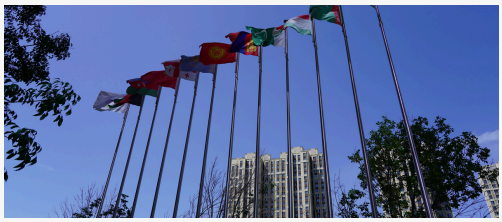
CAREC INSTITUTE NEWSLETTER

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About the CAREC Institute

The CAREC Institute is an intergovernmental organization jointly owned by eleven member countries, dedicated to promoting economic cooperation in Central Asia and along the Silk Road through knowledge generation and sharing. Acting as a knowledge connector across five core themes—including economic stability, trade, connectivity, agriculture, and human development—the Institute ensures policy coherence to drive regional integration.

Inside This Issue

10th Think Tank Development Forum 1–2
Containerization Policy Dialogue 3
Water Managers Study Tour 4
Kashi Fair & Advisory Council 5
Astana Expert Seminar 6
Knowledge Products 7–8
Upcoming Events 9

CAREC Institute's Online Resources

News
Events
Publications
E-Learning Platform



Institute Spotlight

10th CAREC Think Tank Development Forum Held in Tashkent to Advance Regional Financial Growth

From 20 to 21 August 2026, the 10th CAREC Think Tank Development Forum was successfully held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, under the theme "Towards Robust, Innovative and Inclusive Financial Sector Development in the CAREC Region." The event brought together around 130 government officials, think tank experts, financial practitioners, academics, and representatives of international organizations from across the region and beyond to address structural financing constraints hindering infrastructure investment, industrial modernization, and cross-border economic integration.

Co-organized by the CAREC Institute and Westminster International University in Tashkent (WIUT), with support from the Asian Development Bank, the Eurasian Fund for Stabilization and Development, and the People's Republic of China Poverty Reduction and Regional Cooperation Fund, the forum serves as a key platform for policy dialogue and knowledge sharing.

Continued on page 2 →

INSTITUTE SPOTLIGHT · CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Towards Robust, Innovative and Inclusive Financial Sector Development



The 10th CAREC Think Tank Development Forum, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 20–21 August 2026.

At the opening ceremony, CAREC Institute Director Charymuhammet Shallyyev noted that regional capital markets remain shallow, domestic savings are not consistently channeled to productive use, and access to finance remains uneven for small businesses, rural communities, and women entrepreneurs. He added that digital technology is reshaping financial services faster than regulatory frameworks can adapt. WIUT Rector Komiljon Karimov described universities as "part of the region's intellectual infrastructure, where international knowledge meets local experience to prepare future policymakers with cross-disciplinary competence." Abdulla Hashimov, Advisor to Uzbekistan's Minister of Investment, Industry and Trade, emphasized that sustainable growth requires both capital inflows and strong domestic institutional capacity.

In the keynote address, Kamoliddin Talipov, Advisor to the Chairman on Development and Coordination of the Financial Market at the Central Bank of Uzbekistan, highlighted progress in macroeconomic stability, banking regulation, digital financial infrastructure, and financial inclusion. He proposed three priority areas for deeper CAREC cooperation: joint data and research, cross-border payments interoperability, and enhanced financial stability and cyber resilience.

In thematic sessions, participants examined systemic barriers to sustainable growth and explored region-specific policy approaches. Discussions focused on responsible digital finance and innovation, expanding financial inclusion and diversifying financing channels, developing non-bank financing pathways, leveraging domestic financial institutions and capital markets, building a CAREC regional financial safety net, and advancing practical mechanisms for regional financial cooperation.

At a side event, the CAREC Institute, the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), the Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC), and the Uzbekistan Investment Promotion Agency (IPA) launched a joint research project on Advancing Investment Promotions in Renewable Energy and Manufacturing Sectors in Uzbekistan. The 18-month project targets renewable energy-associated manufacturing and the textile and apparel sectors, aiming to shift Uzbekistan's investment promotion from broad outreach to systematic facilitation across the full project life cycle.

