

Third CAREC Working Group on Health Meeting
2nd of March 2023

Summary of Proceedings

I. Introduction

1. The third CAREC Working Group on Health (WGH) meeting was held virtually on the 2nd of March 2023, with Georgia as the CAREC chair country. CAREC WGH members, other CAREC country delegates, development partner representatives, and ADB officers and consultants were in attendance. Dr. Tamar Gabunia, First Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from Occupied Territories, Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia, provided the opening remarks with Mr. Aziz Haydarov, Officer-in-Charge, Social Sector Division of the Central and West Asia Department of ADB.
2. The objectives of the meeting were to: (i) finalize and approve the CAREC Regional Investment Framework (RIF) for Health 2022–2027 and (ii) agree on the CAREC WGH arrangements and creation of the sub-working groups (SWGs). The agenda and participant list are attached as Appendix 1.

II. Meeting highlights

3. **Updates from the CAREC Health Secretariat.** Since the CAREC Health Strategy endorsement in November 2021, regional webinars have been conducted to strengthen health systems resilience and promote regional health cooperation. These include webinars on (i) Vaccine Hesitancy and Behaviour Change Communication, (ii) Strengthening Procurement and Supply Chain Management for possible regional collaboration, (iii) Practical Epidemiology for CAREC and Caucasus countries, (iv) Strengthening Drug Regulatory Capacity; and (v) Data standards and Interoperability as catalysts for innovation in digital health and business process documentation.
4. The Secretariat also reported on the 2nd meeting of the CAREC WGH held in Tbilisi, Georgia, in October 2022. The meeting enabled sharing of the CAREC Health Strategy implementation progress and further alignment of the draft RIF to country priorities and needs.
5. The Secretariat further shared information on the forthcoming repository of health security trainings and materials and video on innovative solutions for addressing CAREC and Caucasus health threats. The Secretariat thanked the CAREC countries for their contributions to the video content.
6. **Review of the Regional Investment Framework on Health.** The Secretariat provided a run-through of the proposed RIF activities for the four strategic pillars and cross-cutting themes. The Secretariat emphasized that the RIF is a living operational document guiding regional health cooperation and supporting investment coordination across countries and development partners. Its implementation will be through countries' initiatives and funding with support from development partners through regional investment projects or selected technical assistance.
7. All the CAREC country representatives present in the meeting fully endorsed the RIF. The countries also expressed support for the RIF implementation and reporting of achievements against the CAREC Health Results Framework.

8. Some countries provided updates on regional health security and cooperation activities. Azerbaijan's fully digitalized surveillance system is implemented nationwide and used to share data with WHO under the International Health Regulation (IHR) and to exchange monthly epidemiological data with Georgia for seven border districts. The Kyrgyz Republic submitted expression of interest to the Pandemic Fund for strengthening One Health approach. The country is awaiting its next joint external evaluation of IHR capacities and developing plans to enhance cross-border activities, including joint simulation exercises with border countries.
9. Development partners present expressed support for the RIF implementation through direct country assistance and the regional cooperation platform.
10. **Pandemic Financing Facility.** The Secretariat apprised the countries of the plan to submit a multi-country proposal to the Pandemic Fund to set up a Pandemic Financing Facility. The Pandemic Financing Facility could support the implementation of the CAREC Health Strategy with focus on regional (cooperation) aspects related to strengthening surveillance and early warning systems (including points-of-entry), laboratory systems, and human resources.
11. **Institutional Arrangements for the CAREC Working Group on Health and Sub-Working Groups.** The Secretariat presented the institutional arrangements for the CAREC WGH under the broader CAREC institutional structure. The proposal for creating sub-working groups for selected technical topics was put forward and accepted. The reporting requirements under the Results Framework which was shared with countries ahead of the meeting were also recognized.
12. The next steps were laid out and included additional recruitment under ADB technical assistance to support CAREC Health Strategy implementation, initiation of RIF activities, additional topical webinars, and sub-working group meetings.
13. In closing, the RIF was declared conditionally endorsed since not all countries were present. The Secretariat provided another week for feedback and for countries to submit written endorsements. The Secretariat expressed appreciation to the Government of Georgia for being the Chair of the WGH. The Secretariat also thanked the CAREC countries for their input and review of the RIF and continued cooperation and the development partners for their support.

