned countries, the new COMPASS cycle launched in January 2024. Year 1 of implementation identified needs and areas of assistance, planned activities and undertook the matchmaking process with partner States.

The IAEA Safeguards and SSAC Advisory Service (ISSAS) mission identifies safeguards-related needs in each participating State. The IAEA and the designated State officials work jointly to identify priorities in the following six areas:

- Legal and regulatory framework
- Nuclear material accounting, control and reporting
- Export and import controls
- SSAC’s information management system
- National inspections and facilitating IAEA verification activities
- Resources, recruitment and training

The ISSAS missions for Cameroon and Ghana were completed between June and July 2024. The IAEA has previously conducted an ISSAS mission for Bangladesh in 2022 and, therefore, assistance priorities had already been identified. Bolivia’s ISSAS mission has been completed in March 2025.



ISSAS mission in Cameroon, location outside facility (LOF) in Douala, July 2024

Recommendations derived from the ISSAS mission are instrumental to inform the workplan for each participating country. The workplan details the assistance package according to a specific timeline for implementation and performance indicators. This enables the COMPASS team to closely monitor progress.

During the first year of implementation, the COMPASS team worked closely with the States concerned for the development of their respective workplans, which were finalized and approved by the designated State officials. After the preparation of the workplans, the IAEA initiated a matchmaking process to align each participating country with up to three

