

ONE HEALTH FOR PANDEMIC PREVENTION, FOOD SYSTEMS RESILIENCE AND ECOSYSTEM HEALTH IN CENTRAL ASIA

TERMS OF REFERENCE Consultant on Public Health

Background

The Central Asian region faces complex challenges in public health, food security, and environmental protection that are transboundary and cross-sectoral in nature. Threats related to the spread of zoonotic diseases, the rise of antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and foodborne risks require a systemic, coordinated approach that goes beyond the capacities of individual countries or sectors. In response to these challenges, the governments of the five Central Asian countries signed a Joint Communiqué in 2022 and approved a Framework Programme of Action in 2023, initiating regional cooperation under the "One Health" concept. The One Health approach emphasizes the interconnections between human, animal, and ecosystem health, enabling more effective prevention, preparedness, and response to emerging threats.

Within this initiative, it has been recognized that sustainable progress is only possible with the presence of a regional coordination structure capable of uniting country efforts, facilitating dialogue, promoting knowledge exchange, and supporting joint decision-making. The role of this structure has been entrusted to the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC), which has extensive experience in fostering inter-country and cross-sectoral collaboration in the region.

As the regional coordinator, CAREC plays a central role in establishing and operationalizing the coordination framework for the One Health concept. It is responsible for developing and aligning a regional action plan, coordinating technical working groups, and organizing regular consultations with participating countries. Additionally, CAREC will lead the development of strategies for establishing a laboratory network, enhancing the legal and regulatory framework, and strengthening communication mechanisms. It will also organize educational and training activities for relevant specialists. CAREC's efforts will contribute to the formation of a unified approach to managing sanitary-epidemiological and environmental risks in the region.

As the Regional One Health Secretariat, CAREC is responsible for implementing the regional action plan, facilitating coordination among national governments and international partners, supporting knowledge exchange, and ensuring integrated risk reduction and response planning.

Objectives of the Assignment

Provide expert technical support for the implementation of public health activities under the One Health project and contribute to the Regional One Health Coordination Structure (ROHCS) and Technical Working Groups (TWGs), offering expert opinions, recommendations, and documentation related to public health.

Scope of Work

- Develop thematic materials and documents, including multi-sectoral risk assessment methodologies, public health surveillance strategies, and risk communication strategies for pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response (particularly related to zoonoses, foodborne diseases, and AMR).

- Participate in the development of the Regional One Health Action Plan and provide expert input related to public health.
- Organize and conduct country-level consultations with national public health authorities to gather insights, validate findings, and develop tailored recommendations.
- Facilitate the development and implementation of training modules, including through the creation of e-learning content and dissemination of existing public health threat and response guides in collaboration with technical partners.
- Participate in and contribute to the work of ROHCS and TWGs, providing technical input and expert recommendations.
- Support the preparation of reports, policy briefs, and technical documents related to public health.

Deliverables

- Development of risk assessment frameworks and surveillance strategies for public health.
- Country consultation reports and feedback summaries.
- Contributions to Regional One Health Action Plan and associated documents.
- Facilitated access to e-learning modules and other public health-related training materials developed by technical partners.
- Participation at ROHCS/TWGs meetings, providing expert advice and recommendations.

Assignment Duration

The assignment will last for a maximum of 24 months, but will not exceed the project end date. Extension may be considered based on project dynamics.

Reporting

The Consultant on Public Health will report directly to the CAREC OH Project Coordinator.

Assignment Location

CAREC Headquarters in Almaty, Kazakhstan or one of the Central Asian countries with the possibility of remote work, with occasional travel within Central Asia for event support and stakeholder engagement.

Qualifications

- Proven experience in public health management, epidemiology, and disease surveillance systems.
- In-depth knowledge of One Health principles, public health risk assessments, and global health policies.
- Experience working on regional or international health projects, particularly in Central Asia or similar regions.
- Familiarity with antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and zoonotic disease management.

Education

- Master's degree or equivalent in Public Health, Epidemiology, Medicine, or a related field.

Skills and Competencies

- Strong analytical skills for interpreting health data and risk assessments.
- Excellent communication and stakeholder engagement skills, particularly in a cross-sectoral context.

- Experience in writing technical documents, reports, and policy briefs.
- Ability to coordinate multi-stakeholder consultations and workshops.
- Familiarity with the principles of crisis communication and health emergencies.
- Fluent in English and Russian (spoken and written).
- Strong organizational and time-management skills, with the ability to handle multiple tasks and deadlines.