Shokhrukh Gulyamov, Deputy Minister of Investment, Industry and Trade of Uzbekistan, stated that the initiative will convert regional research into actionable tools, including sector-specific investment manuals, a client relationship management system, and specialized training, to attract technology-driven SMEs and foster integrated value chains. IPA Acting Director Roksana Nesor noted that the project enables structured engagement to better serve SMEs lacking independent advisory resources, while IsDB Country Representative Khusan Khasanov highlighted its potential as a replicable model for institutional capacity building across CAREC economies.

Another side event held during the forum saw the CAREC Institute sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Central Asia to deepen cooperation in education, research, and knowledge sharing among regional think tanks.

POLICY DIALOGUE

CAREC Institute Holds Policy Dialogue on Enhancing Regional Containerization



The online policy dialogue "Enhancing Containerization in the CAREC Region," 27 August 2026.

On 27 August 2026, the CAREC Institute (CI) held an online policy dialogue titled "Enhancing Containerization in the CAREC Region: Strategies for Policy and Economic Growth." The event centered on the Institute's new study on containerization in the CAREC region and drew more than 60 policymakers, industry representatives, and logistics experts.

CI Director Mr. Charymuhammet Shallyyev opened the session by describing containerization as "a transformative force that can unlock unprecedented trade potential." He added, however, bottlenecks persist, citing transit constraints, outdated infrastructure, and fragmented information systems. The study was conducted by a consultant team led by Mr. Khong Kie Ee, with international expert Dr. Wei Yim Yap and national consultants for Azerbaijan, China, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, and Pakistan.

Dr. Yap observed that despite volatility in global supply chains, CAREC corridors have taken on greater strategic weight. Container traffic has grown along the Trans-Caspian Middle Corridor and at major gateways including the ports of Tianjin, Baku, Aktau, Poti, and Karachi. Mr. Khong outlined the main bottlenecks across four corridor clusters, among them capacity limits and manual procedures at Zamiin-Uud, insufficient vessel capacity on the Caspian Sea, and congestion at border crossings such as Dostyk. The study recommends expanding container vessel fleets, developing dedicated terminals, running scheduled shuttle trains, and advancing digitalization through Single Window systems and electronic bills of lading.

The national consultants presented country-specific findings. Georgia pointed to the Tbilisi Dry Port and its scheduled block trains; Kazakhstan described its new Containerization Concept and the expansion of Aktau port; Mongolia noted its need for internationally recognized dry ports to relieve congestion at Zamiin-Uud. Their presentations converged on a common set of regional priorities: drawing up national containerization strategies, strengthening public-private partnerships, advancing digitalization and interoperable documentation, launching scheduled container train services, and coordinating infrastructure and regulation through shared corridor performance indicators.

CI Deputy Director Two, Dr. Kuat Akizhanov, closed the dialogue by urging stakeholders to act on the study's recommendations. The region's container traffic is projected to keep growing, he said, and that growth "is an opportunity we cannot afford to miss."

> "Containerization is a transformative force that can unlock unprecedented trade potential."
>
> **Charymuhammet Shallyyev, Director, CAREC Institute**

Uzbek Female Water Managers Begin Study Tour on China's Water-Saving Practices in Xinjiang



The opening of the study tour for Uzbekistan female water resource managers, Urumqi, 3 August 2026.

The study tour for Uzbekistan female water resource managers on China's water-saving management practices opened in Urumqi, Xinjiang, the People's Republic of China, on 3 August 2026. Co-hosted by the CAREC Institute and the Ministry of Water Resources of Uzbekistan, and supported by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the five-day program brings 15 female water professionals from Uzbekistan. Through site visits and technical exchanges in Urumqi, Shihezi, and Changji, participants will examine arid-zone water-saving technologies and gender-inclusive governance models.

