

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

TERMS OF REFERENCE Consultant on Veterinary Sector

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 veterinary 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 for the veterinary sector.

Scope of Work

- Develop thematic materials and documents, including multi-sectoral risk assessment methodologies, veterinary surveillance strategies, and laboratory protocols, particularly related to zoonoses, food-borne diseases, and AMR.
- Participate in the development of the Regional One Health Action Plan and provide expert input related to veterinary health.

- Organize and conduct country-level consultations with national veterinary authorities to gather insights, validate findings, and develop tailored recommendations.
- Facilitate the development and dissemination of training modules, including e-learning materials and existing guidelines on veterinary issues such as zoonoses, food safety and antimicrobial resistance (AMR), in collaboration with specialised 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 veterinary health.

Deliverables

- Development of risk assessment frameworks and surveillance strategies for veterinary health.
- Country consultation reports and feedback summaries.
- Contributions to Regional One Health Action Plan (Veterinary Sector) and associated documents.
- E-learning modules and other veterinary-related training materials.
- 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

- Extensive experience in veterinary science, animal health, and zoonotic disease management.
- Expertise in laboratory diagnostics, antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in veterinary settings, and food safety.
- Familiarity with regional veterinary health systems and frameworks.
- Experience with intersectoral collaboration between veterinary, public health, and environmental sectors.

Education

- Master's degree or equivalent in Veterinary Medicine, Animal Science, or a related field.

Skills and Competencies

- Strong technical expertise in veterinary surveillance systems, diagnostics, and risk assessments.
- Ability to analyze and harmonize veterinary health regulations and standards across countries.

- Experience in developing and delivering training materials and modules for veterinary professionals.
- Work experience and professional network established in Central Asian countries.
- Excellent report writing and document preparation skills for technical and policy-oriented audiences.
- Effective communication skills, particularly in coordinating with national and international stakeholders.
- Familiarity with the principles of One Health and multi-sectoral collaboration.
- Fluent in English and Russian (spoken and written).
- Strong problem-solving skills and attention to detail.