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Workshop Report

Building Anticipatory
Innovation Governance
Capacity in Uzbekistan

September 2025

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Disclaimer

This report is the output of the CAREC Institute's in country capacity building workshop on "Building Anticipatory Innovation Governance Capacity in Uzbekistan" that took place from 23-26 September 2025. The workshop was co-organized and hosted by the Center for Policy Research and Outreach (CPRO) at Westminster International University in Tashkent (WIUT). This report was drafted by Mr. Akhtem Useinov and Dr. Bekzod Zakirov, CPRO team. It is edited by Dr. Ilhom Abdulloev, Chief of the Capacity Building Division, the CAREC Institute, and Ms. Dildar Zakir, Capacity Building Specialist, the CAREC Institute.

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Acknowledgements

The workshop greatly benefited from the participation of the invited expert, Mr. Daniel Riveong of Plural Futures, who served as the international expert and trainer (short-term course instructor). Mr. Riveong is an award-winning foresight practitioner with over 11 years of experience applying strategic foresight and systems thinking to help organizations navigate complex issues. He has worked extensively on foresight and agrifood systems across Europe and Southeast Asia, including Finland and Cambodia. Additionally, Mr. Riveong brings over 15 years of experience in digital technologies, specifically in digital marketing and business intelligence. He has facilitated workshops, conducted research, delivered capacity training, and worked on multi-stakeholder projects throughout Asia and Europe. His past foresight engagements include financial institutions, national governments, universities, and international organizations such as UNICEF, UNDP, WHO, FAO, and others.

The workshop organizers also extend their gratitude to the Ministry of Investment, Industry and Trade of the Republic of Uzbekistan for their technical support, which facilitated the participation of representatives from various Ministries and Agencies across Uzbekistan. Special thanks are also given to Ms. Aziza Umarova, Head of Delivery Unit, Agency for Strategic Reforms under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and Mr. Isomiddin Akramov of UNDP Uzbekistan, for delivering invited guest presentations.

The valuable participation of public sector representatives is also acknowledged for their contributions and for sharing their knowledge and expertise during the workshop. Furthermore, the interpretation and translation support provided by Mr. Jabborbek Imomkulov, Mr. Saidamirxon Shukurov, and Mr. Javlon Abdullayev was essential for facilitating interaction between participants and resource people.

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Background to Workshop

Since 2022, the Centre for Policy Research and Outreach (CPRO) of Westminster International University in Tashkent (WIUT) has hosted the [UNESCO Chair in Future Studies for Anticipatory Governance and Sustainable Policymaking](#).

The UNESCO Chair is the first of its kind in Central Asia. It promotes research, training, and teaching on futures studies for policymakers, linking these efforts to Uzbekistan's ongoing reforms, while also serving scholars, students, and practitioners.

Based on the experience and capacities of the CPRO, it was decided to apply for a co-organized capacity building events grant proposal from the CAREC Institute. The CPRO's proposal was accepted, and the Grant Agreement was signed between the CAREC Institute and WIUT in May 2024.

The workshop was originally scheduled for August 18-21, 2024. However, it was later rescheduled for 23-26 September 2024. Following an official request for technical support from WIUT, the Ministry of Investment, Industry and Trade of the Republic of Uzbekistan invited representatives from various Ministries and Agencies across Uzbekistan.

This workshop aimed to build capacities in foresight and anticipatory innovation governance as a strategic long-term planning tool, facilitating the transition to more anticipatory and innovative governance models. The workshop primarily focused on national priorities, including climate change, sustainable urban development, environmental protection, and the green transition. Its themes and discussions were centered around the Uzbekistan-2030 Strategy, reinforcing the country's role in regional cooperation within the CAREC framework.

The project's objectives were:

- Addressing the shortage of resources and skills to build Uzbekistan's capacity in futures studies.
- Generating information and managing data processes to formulate future scenarios and develop actionable options.
- Proposing methods for developing and producing foresight reports in partnership with local think tanks and government agencies.
- Applying sector-specific foresight and anticipatory innovation governance (e.g., in social protection).
- Proposing methods for providing advice on ongoing capability, networks, learning, and development resources.
- Enhancing the ability of public sector officials to anticipate and respond to emerging policy challenges, including climate change.
- Providing hands-on experience in using strategic foresight and anticipatory governance tools.
- Fostering cross-sector collaboration and peer learning among Uzbek government institutions.

