

CAREC REGIONAL INVESTMENT FRAMEWORK FOR HEALTH, 2022-2028

Strategic Pillar 1 – Leadership and Human Resource Capacity

Objective	Activities and Level of Priority	Indicative Implementation Modality ^a and Period	Possible Countries and Clusters	Link to Results Framework ^b
Governance, coordination and financing				
Strengthen leadership and cooperation for regional health security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold regular meetings, policy discussions, knowledge exchange and study visits on relevant health security topics (e.g., on cross-border health cooperation, One Health, gender mainstreaming, climate change and health, innovations, human resources for health). Raise awareness on cross-border health and advocate for high-level actions, multisectoral and multilevel collaboration, and accountability among WGH members to foster regional cooperation and progress toward the CAREC Health Strategy targets. Include IHR focals in WGH meetings to allow coordination. Facilitate Memoranda of Understanding on health security and border health between countries. 	TA activity, 2023-2026	Regional bilateral	1.a
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define governance structure with legal and regulatory framework (national focal points on health and climate change in all sectors, working group 	Project component, 2025-2028	All countries	1.a
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize initial discussions with heads of national public health institutes to discuss the feasibility, legal issues and financing, and operational scope of the establishment of a Regional Centre for Disease Control (CDC) for Central Asia/CAREC countries 	TA activity, 2024-2026	Regional	1.a/1.b, 6.a
Enhance health security preparedness and response capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop or update and cost National Action Plans for Health Security (NAPHS) for prioritization of capacity development and implementation. 	TA activity, 2023-2025	All countries	C.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of climate change and health security into prevention, preparedness response plans at all levels e.g., inclusion of climate change and health in NAPHS 	TA activity, 2024-2028	AZE, GEO, KGZ, MON, PAK, TAJ	C.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide capacity development on establishing or strengthening Emergency Operation Centers. 	TA activity, 2023-2025	Regional	1.a/1.b.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish or strengthen Emergency Operation Centers, including developing the legal and policy framework for a long-term perspective, defining relevant aspects, such as institutional arrangements and set up, infrastructure and equipment, information systems, staffing, deployment and specific training and institutional capacity strengthening needs. 	Project or project component, 2024-2028	All countries, regional	1.a/1.b/1.c
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore options for establishing public health emergency funds (funding modalities, e.g., specific disbursement procedures) to enable fast-tracking of allocation and disbursement in emergency situations. 	TA activity and project component, 2024-2028	TAJ, UZB	1.b
Improve pandemic risk financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out policy discussions and knowledge exchange on pandemic risk financing instruments and promote a regional pandemic risk financing mechanism. 	TA activity, 2022-2027	Regional	1.b

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement pandemic risk financing mechanism, including policy actions enhancing the enabling environment. 	Project component, 2025-2028	KGZ TAJ	1.b
Workforce capacity and skills				
Strengthen human resources for appropriate and effective health response measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop repository of available reputable/certified training programs, institutions and materials on health security (including on One Health, public health emergency management, and labs). Identify opportunities to scale up existing institutions to carry out regional training and training of trainers. 	TA activity, 2023-2025	Regional	6.a
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct country-specific human resource supply and demand analysis for selected specialists, including mapping of existing human resources against required health workforce competencies for health emergency preparedness and response (for example, public health and healthcare management specialists). 	TA activity, 2023-2025	AZE, KGZ, GEO, MON, PAK, TAJ, TKM, UZB	1.c
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop health workforce registry. Improve skills and data use in human resources for health planning and forecasting. 	Project component, 2023-2028	AZE, KGZ, GEO, MON, PAK, TAJ, TKM, UZB	1.c
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and test country-specific human resource deployment protocols for emergency response. 	Project component, 2023-2026	AZE, KGZ, GEO, MON, PAK, TAJ, TKM, UZB	1.b
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a regional training center and/or identify HUBs (Centers of Excellence) for undergraduate and graduate degrees in public and global health, One Health, Climate Change and Health and other courses useful for increasing health security capacity. Offer in-country faculty training on required subjects to produce quality educators for the countries. 	TA activity, 2024-2026, Project component 2025-2028	GEO, KAZ, PAK, PRC, TAJ	1.c, 6.a
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct trainings and training-of-trainers in pre-defined areas (One Health, Public Health, Climate Change and Health, forecasting and planning skills, testing and sampling procedures and methodologies in laboratories) based on gap analysis results. 	Project component, 2023-2026	AZE, KGZ, GEO, MON, PAK, TAJ, TKM, UZB. Specific to labs: PAK, TKM, TAJ	1.c
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop workforce capacity across sectors on climate change and health 	TA activity 2024-2027, Project component, 2023-2027	AZE, GEO, KGZ, MON, PAK, TAJ, TKM	1.c
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct analysis on policy and gaps for mutual recognition of health worker certifications 	TA activity 2025-2026	Regional	1.b/4.a/6.a

AZE = Azerbaijan, CAREC = Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation, TA = technical assistance, GEO = Georgia, IHR = International Health Regulations, KGZ = Kyrgyz Republic, MON = Mongolia, PAK = Pakistan, TAJ = Tajikistan, TKM = Turkmenistan, UZB = Uzbekistan, WGH = Working Group on Health.