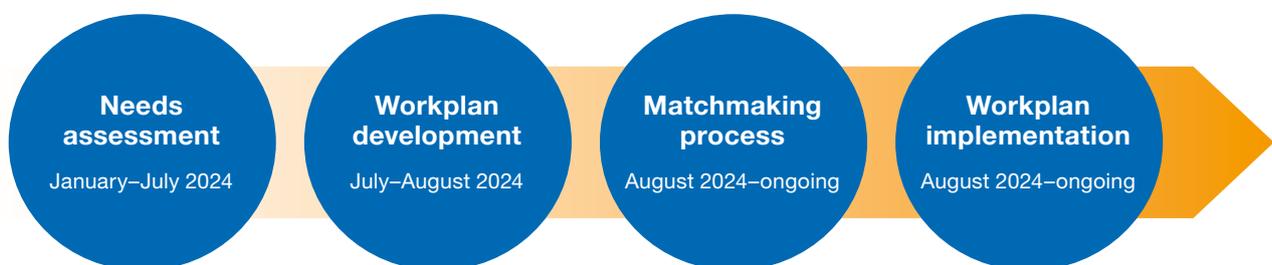


Figure 1: Timeline for Year 1 of COMPASS assistance

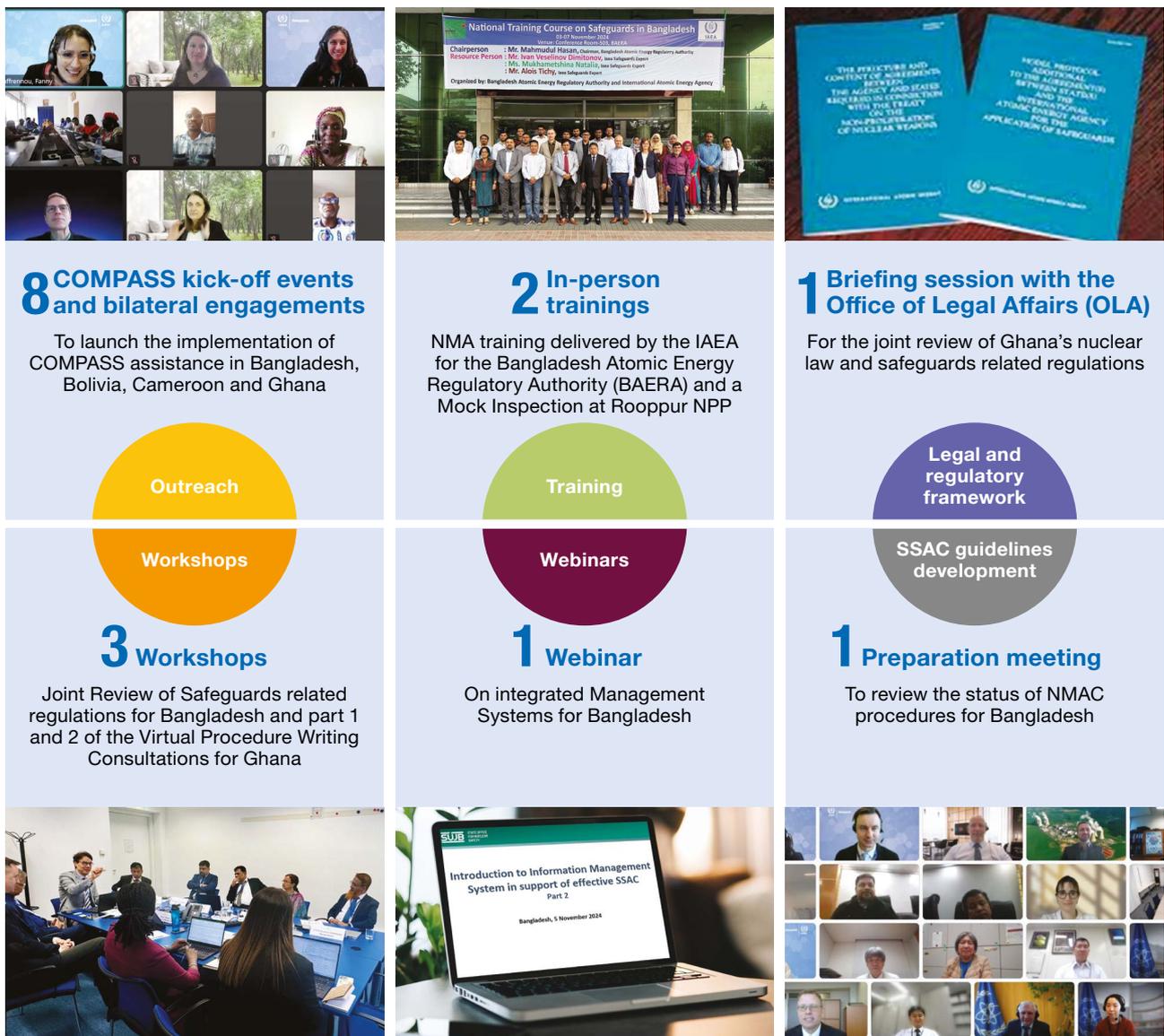


Figure 2: Summary of COMPASS activities delivered during Year 1

suitable partners. This process ensures that participating States receive in-kind support from partner States with compatible experience and expertise. As implementation activities continue in Year 2, additional partners may be identified and invited to contribute, further expanding the support available to participating States.

The four participating States present distinct nuclear profiles, reflecting different stages of safeguards development. The COMPASS assistance package is customized to align

with each country's specific needs and priorities, effectively providing support where it is most needed. In terms of implementation, between January and December 2024 a total of 16 activities were delivered. Additionally, Year 1 also included a number of preparatory engagements to coordinate the assistance provided. The 16 activities delivered during Year 1 include IAEA-led activities and activities implemented jointly with partners. Figure 2 provides a summary of the activities completed during Year 1.

Support from IAEA Member States

COMPASS implementation is made possible through the support of IAEA Member States. The network of partners has been gradually growing and currently includes 18 Member States (Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and United States of America) and the European Commission. Many of these partners provide assistance through their respective Member State Support Programme (MSSP).

The 2024–2026 cycle of COMPASS is financed primarily with the use of extrabudgetary resources. The following nine IAEA Member States have

provided financial contributions to this cycle so far: Australia, Belgium, France, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and United States of America. In-kind support is offered upon the IAEA's request through facilitating scientific visits, online and in person training, knowledge sharing on areas of expertise and support with legal and regulatory frameworks. Online and in person bilateral engagements are also a regular component of the in-kind support provided by Member States.

COMPASS' success and sustainability of the initiative depend on additional financial support from Member States.