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Agenda

EXPECTED OUTPUTS:

- Finalization and approval of the Regional Investment Framework 2022–2027
- Agreements on the CAREC Working Group on Health arrangements and creation of SWGs

TENTATIVE PROGRAM:

Overall moderator: Mr. George Gotsadze, CAREC Regional Health Coordinator, TA 6535

TIME	AGENDA POINTS
1:30-2:00 PM	Technical checks and group photo
2:00-2:05 PM	<p>Welcome Remarks</p> <p>Dr. Tamar Gabunia, First Deputy Minister, Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Health, Labour and Social Affairs, Georgia, Host Country of CAREC</p> <p>Mr. Aziz Haydarov, Unit Head, Project Administration and Officer-in-Charge, Social Sector Division, Central and West Asia Department (CWSS), Asian Development Bank (ADB)</p>
2:05-2:10 PM	<p>Updates from CAREC Health Secretariat: Review of Activities in 2022</p> <p>Ms. Kirthi Ramesh, Social Sector Specialist, CWSS, ADB</p>
2:10-2:40 PM	<p>CAREC Health Strategy 2030: Regional Investment Framework 2022–2027</p> <p>Ms. Kirthi Ramesh, Social Sector Specialist, CWSS, ADB Ms. Rosebelle Azcuna, Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist, TA 6535</p>
2:40-3:20 PM	<p>Endorsement of RIF and Updates from Countries</p> <p>Updates on activities on regional health security and cooperation</p>
3:20-3:40 PM	<p>Institutional Arrangements for the CAREC Working Group on Health and creation of Sub-Working Groups</p> <p>Mr. George Gotsadze, CAREC Regional Health Coordinator, TA 6535</p>
3:40-3:50 PM	<p>Next Steps, Schedule of next WGH Meeting and Support needed from ADB/CAREC Secretariat</p> <p>Mr. George Gotsadze, CAREC Regional Health Coordinator, TA 6535</p>
3:50-4:00 PM	Other Matters

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List of Participants

I. CAREC Countries

A. Azerbaijan

1. Mr. Rashad Chobanli, Head of Analytics and Statistics Division, Strategic Analysis Department, State Agency on Mandatory Health Insurance
2. Ms. Nazifa Mursalova, Head of Public Health and Sanitary-Epidemiological Control Department, Ministry of Health
3. Ms. Aytan Garayusifova, Deputy Head of Public Health and Sanitary-Epidemiological Control Department, Ministry of Health
4. Ms. Tarana Ahmadova, Deputy Head of Human Resources Department, Ministry of Health

B. Georgia

5. Dr. Tamar Gabunia, First Deputy Minister, Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Health, Labour and Social Affairs
6. Ms. Ketevan Goginashvili, Chief Specialist at Health Care Policy Division, Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Health, Labour and Social Affairs
7. Ms. Oliko Mamatsashvili, Digital Healthcare Division Coordinator, Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Health, Labour and Social Affairs
8. Mr. Davit Geladze, Chief Specialist of International Partners Relations Division, Ministry of Health
9. Ms. Lia Gvinjilia, Technical Advisor, CDC

C. People's Republic of China

10. Ms. Meng Shao, Director, Department of International Cooperation, National Health Commission
11. Mr. Zhiwen She, Deputy Director, Department of International Cooperation, National Health Commission
12. Ms. Bowei Duan, Officer, Department of International Cooperation, National Health Commission

D. Mongolia

13. Mr. Mungunchimeg Enkh, Software Specialist, Ministry of Health

E. Kazakhstan

14. Mr. Murat Imashev, Deputy Director of the Department of International Cooperation and Integration, Ministry of Healthcare of the Republic of Kazakhstan
15. Ms. Arai Zakenova, Chief Expert, Ministry of Healthcare of the Republic of Kazakhstan
16. Ms. Dana Ryskul, Chief Expert, Committee for State Epidemiological Control, Ministry of Healthcare of the Republic of Kazakhstan
17. Ms. Zarina Aitymbet, Chief Expert, Ministry of Healthcare of the Republic of Kazakhstan
18. Ms. Zhanat Zhamalbekova, Head of the Division for Epidemiological Surveillance of Particularly Dangerous Infections and Biosafety, Committee of Sanitary and Epidemiological Control, Ministry of Healthcare of the Republic of Kazakhstan