^a Any of the activities in the RIF can also be supported through countries' own initiative and funding.

^b See Annex 1 for the CAREC Health Strategy Results Framework.

B. Strategic Pillar 2 – Technical Preparedness

Objective	Activities and Level of Priority	Indicative Implementation Modality ^a and Period	Possible Countries and Clusters	Link to Results Framework ^b
Surveillance				
Improve access to and use of regional health data for health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harmonize national lists of notifiable diseases for information exchange and align with IHR notifiable diseases (event information site, outbreak notification), Standard 	TA activity and/or project component, 2023-2025	KAZ, KGZ, TAJ, TKM, UZB	2.a 5.b 6.a

emergency prevention, preparedness and response		Operating Procedures, early detection and alerts. Assess and strengthen sub-national and cross-sectoral information flow. ^b			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish regularly updated regional health security dashboard via CARINFONET and institutionalize use of data for health emergency prevention, preparedness and response. 	TA activity, 2023-2025	KAZ, KGZ, TAJ, TKM, UZB	1.b 5.b 6.a
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop country capacities on sex-disaggregated climate-related disease and risk surveillance and assessment on health and climate change. 	Project component 2025-2028	All countries	2.a 5.b
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop database on sex-disaggregated climate change-related health outcomes 	Project component 2025-2028	GEO, KGZ, PAK, UZB, TAJ, TKM	2.a 5.b
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research gender-differentiated effects of climate change on health. 	TA activity, 2025-2028	AZE, KGZ, MON, PAK, PRC, TAJ, UZB	2.a 5.c
Laboratory infrastructure and capacity					
Improve availability and access to quality laboratory services		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess, cost and plan for laboratories upgrading to comply with national standards and biosafety levels and detect antimicrobial resistance. 	TA activity, 2023-2027	AZE, TAJ, TKM, UZB	- 2.b
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade selected laboratories (including in border areas) to comply with national standards and biosafety levels and establish cross-border referral and specimen transportation.^b 	Project component, 2024-2028	AZE, KGZ, TAJ, TKM, UZB	2.b
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable national reference laboratories to conduct genome sequencing. 	Project component, 2024-2028	AZE	2.b
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Laboratory Quality Management Systems for national laboratory networks and foster regional exchange of testing and sampling strategies.^b 	Project component, 2024-2028	AZE, KGZ, TAJ, TKM, UZB	2.b
Enhance laboratory equipment and supply management systems		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and establish laboratory equipment and supply management systems. 	Project component, 2024-2028	KGZ, TAJ, TKM	2.b
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot and implement laboratory information systems, including laboratory information sharing and specimen tracking.^b 			

AZE = Azerbaijan, CARINFONET = Central Asian Republics Information Network, IHR = International Health Regulations, KAZ = Kazakhstan, KGZ = Kyrgyz Republic, TAJ = Tajikistan, TKM = Turkmenistan, UZB = Uzbekistan.

^a Any of the activities in the RIF can also be supported through countries' own initiative and funding.

^b See Annex 1 for the CAREC Health Strategy Results Framework.

^c Activity included in KGZ Regional Health Security project fully or to some extent.

C. Strategic Pillar 3 – Surge Demand and Access to Supplies

Objective	Activities and Level of Priority	Indicative Implementation Modality ^a and Period	Possible Countries and Clusters	Link to Results Framework ^a
Regulatory mechanisms				
Enhance capacities of national regulatory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize collaborative activities such as joint assessment of applications regarding medical products identified as common priority by participating NRAs. 	TA activity, 2023-2026	AZE, KGZ, PAK, TAJ, UZB	1.b 3.a

