

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

TERMS OF REFERENCE PR / Communications Specialist

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.

A key component of the project is the implementation of a strategic communication approach to ensure regional visibility, stakeholder engagement, and public awareness.

Objectives of the Assignment

To lead and implement the communication and public relations (PR) components of the regional One Health program, ensuring unified messaging, stakeholder engagement, and media visibility through both digital and traditional communication channels.

Scope of Work

The PR / Communications Specialist will be responsible for the following:

A. Strategy and Planning

- Develop and implement the Regional One Health Communication Strategy, in coordination with PR manager, Project coordinator, national focal points and WB team.
- Develop a brand identity and maintain visual consistency across all communication materials.

- Prepare and implement a publication and content calendar, aligned with project milestones and thematic priorities.

B. Media and Public Relations

- Develop and implement a media outreach plan, covering traditional (TV, radio, print) and online outlets across the region.
- Build and maintain a media contact database of relevant journalists and editorial contacts in participating countries.
- Invite and coordinate media participation in project events, including forums, launches, consultations, and training.
- Prepare press kits for events, including press releases, background briefs, speaker bios, visual materials, and quotes.
- Draft and disseminate press releases, opinion articles, interviews, and news stories in collaboration with technical teams and national stakeholders.
- Organize and moderate media briefings and press conferences as needed.
- Liaise directly with journalists and editors to support coverage of project activities and secure interviews with project representatives.
- Conduct ongoing media monitoring and analysis, collecting and archiving published materials and tracking media exposure on monthly basis and present this analysis to the project coordinator.
- Prepare quarterly media monitoring reports, assessing visibility, tone, outreach scope, and communication impact.

C. Digital Communication and Social Media

- Design and manage regional social media campaigns, including content planning, visual creation, and performance tracking.
- Contribute to the Central Asian One Health Information Portal by uploading communications products and ensuring regular updates.
- Use interactive tools (surveys, infographics, Q&A sessions) to increase engagement with the general public and stakeholder communities.

D. Coordination with Contractors and Content Production

- Prepare Terms of Reference (ToRs) and technical briefs for engaging creative service providers (designers, photographers, videographers, copywriters, decorators, etc.).
- Coordinate the production of visual and promotional content (banners, roll-ups, branded merchandise, video explainers, photos, educational infographics).
- Oversee venue branding and decoration for events in accordance with project identity standards.
- Supervise contractors to ensure quality, timeliness, and consistency in all visual communications deliverables.

E. Capacity Building and Training

- Conduct a needs assessment on communications capacity among project partners.
- Develop and deliver training for CAREC staff, national stakeholders, and focal points on effective communication, media engagement, and public messaging.
- Support crisis communication preparedness, including simulations and guidance development.

F. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Define KPIs for communication activities and develop simple tracking tools (e.g., dashboards).
- Conduct quarterly assessments of campaigns and PR performance; propose adjustments.

- Contribute to donor visibility reports, CAREC publications, and knowledge products based on communication outcomes.

Assignment Duration

The assignment will last for 12 months, beginning from contract signing. Extension may be considered based on project dynamics.

Reporting

The PR Specialist reports to the CAREC OH Project Coordinator and works closely with technical teams, the M&E specialist, and national communication focal points.

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

Education

- University degree in Communications, Public Relations, Journalism, Marketing, or related field.

Experience

- At least 5 years of experience in PR, media relations, or strategic communications for international/regional development programs.
- Strong background in managing social media campaigns, organizing press events, and working with multimedia contractors.
- Previous experience in working with donors such as the World Bank, WHO, or FAO is a strong asset.

Skills

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills in English and Russian.
- Strong media writing, storytelling, and content creation abilities.
- Proficiency in design tools (e.g., Canva, Adobe Creative Suite) and media monitoring software.
- Organizational skills and attention to detail.
- Cultural sensitivity and ability to work with diverse stakeholders.