Water resource pressure in Central Asia has continued to rise in recent years. While women play an indispensable role in grassroots water management, their participation in technical decision-making and system operation remains limited. In his opening remarks, CAREC Institute Director Mr. Charymuhammet Shallyyev emphasized that female empowerment is not merely a social goal, but a technical necessity for sustainable community water use. He positioned the study tour as a knowledge-sharing platform to support gender-inclusive governance with arid-zone water-saving practices.

This vision was echoed by Mr. Zokirjon Ishpulatov, First Deputy Minister of Water Resources of Uzbekistan. In a video message, he encouraged participants to adapt China's advanced water-saving technologies and digital management practices into context-specific solutions that boost sectoral efficiency and sustainability. Mr. Mirzo Iskandar Gulyamov, Head of Country Operations at the ADB Uzbekistan Resident Mission, noted that such efforts directly advance Uzbekistan's Gender Concept for the Water Management Sector. He added that the study tour equips participants with the leadership and technical skills essential for inclusive, climate-resilient water governance.

During the keynote session, officials from the Department of Finance, the Department of Water Resources, and the Women's Federation of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region presented policies and practices covering public funding for water infrastructure, fiscal support for women's empowerment, high-efficiency water-saving projects, digital twin water systems, and grassroots women participation mechanisms in water governance. Researchers from the Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Xinjiang Academy of Agricultural Sciences shared insights on agricultural water-saving technologies and intelligent management in arid regions.

"The CAREC Institute will continue to serve as a knowledge bridge among member countries, generating, sharing, and applying knowledge to foster mutual learning and help each country explore sustainable development solutions suited to its own realities," said Dr. Li Kouqing, Deputy Director One of the CAREC Institute.

Throughout the tour, the delegation will visit water-saving facilities, modern agriculture demonstration zones, enterprises, and rural communities to observe the application of technologies and gender collaboration mechanisms in practice firsthand.



14–16 AUGUST 2026 · KASHI, XINJIANG

CAREC Institute Participates in 16th Xinjiang Kashi–Central and South Asia Commodity Fair

From August 14 to 16, the 16th Xinjiang Kashi – Central and South Asia Commodity Fair was held in Kashi Prefecture, China. CAREC Institute Director Charymuhammet Shallyyev and Senior Research Specialist Zhang Jian attended the opening ceremony, 2026 Kashi Friendship Cities Cooperation and Development Conference, and other official sessions.

During the event, the delegation held discussions with Central and South Asian partners on strengthening transnational value chains to advance sustainable regional cooperation, and toured exhibition areas covering textiles, agricultural specialties, culture and tourism, new energy, and digital high-tech industries.

Established in 2005, the fair has evolved into a key platform for regional economic and trade exchange. Under the theme "Co-building the Asia-Europe Golden Passage, Sharing Opportunities for Silk Road Cooperation", this year's event featured Uzbekistan as the Guest Country and Guangdong Province as the Guest Province, attracting over 330 overseas enterprises from 44 countries and regions alongside more than 1,000 Chinese enterprises.



The opening ceremony of the 16th Xinjiang Kashi–Central and South Asia Commodity Fair.



26 AUGUST 2026 · ONLINE

CAREC Institute Holds 8th Advisory Council Meeting

The CAREC Institute (CI) hosted its 8th Advisory Council (AC) Meeting virtually on 26 August, gathering AC members, stakeholders, and the CI team to review recent progress and discuss the Rolling Operation Plan for 2027 and 2028. The meeting was moderated by Dr. Li Kouqing, Deputy Director One at CI.

CI Director Mr. Charymuhammet Shallyyev presented a comprehensive overview of the Institute's progress report, highlighting key milestones achieved under the current operational framework. He further outlined the planned activities and strategic priorities for the upcoming two-year cycle, emphasizing CI's continued commitment to supporting regional cooperation through evidence-based research, capacity building, and knowledge sharing. Dr. Kuat Akizhanov, Deputy Director Two of CI, also attended the meeting.