authorities (NRA) and regional reliance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop mechanisms for regular collaboration with well-resourced regulatory authorities (e.g., European Medicines Agency, Swiss-Medic) to regularly obtain their support and sharing of information. 	TA activity, 2023-2026 and/or project component, 2024-2028		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess NRA strengths and weaknesses with the possibility of gradually converting strong NRAs into regional centers of excellence for the benefit of all participating authorities. 	TA activity, 2024-2026		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a dedicated IT platform to support joint assessments and facilitate information exchange and foster reliance with minimal manual intervention. 	TA activity or project component 2024-2028		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optimize country resources by streamlining desk evaluation of documentation such as Good Manufacturing Practice Certificates and Certificates of Pharmaceutical Product issued within the scope of WHO Certification Scheme and ensure using a risk-based approach when designing and implementing sampling and laboratory testing activities. 	TA activity 2024-2026 or project component, 2024-2028		
Procurement and supply chain mechanisms					
Improve regional supply security by strengthening cross-country collaboration on procurement of essential public health products		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate information sharing through the collection, compilation, analysis, and visualization of country-provided data (including product pricing, supplier performance, market information) for selected hard-to-access essential medical products as a first step toward collaborative procurement. 	TA activity, 2024-2026	Regional	1.b 3.b 6.a
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct feasibility assessment on establishing regional mechanism(s) for aggregating demand, group contracting and/or pooled procurement of essential public health supplies, and identify pathfinder countries to pilot initiatives for selected priority products. 	TA activity, 2024-2026	Regional	3.b 6.a
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot collaborative procurement mechanism, potentially including a joint revolving fund element. 	Project or project component, 2025-2028	Initially 2-3 countries	1.b 3.b 6.a
Increase transparency and efficiency of regional health supply chains		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in end-to-end digitization of public health supply chains and in regional standards for data management, use and sharing to improve forecasting and demand planning, enable informed procurement decisions, prevent stock-outs and shortages, and reduce the circulation of substandard and/or falsified products. 	Project or project component, 2024-2028	Initially 1-2 countries	3.c
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Regional Supply Chain Risk Management Plan. 	TA activity, 2024-2026	Regional	3.c
Establish a regional hub for strengthening procurement and supply chain management		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct feasibility assessment to establish a regional PSM Institute or Center for strengthening and supporting regional collaborative procurement and supply chain management. 	TA activity, 2023-2026	Regional	3.b 6.a
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a regional procurement and supply chain management (PSM) Institute or Center for capacity development activities and supporting regional collaborative PSM management. 	Project or project component, 2026-2028	Regional	3.b 6.a

AZE = Azerbaijan, GEO = Georgia, IT = information technology, KGZ = Kyrgyz Republic, MON = Mongolia, PSM = procurement and supply chain management, TA= technical assistance, TAJ = Tajikistan, WHO = World Health Organization.

^a Any of the activities in the RIF can also be supported through countries' own initiative and funding.

^b See Annex 1 for the CAREC Health Strategy Results Framework.