Management and monitoring

In 2024, COMPASS was added to the regular offering of capacity-building activities of the Department of Safeguards. In particular, COMPASS implementation is led by the Member States Training Team of the Division of Concepts and Planning (SGCP). At the State level, COMPASS Officers are responsible for liaising with each participating country and leading the implementation activities, supported by Training Assistants. The COMPASS Team coordinates the participation of other experts from Operation Divisions and the Division for Information Management within the Department of Safeguards, as well as from the Office of Legal Affairs.

Monitoring is carried out regularly through an internal quarterly evaluation, which tracks the initiative's progress according to the workplan of each State and related performance indicators. Results from the quarterly evaluation are summarized and shared with the Director of the Division of Concepts and Planning.

The current COMPASS cycle will conclude with a Final Report. Furthermore, a long-term evaluation strategy is planned to assess the sustained impact of the initiative on the SSACs of participating States.

What's next?

By focusing on needs-assessment, matchmaking and overall programme preparation, Year 1 of the current cycle of COMPASS laid the basis for identifying priorities and planning the assistance package for each participating State. This phase also marked the start of implementation activities. Building upon this foundation, Year 2 will be dedicated to implementation.

To be able to ensure the sustainability of COMPASS, further financial resources are required. For this, we count on our Member State partners to continue supporting this important capacity building programme.

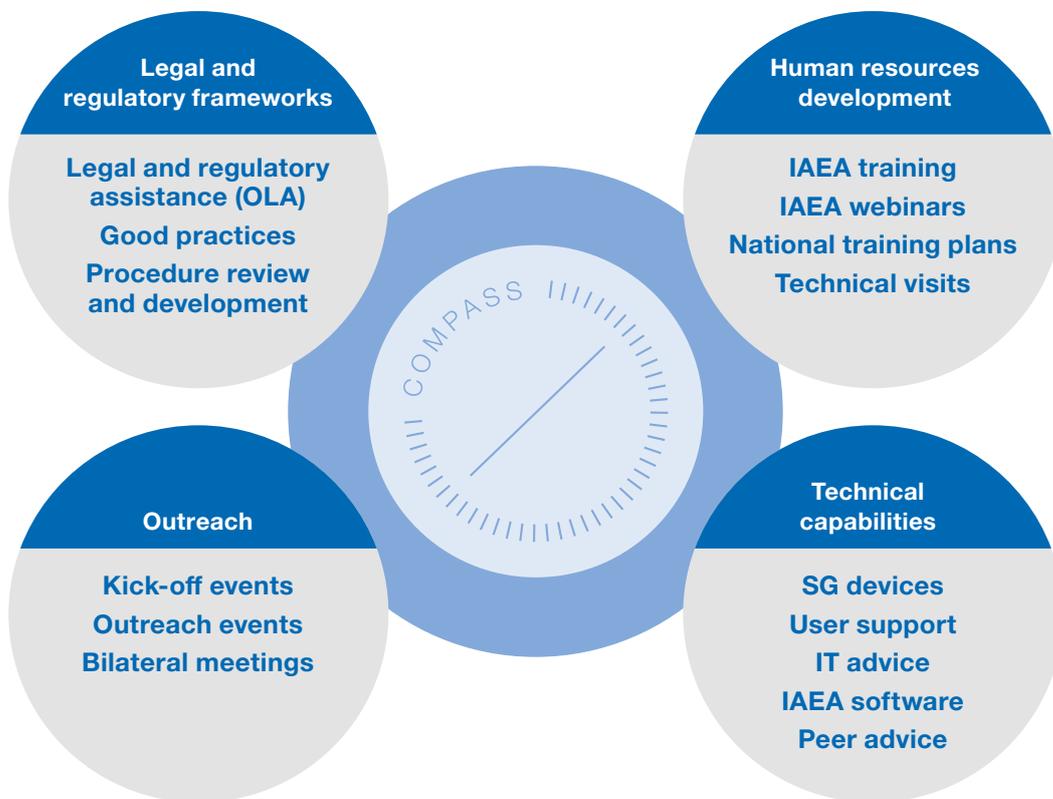


Figure 3: COMPASS assistance by area

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