AC members examined the progress report and the planned activities, provided targeted feedback to enhance the relevance of CI's knowledge products, strengthen institutional capacity, and facilitate regional policy dialogue.

Composed of distinguished experts, the Advisory Council provides essential strategic guidance. The insights from this meeting will serve as valuable input for the Institute's overall operations going forward.

EXPERT SEMINAR · ASTANA

CAREC Institute Deputy Director Dr. Kuat Akizhanov Presents Report on Inclusive Development at Astana Expert Seminar



Dr. Kuat Akizhanov presenting at the expert seminar in Astana, Kazakhstan, 25–26 August 2026.

Dr. Kuat Akizhanov, Deputy Director Two of the CAREC Institute, presented a report on inclusive development at a two-day expert seminar held in Astana, Kazakhstan. Under the theme of "Socio – Economic Development in the Context of the Contemporary Global Paradigm", the seminar was organized by the Institute of Contemporary Politics from 25 to 26 August 2026.

At the seminar, Dr. Akizhanov presented the report "From Economic Growth to Progressive Redistribution in the CAREC: The Case of Kazakhstan," which drew on the CAREC Institute's research publication titled "Addressing Socio-Economic Inequality: Decent Work in CAREC's Green and Digital Transitions." His presentation specifically focused on Kazakhstan to examine how CAREC member countries could move beyond conventional growth models toward inclusive development by making use of green and digital opportunities.

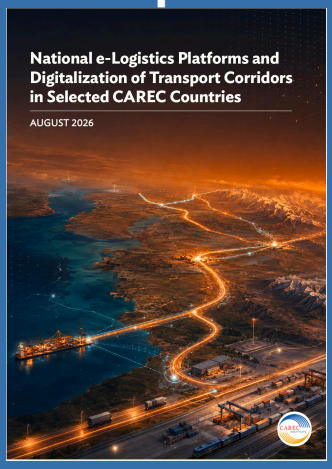
"The CAREC region's green and digital shift shows that inclusive development requires rethinking growth beyond traditional metrics," Dr. Akizhanov said. He noted that the report, drawing on the case of Kazakhstan, provides policy-oriented analysis of socio-economic inequality in the region and argues that economic growth strategies should be paired with progressive redistribution mechanisms.

Policymakers and researchers can now access the full report on the CAREC Institute's website: https://www.carecinstitute.org/publications/carec-institute-releases-new-report-on-green-transition-and-environmental-standards-compliance-in-carec-region/

> "The CAREC region's green and digital shift shows that inclusive development requires rethinking growth beyond traditional metrics."
>
> **Dr. Kuat Akizhanov, Deputy Director Two, CAREC Institute**

CAREC Institute Knowledge Product

Digital Transport Corridors and the 10th Think Tank Development Forum Report



National e-Logistics Platforms and Digitalization of Transport Corridors in Selected CAREC Countries

CAREC Institute | August 2026

New Report Maps a Shared Path toward Digital Transport Corridors across Five CAREC Countries.

A new research report, National e-Logistics Platforms and Digitalization of Transport Corridors in Selected CAREC Countries, assesses transport and logistics digitalization in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. It proposes practical pathways for developing interoperable national e-logistics platforms and connected digital transport corridors.

The report finds that digitalization is advancing, but many systems remain fragmented across agencies, transport modes, and national borders. It proposes interoperable national e-logistics platforms to connect transport stakeholders, complement national single-window systems, and support multimodal freight operations.

The analysis highlights standardized electronic documents, coordinated border processes, secure data exchange, and integration between national systems as key requirements. It recommends modular digital infrastructure that can be adapted to each country's circumstances.

Compatible platforms and stronger regional cooperation could reduce border delays, improve shipment visibility, strengthen multimodal connectivity, and make regional supply chains more resilient.