Aligning anticipatory innovation governance with the CAREC 2030 Strategy's operational priorities and Uzbekistan's national development goals. The expected workshop outcomes include:

- Increased capacity of public sector officials to use foresight tools for strategic policymaking, innovation, and climate governance.
- Development of a network of foresight practitioners within Uzbekistan's public sector.

- Actionable recommendations for integrating anticipatory governance into national strategies.
- A roadmap for institutionalizing foresight practices in government planning.

Presenters and Facilitators

The CAREC Institute provides the facilitators for the workshop, with key staff being:

- Ms. Dildar Zakir, Capacity Building Specialist
Contact: dildarz@carecinstitute.org

The workshop training was delivered by:

- Mr. Daniel Riveong, Plural Futures
Contact: daniel@pluralfutures.com

Guest speakers include:

- Ms. Aziza Umarova, Head of Delivery Unit, the Agency for Strategic Reforms under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan
Contact: a.umarova@asr.gov.uz
- Mr. Isomiddin Akramov, UNDP Uzbekistan
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Other key facilitators include:

- Dr. Bekzod Zakirov, CPRO Director
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- Mr. Akhtem Useinov, Research Fellow at CPRO
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- Mr. Shokhzod Meyliev, CPRO Department Administrator
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Participants

There were 20+ primary participants registered for the workshop as per the table below.

Names	Representing Agencies	Contacts
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Nigora Umarova	Agency for Governance Efficiency	info@bsa.uz +998712393476

Interpreters

- Mr. Jabborbek Imomkulov
- Mr. Saidamirxon Shukurov
- Mr. Javlon Abdullayev

Attendance

Based on the attendance list, 11-15 participants showed great interest and diligently attended the workshop throughout the seminar. We include interpreters in the attendance list, as they have been part of the working group during the workshops.

Workshop Photos



Other photos are available in the [link](#).

Agenda



Building Anticipatory Innovation Governance Capacity in Uzbekistan Workshop

The workshop is organized jointly by
Westminster International University in Tashkent (WIUT)
Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Institute (CI)

23-26 September 2025

Venue: WIUT, SHB306

Workshop Agenda

DAY 1: 23 September 2025

9:00 – 9:30	Registration of participants
9:30 – 9:50	Welcome Bakhrom Mirkasimov, Deputy Rector Westminster International University in Tashkent (WIUT), Uzbekistan Dildar Zakir, Capacity Building Specialist CAREC Institute, Urumqi, PRC
9:50 – 10:20	<i>Anticipatory Innovation Governance and Uzbekistan 2030</i> Daniel Riveong, Plural Futures, Spain
10:20 – 11:15	<i>Our Four-Day Agenda and What Happens Next, and Activity</i> Daniel Riveong and CPRO Team
11:15 – 11:45	Coffee Break (SHB first floor)
11:45 – 12:00	<i>Anchoring Our Learning Purpose with Uzbekistan 2030</i> Daniel Riveong
12:00 – 13:30	<i>Foresight and Creativity in Public Service</i> Aziza Umarova, Head of Delivery Unit, the Agency for Strategic Reforms under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch Break (the Academic Lyceum venue)

Please refer to the supplementary materials for the full agenda.

Training materials

The training materials include:

1. Presentation slides. The presentation slides attached to the supplementary materials are compiled into a single cumulative slide, covering all four days of the workshop.
2. Workshop materials. The workshop materials include mapping tools, trend cards, policy response discussion tools, and presentation templates. Please refer to the supplementary materials to view the workshop materials.

Event outcomes

Workshop outcome	Benchmark/Goal	Measurement Criteria	Results
Knowledge Improvement	50% increase in participant knowledge	Input and contribution of participants during the workshop, including discussions	Participants learnt futures and foresight tools through the lens of migration and other socio-economic dimensions. Guest speakers invited shared their experiences with implications for Uzbekistan.
Skills Development	4-5 skills learned	Input and contribution of participants during the workshop, including discussions	
Participant Engagement	80% participation rate	Attendance records, feedback	Please refer to the attendance section above.
Workshop Satisfaction	80% satisfaction rate	Feedback report	Please refer to the feedback from participants section below.