F. Kyrgyz Republic

19. Mr. Ryspek Sadygaliev, Chief physician, Center for State Epidemiological Surveillance on Transport, Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic
20. Ms. Dinagul Otorbaeva, Head, State Epidemiological Surveillance Department
21. Ms. Zinat Beishebaeva, Head of the Public Health Department, Ministry of Health

G. Tajikistan

22. Mr. Karimov Sayfiddin, First Deputy Head of the Service of State Supervision of Health and Social Protection of the Population
23. Mr. Alijonov Kholmurod, Head of the Department Head of the Service of State Supervision of Health and Social Protection of the Population
24. Ms. Safarova Gulruksor, Director of the State Institution "Republican center for Statistics and medical information"

H. Turkmenistan

25. Ms. Altyn Atayeva, Deputy Medical Director of the Hospital with Research and Clinical Center of Cardiology, Ministry of Healthcare and Medical Industry,
26. Mr. Ata Chapayev, Chief Specialist of International Division, Ministry of Finance and Economy
27. Mr. Khozhanazar Orazdurdyev, Deputy Head, State Sanitary and Epidemiological Services,
28. Ms. Gurbangul Ovliyakulova, Division Head, Ministry of Health

I. Uzbekistan

29. Mr. Bobur Yuldashev, Head of the Investment Department, Sanitary and Epidemiological Welfare and Public Health Service, Ministry of Health

II. Development Partners

A. Asian Development Bank

30. Mr. Aziz Haydarov, Unit Head, PAU/OIC, CWSS
31. Ms. Kirthi Ramesh, Social Sector Specialist, CWSS
32. Mr. Philipp Kalpaxis, Senior Procurement Specialist, PPFD
33. Ms. Gladys Ann Maravilla, Operations Assistant, CWSS
34. Ms. Cristina Lim, Senior Operations Assistant, CWSS
35. Ms. Mary Ann Magadia, Programs Analyst, CWRC
36. Mr. Pavel Stetsenko, Assistant, TJRM
37. Ms. Aihua Wu, PRC, CWRD
38. Mr. Omer Bin Zia, PAK, CWRD

B. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

39. Mr. Tushar Singh, Regional Advisor, Workforce Development, Eastern Europe and Central Asia Regional Office
40. Mr. Joel Stanojevich, Associate Director for Policy and Communications
41. Mr. Charles Vitek, Regional Director Eastern Europe and Central Asia

C. International Organization for Migration

- 42. Ms. Salma Taher, Project Officer (CDC Cooperative Agreement), International Organization for Migration
- 43. Ms. Rukhshona Qurbonova , Migration Health Programmes Coordinator, Manager of the Regional Border Health Project, International Organization for Migration in Tajikistan
- 44. Ms. Ursula Wagner, Regional Migration Health Coordinator, International Organization for Migration
- 45. Mr. Jaime Calderon, Regional Migration Health Advisor, International Organization for Migration

D. ADB/CAREC Consultants

- 46. Ms. Ekaterine Koroshinadze, CAREC Regional Cooperation Coordinator, Georgia
- 47. Ms. Aidana Berdybekova, CAREC Regional Cooperation Coordinator, Kyrgyz Republic
- 48. Ms. Bujin Erdenebaatar, CAREC Regional Cooperation Coordinator, Mongolia
- 49. Ms. Nodira Odinaeva, CAREC Regional Cooperation Coordinator, Tajikistan
- 50. Mr. Diyar Tassym, Advisor to CAREC NFP, Kazakhstan
- 51. Mr. Durdy Ilamanov, Advisor to CAREC NFP, Turkmenistan
- 52. Mr. Ashraf Kuliyeu, Advisor to CAREC NFP, Azerbaijan
- 53. Mr. Meder Turgunbekov, Advisor to CAREC NFP, Kyrgyz Republic
- 54. Mr. Nadir Safaev, Advisor to CAREC NFP, Uzbekistan
- 55. Mr. George Gotsadze, Consultant, CWSS
- 56. Ms. Sarah Cueno, Consultant, CWSS
- 57. Ms. Rosebelle May Azcuna, Consultant, CWSS
- 58. Ms. Martina Merten, Consultant, GOPA
- 59. Ms. Christine Bishop, Consultant, VAMED
- 60. Mr. Peeter Ross, Consultant, VAMED
- 61. Mr. Alzeus Alzate, Consultant, CWRC
- 62. Ms. Reneli Ann Gloria, Consultant, CWRC