

Talking points for CAREC Disaster Risk Engagement Meeting

- On behalf of ADB's Social Sector Division, I would like to welcome delegates and participants from Ministries of Health, Ministries of Finance and Economy and other line ministries to the second day of the CAREC Disaster Risk Engagement Meeting. I would like to particularly commend countries' support to coordinate amongst ministries of Emergency Management, Health and Finance. I would also like to express thanks for the support and participation of WHO, ECDC and the Global Fund, as well as UNDP, UNDRR and WB.
- Last month the CAREC Working Group on Health held its second meeting and the first meeting on site, hosted by Georgia and co-chaired by PRC. The Working Group, consisting of officials from Ministry of Health, oversee implementation of the CAREC Health Strategy and Regional Investment Framework. It was an exciting meeting with much engagement and knowledge exchange between member countries. During this meeting concrete activities for regional cooperation and investment opportunities to implement the Strategy were discussed. They are currently being consolidated into the regional investment framework to be shared shortly.
- This second day of the 3-day event, is an opportunity to further discuss one concrete opportunity for regional health security and cooperation which will help implement the CAREC health strategy. Today's discussion will focus on regional disaster and infectious disease risk transfer options. When the pandemic hit, countries in the CAREC region were grappling with rapidly accessing emergency funding for pandemic response because financial and legal arrangements for such situations had not been institutionalized. It emerged as one of the lessons to strengthen financial arrangements for public health emergencies as part of our efforts to support pandemic preparedness and health systems resilience.
- Innovative Disaster Risk Financing solutions are an opportunity to build physical and financial resilience against disaster and climate change as well as infectious disease. An infectious disease risk financing mechanism is closely linked with other aspects of health security such as ensuring local and regional laboratory capacity and surveillance systems, developing a platform for infectious disease outbreak response, and developing contingency and response plans. This is also closely aligned with the recommendations under the CAREC Health Strategy 2030 which focuses on regional health security. The proposed Infectious Disease Risk Financing Framework is closely linked and mentioned as a concrete deliverable to implement the CAREC Health Strategy and Regional Health Investment Framework.
- Implementing Innovative Disaster Risk Financing solutions requires a multi-sector and multi-stakeholder and possibly cross-border approach including different line ministries, as well as collaboration with the private sector. Today's meeting brings health and financing expertise as well as countries and development partners and experts together. It is a great opportunity to intensify dialogue and mutual understanding on the challenges and opportunities to implement Innovative Disaster Risk Financing solutions to pave the way for an Infectious Disease Risk Financing Framework and discuss opportunities for piloting. We encourage you all to contribute actively, ask questions and provide your feedback on what is feasible in your country context.
- We look forward to the outcomes of this meeting and wish all delegates fruitful discussion paving the way for an Infectious Disease Risk Financing Framework and identifying possibilities for a pilot.