

Overview of the CAREC Program and the Digital TA

Presented by the CAREC Secretariat



The **Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Program (CAREC)** is an **open and inclusive platform** of 10 member countries: Azerbaijan, PRC, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

Promotes regional cooperation through Policy dialogue, Investment projects, Knowledge solutions, Capacity–building, and South-South cooperation



Development partners:

ADB-Asian Development Bank, **EBRD** - European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

IMF - International Monetary Fund, **IDB**-Islamic Development Bank, **UNDP**-United Nations Development Program, WB - World Bank

ADB serves as CAREC Secretariat

The **CAREC Institute** serves as a regional knowledge hub, undertaking research and capacity building on key issues affecting the region.

About CAREC Program Structure

Operational Clusters



Economic and Financial Stability



Trade, Tourism, and Economic Corridors



Infrastructure and Economic Connectivity



Agriculture and Water



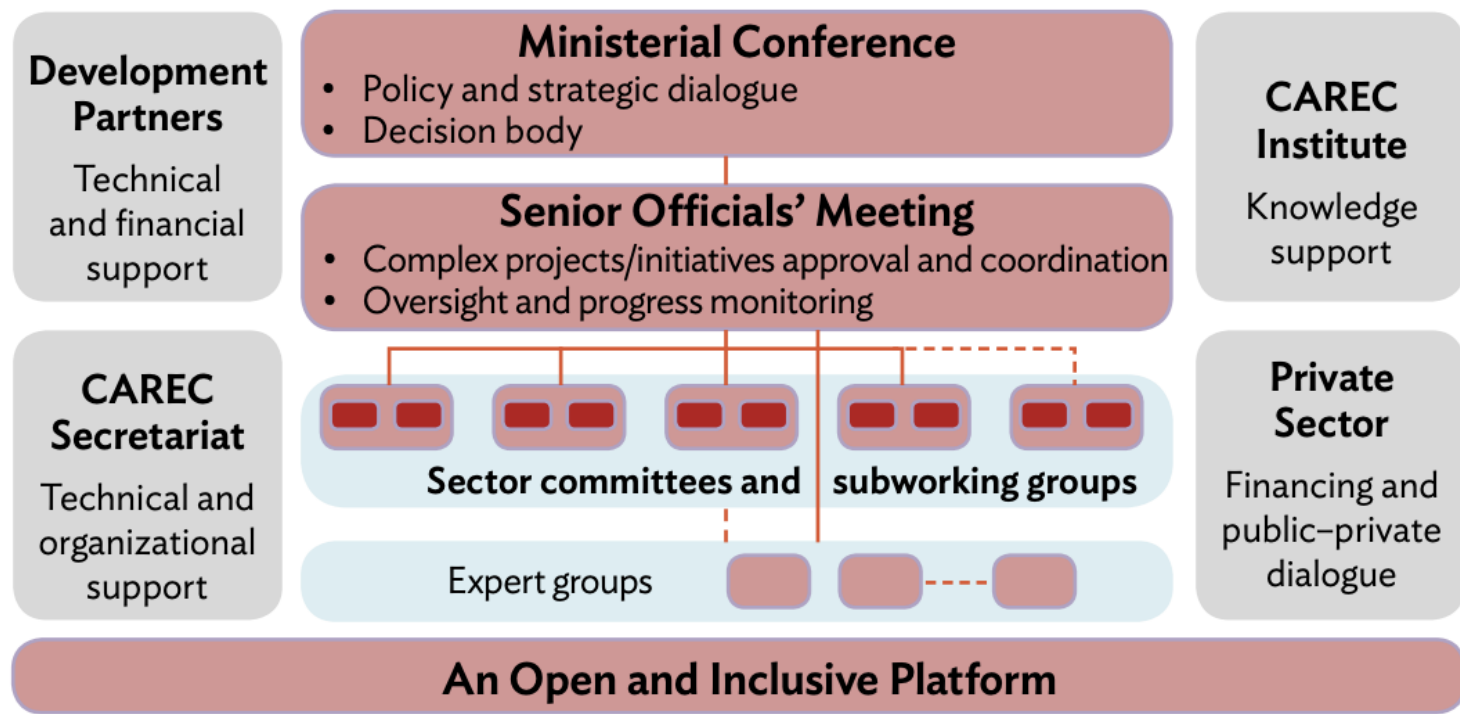
Human Development



Cross-cutting Themes

- Climate Change
- Digital/ICT
- Gender

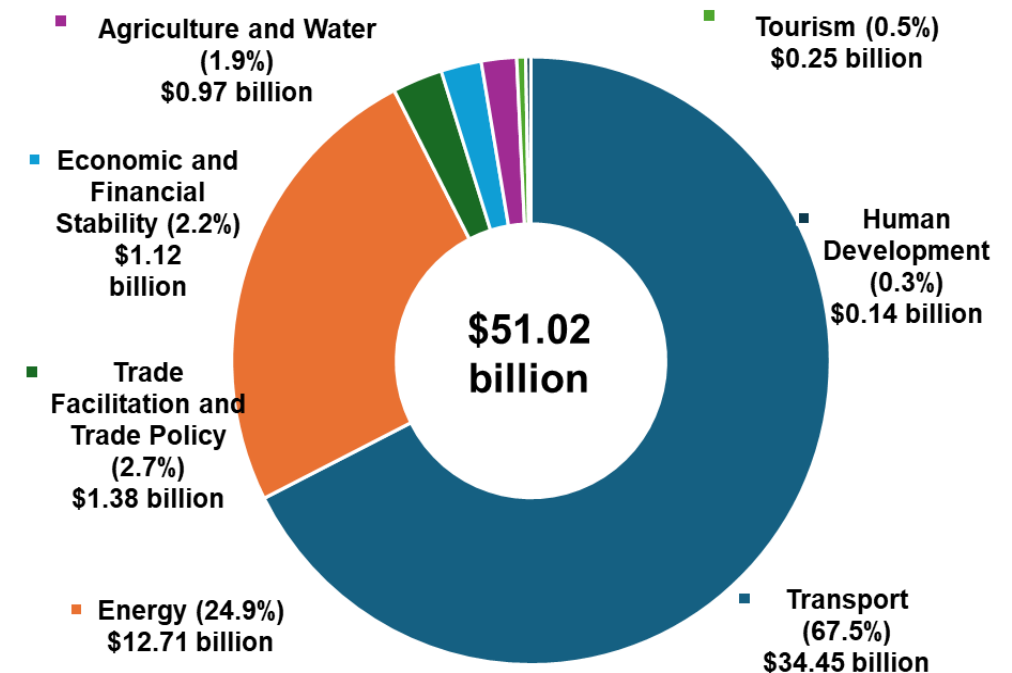
Institutional Framework



CAREC Project Portfolio (as-of Dec 2023)

- **\$51 billion** CAREC cumulative investment projects (2001–2023)
- **103** ongoing projects, mostly in transport, energy, and trade sectors, but diversifying into new areas
- Over **\$17.6 billion** was financed by ADB, **\$23.4 billion** by other development partners, and **\$10 billion** from CAREC governments
- In addition, **29** ADB-supported active CAREC TAs (total of \$58 million)

CAREC Investment Projects By sector, 2001–2023



*The amount of CAREC investments may still change following the ongoing review of the CAREC portfolio database in consultation with development partners.

CAREC Digital Strategy 2030 – VISION & MISSION

VISION

- Inclusive Economic Growth & Social Well-being
- New jobs (including for the disadvantaged and minority populations)
- Better Services
- Higher Regional Competitiveness