The recommendations emphasize coordinated governance, public-private participation, international standards, and stronger implementation capacity. Compatible national platforms and cross-border data exchange could reduce border delays, improve shipment visibility, strengthen multimodal connectivity, and increase regional supply-chain resilience.

The report concludes that long-term corridor digitalization requires sustained cooperation. National platforms should serve domestic users while connecting reliably with neighboring systems along regional transport routes.

Read the report



CAREC Institute Publishes Report on the 10th CAREC Think Tank Development Forum

CAREC Institute | August 2026

This report presents the outcomes of the 10th CAREC Think Tank Development Forum, held on 20–21 August 2026 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Co-organized by the CAREC Institute and the Westminster International University in Tashkent, with support from the Asian Development Bank, the Eurasian Fund for Stabilization and Development, and the People's Republic of China Poverty Reduction and Regional Cooperation Fund, the Forum brought together around 130 participants from across the region to discuss "Towards Robust, Innovative, and Inclusive Financial Sector Development in the CAREC Region." This report summarizes the key discussions, findings, and policy recommendations for CAREC member countries.

Related: 10th CAREC Think Tank Development Forum Held in Tashkent to Advance Regional Financial Growth

Read the forum report

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Joint Publication

Trilingual Glossary of Green Economy Terms Released



As extreme weather and climate change issues become increasingly prominent, the green economy has emerged as an important pathway for sustainable development. Turkmenistan prioritizes green economic development, focusing on resource efficiency, ecological conservation, and regional green cooperation.

In response to national green development needs, scholars from the Turkmen State Institute of Economics and Management have selected and compiled English-language green economy terms from international organization reports, academic materials, and official policies, and translated them into Turkmen.

To facilitate knowledge exchange in the green economy field, CAREC Institute staff provided voluntary off-duty support to add Chinese translations, forming an English-Turkmen-Chinese trilingual glossary.

The glossary is now released for public reference. Download the glossary

Click here to view the reports

Upcoming Events



Second Tianshan Forum for Central Asia Economic Cooperation, Almaty, 2–3 November 2026

The second Tianshan Forum for Central Asia Economic Cooperation will be held on 2–3 November 2026 in Almaty, Kazakhstan, bringing together senior officials, development partners, leaders of the private sector and business associations, and experts from regional think tanks to discuss how Central Asia can build more resilient connectivity and attract quality investment.

Co-organized by the CAREC Institute and the Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the forum takes place under the theme "Strengthening Resilient Connectivity and Quality Investment in Central Asia." It follows the inaugural forum held in Urumqi in December 2025, which drew broad international attention.

The two-day program includes high-level opening remarks, keynote addresses, two subforums and thematic sessions. Discussions will focus on mobilizing public and private investment for transport, trade, energy and digital connectivity; policy and regulatory reforms to deepen cross-border cooperation; ecology-based agriculture and the role of local governments; and artificial intelligence as a driver of regional growth.

Participants are expected to include senior officials from member governments of the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Program, development partners such as multilateral and bilateral development agencies, international organizations and financial institutions, leaders from the private sector and business associations, and experts from regional think tanks.

The Export-Import Bank of China and the People's Government of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region co-organize the "Investing in Central Asia" and "Local Government Cooperation " subforums, respectively. The Asian Development Bank is the forum's strategic partner, with additional support from a range of international institutions and companies.

For more information, please visit the 2nd Tianshan Forum webpage.

Full event details, agendas and registration links are available at carecinstitute.org/events. Recordings and presentations from past dialogues are published on the CAREC Institute E-Learning Platform.

ALSO COMING UP

13 October 2026	CAREC Institute Chai Talk: The Legal Foundation of Digital Trade — Practical Barriers to Cross-Border E-Commerce
20 November 2026	Knowledge Sharing Webinar: Heterodox Approaches to Development in Central Asia — Post-Soviet Development Economics and Society

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