D. Strategic Pillar 4 – Vulnerable Population Groups and Border Health

Objective	Activities and Level of Priority	Indicative Implementation Modality ^a and Period	Possible Countries and Clusters	Link to Results Framework ^b
Cross-border health security				
Enhance cross-border health security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate cross-border and cross-sector data exchange in border areas based on the IHR and following agreed data standards and selected priority diseases through Memoranda of Understanding (also see Pillar 2). 	TA activity, 2023-2025 and/or project component, 2024-2028	AZE-GEO border; Selected KAZ, KGZ, TAJ, TKM, UZB borders; PAK, PRC	1.b 2.a 5.b
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade points-of-entry (POE) in terms of preparedness and response capacity, infection screening (laboratory and networks) and control (quarantine), case management, first aid, and quality of care. Raise awareness on IHR and occupational health at POE. 	Project component, 2024-2028	ABEC: KAZ, KGZ; AZE-GEO border; TAJ, TKM, UZB	1, b/ 2.a
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct and scale joint outbreak risk assessments and joint outbreak response simulations and tabletop exercises (incl for One Health), contingency plans development in designated POE (see IHR annex) drawing from available and updated tools. 	Project component, 2024-2028	AZE-GEO border; Selected KAZ, KGZ, TAJ, TKM, UZB borders; PAK	1.b
Border health				
Improve understanding of border and economic corridor health conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct survey among border communities and mobile populations (including women and vulnerable groups) on their health status, needs, social determinants of health, access to health services, and effects of outbreaks and pandemics.^b 	TA activity, 2023-2028	AZE-GEO border; ABEC: KAZ, KGZ; Selected KAZ, TAJ, TKM, UZB borders; PAK	4.a 5.c
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess service availability and quality in selected border areas health facilities including in mountainous and hard to access areas and across economic corridors. 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out analytical work in cooperation with other sectors in border areas and economic corridors such as health impact assessments, barrier assessments, cost-benefit analyses, tourism and other diagnostics. to support investment planning 	TA activity, 2025-2028	AZE-GEO border; Selected KAZ, KGZ, TAJ, TKM, UZB borders; PAK	4.a 5.c
Improve availability and quality of health facilities and services in border areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade selected health facilities and services in border and mountainous areas, tourism hotspots and economic corridors, including improving infection prevention and control, better linkages to laboratories and support to outbreak prevention, detection and control, screening, and case management of infectious diseases, better access and quality of water-and trauma services. 	Project or project component, 2024-2028	ABEC: KAZ, KGZ; AZE-GEO border; TAJ, TKM, UZB	4.b
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop low-carbon and climate resilient health facilities including in border areas and along economic corridors (through upgrading and in new constructions) 	Project component, 2025-2028	GEO, KAZ, KGZ, MON, PRC, TAJ	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct workshops on establishing and sharing migrant Electronic Medical Records and case referrals across borders (including for TB and HIV) considering patient confidentiality. 	TA activity, 2025-2026	AZE, GEO, KGZ, MON, PAK, PRC, TAJ, UZB	1.c 4.b
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot to trial migrant Electronic Medical Records between AZE and GEO borders (including for TB and HIV) while considering patient confidentiality. 	Project component, 2024-2028	AZE-GEO border	4.b
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting medical tourism and explore cross-border case referral 	Project component 2026-2028	PRC, KAZ, KGZ, TAJ, UZB	1.b/4.a/6.a
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In collaboration with transport sector, improve health outcomes through supporting air quality monitoring and mitigation measures, greening spaces, road safety, preparedness and response capacity, and improved access to health facilities and services in border areas, tourism hotspots and across economic corridors 	Project component 2026-2028	AZE, GEO, KAZ, KGZ, TAJ, TKM, UZB PAK	4.a
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening health related services and infrastructure in areas with frequent tourists and travelers, especially mountainous and border regions 	Project component, 2024-2028	KGZ, TAJ	4.a
Enhance community empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop or update plans for socially inclusive Risk and Behavior Change Communication (BCC) across borders, considering gender mainstreaming. 	Project component, 2024-2028	TAJ, PAK	4.a
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement socially inclusive risk and BCC plans (e.g., informing migrants of services available and removing stigma as barriers to access) and support community-led social actions for resilience in border areas. 			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create awareness on climate change and health among communities, incl. women, mobile populations and vulnerable groups 	Project component, 2025-2028	AZE, GEO, KGZ, TAJ	4.a
Financial protection for labor migrants				
Improve financial protection for labor migrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct feasibility study and dialogues on financial protection, portability of benefits and benefit catalog for labor migrants (including access to medical and diagnostic services). 	TA activity, 2023-2026	AZE, GEO, KAZ, KGZ, PAK, TAJ, TKM, UZB	4.a
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot financial protection schemes for labor migrants (including foreign nationals) in selected CAREC countries building on existing insurance schemes and bilateral arrangements to be further determined based on feasibility study. 	Project component, 2025-2028	To be determined after feasibility study	6.a

ABEC = Almaty - Bishkek Economic Corridor, AZE = Azerbaijan, CAREC = Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation, GEO = Georgia, IHR = International Health Regulations KAZ = Kazakhstan, KGZ = Kyrgyz Republic, MON = Mongolia, PAK = Pakistan, TAJ = Tajikistan, TB = tuberculosis, TKM = Turkmenistan, UZB = Uzbekistan.

^a Any of the activities in the RIF can also be supported through countries' own initiative and funding.

^b See Annex 1 for the CAREC Health Strategy Results Framework.

^c Activity included in KGZ Regional Health Security project.

E. Crosscutting: Digital Health

Objective	Activities and Level of Priority	Indicative Implementation Modality ^a and Period	Possible Countries and Clusters	Link to Results Framework ^b
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Digital health foundations					
Improve technical capacities on digital health foundations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct digital health webinars on a variety of topics such as standards and terminology; education and digital literacy; health workforce registries; platform development; evaluation of applications and shared knowledge, interoperability, cybersecurity, developing an enterprise architecture, and planning for digital health investments. 	TA activity, 2022-2026	Regional	1.c 5.a
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investments in digital health foundations (core registries, platform, infrastructure, network, etc.). 	Project component, 2024-2028	Selected countries	5.a
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a regional framework for assessing digital health applications and solutions. 	TA activity, 2023-2024	Selected countries	6.a
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct feasibility study on a mechanism for regular collaborative activities to conduct a joint assessment of digital health applications and solutions and share information. 	TA activity, 2024-2028	Selected countries	6.a

AZE = Azerbaijan, GEO = Georgia, KAZ = Kazakhstan, KGZ = Kyrgyz Republic, TA = technical assistance, UZB = Uzbekistan.

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