Summary narrative of the workshop discussion materials

During the workshop, participants were expected to focus on one specific problem statement to better understand the methods and tools to be applied. It was decided to concentrate on migration, particularly external migration, and its cross-sectoral dimensions. The discussion materials collected and reviewed explore Uzbekistan's potential futures through the lens of migration, socio-economic development, and policy adaptation within a changing global and regional environment. The scenario work connected past legacies, present pressures, and future possibilities to envision strategic directions for the country.

Current Context (“Push of the Present”)

Based on the discussions, Uzbekistan faces several interlinked challenges that drive outward migration and limit domestic economic diversification. Key discussed pressures include:

- Lack of local job opportunities, especially for youth and graduates.
- Underdeveloped infrastructure and bureaucratic inefficiencies that slow reform.
- Outdated education and teaching systems, constraining innovation.
- Less efficient governance.

At the same time, a young, tech-oriented population shows increasing interest in IT, startups, and language learning, signaling readiness for digital transformation.

Historical Context (“Weight of the Past”)

Historical legacies, migration patterns, and strong family-centered values continue to shape the present. Economic development is partially dependent and could be further dependent on remittance-driven growth, but can also reinforce dependency on external labor markets.

Future Drivers (“Pull of the Future”)

Participants envisioned a future where Uzbekistan becomes a regional hub for logistics, trade, and innovation, supported by:

- Simplified residency and migration reforms.
- Return migration and knowledge exchange.
- Investment in education and startups.
- Development of Uzbek-branded exports and knowledge-based industries.
- Climate change and digitalization are also recognized as pivotal forces shaping labor mobility and national competitiveness.

The working groups suggested transformation pathways over a 20-year horizon:

- +5 years: Continued migration for blue-collar work increases remittances and consumption.
- +10 years: Ex-migrants begin returning, bringing skills and capital; investment and education rise.
- +20 years: Uzbekistan emerges as a labor and service hub, attracting skilled migrants itself.

Policy and strategic responses suggested highlight that the rise of AI and the digital economy could redefine migration, education, and work. Anticipated impacts include fewer borders and increased global labor mobility, as well as new opportunities for education and language acquisition.

The participants also provided policy recommendations, including:

- Investing in education, especially STEM and digital skills.
- Accelerating urbanization and building monocenters for job creation.
- Strengthening legal and governance frameworks to manage migration and climate risks.
- Introducing robust policy monitoring and impact evaluation systems aligned with Uzbekistan 2030 goals.

Overall, the discussions present a forward-looking narrative of Uzbekistan as a transforming society — transitioning from a remittance-dependent, lower-middle-income country to a diversified, knowledge-driven economy. This transformation hinges on strategic migration management, education reform, and institutional modernization.

Feedback from participants

Based on the feedback, most of the participants who filled in the evaluation form on the final day of the workshop *strongly agreed* or *agreed* on the following statements:

- The objectives of the workshop were clearly defined
- Participation and interaction were encouraged
- The topics covered were relevant

- The content was organized and easy to follow
- The materials distributed were helpful
- This workshop experience will be useful in their work
- The trainer and speakers were well prepared and knowledgeable about the workshop topics
- The time allotted for the workshop was sufficient
- The room and facilities were adequate and comfortable
- The workshop objectives were met
- Coffee breaks and lunch were organized well

Some respondents appreciated the group discussions and suggested having more of them, which were indeed part of the workshop. Respondents also noted that public sector representatives might struggle to attend the entire workshop. An alternative suggestion was a more targeted approach—such as inviting specific line ministries or agencies—to encourage active participation throughout.

Additionally, participants proposed future workshops on the following topics: (1) Reforms audit (Audit of progress), (2) Program/policy evaluation, and (3) Project management techniques in innovation, startups, and governance policy. Participants found the new methods and approaches they learned to be useful and plan to apply them in their jobs.