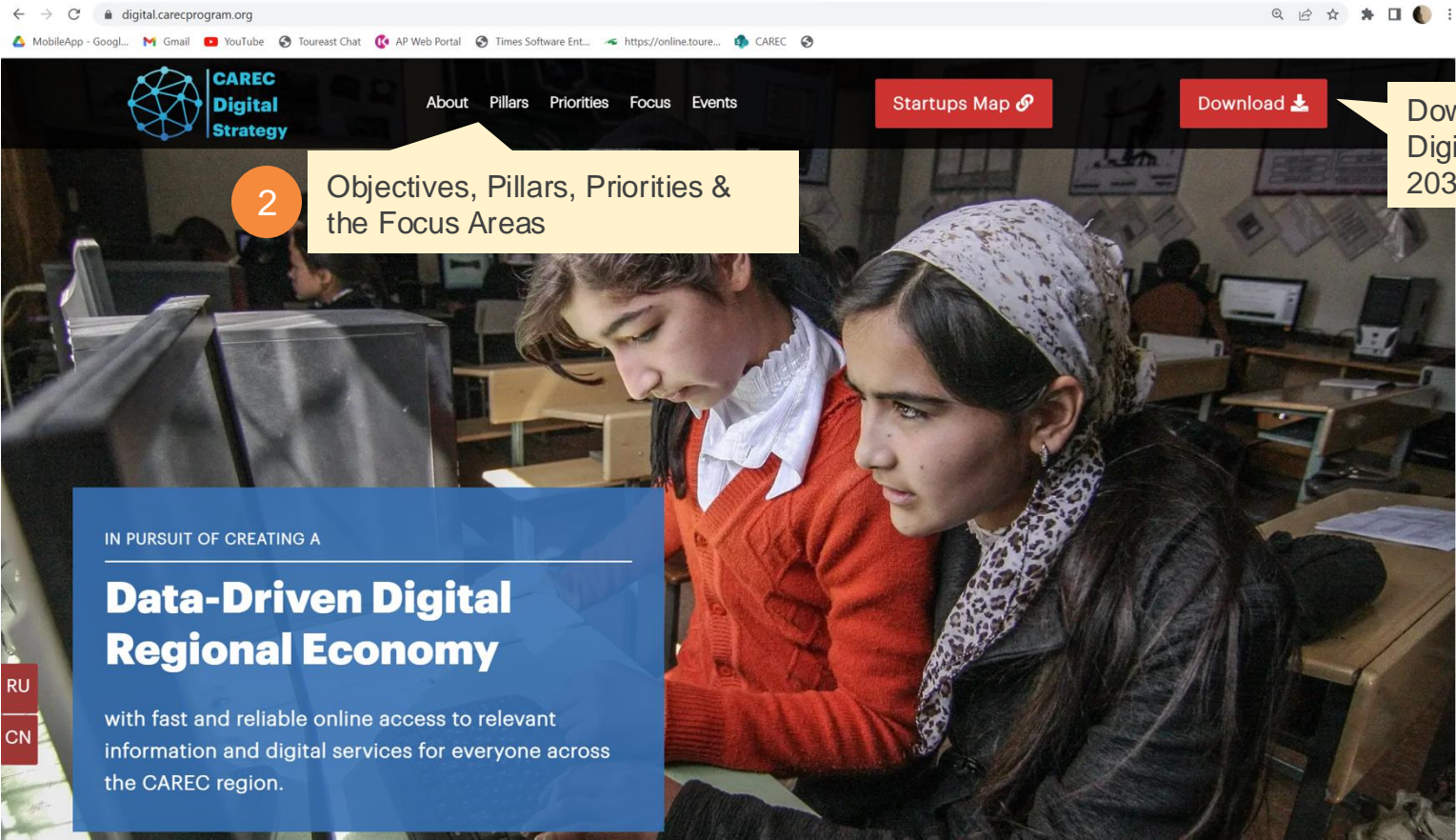
MISSION

Creating a **Data-Driven Digital Regional Economy** with fast and reliable online access to relevant information and trusted, real-time, user-friendly digital services for all citizens, businesses, and administrations across the CAREC region.

CAREC Digital Strategy 2030

Published Online for everyone to Access

1 For More Information Visit: [HTTPS://DIGITAL.CARECPROGRAM.ORG](https://digital.carecprogram.org)



2 Objectives, Pillars, Priorities & the Focus Areas

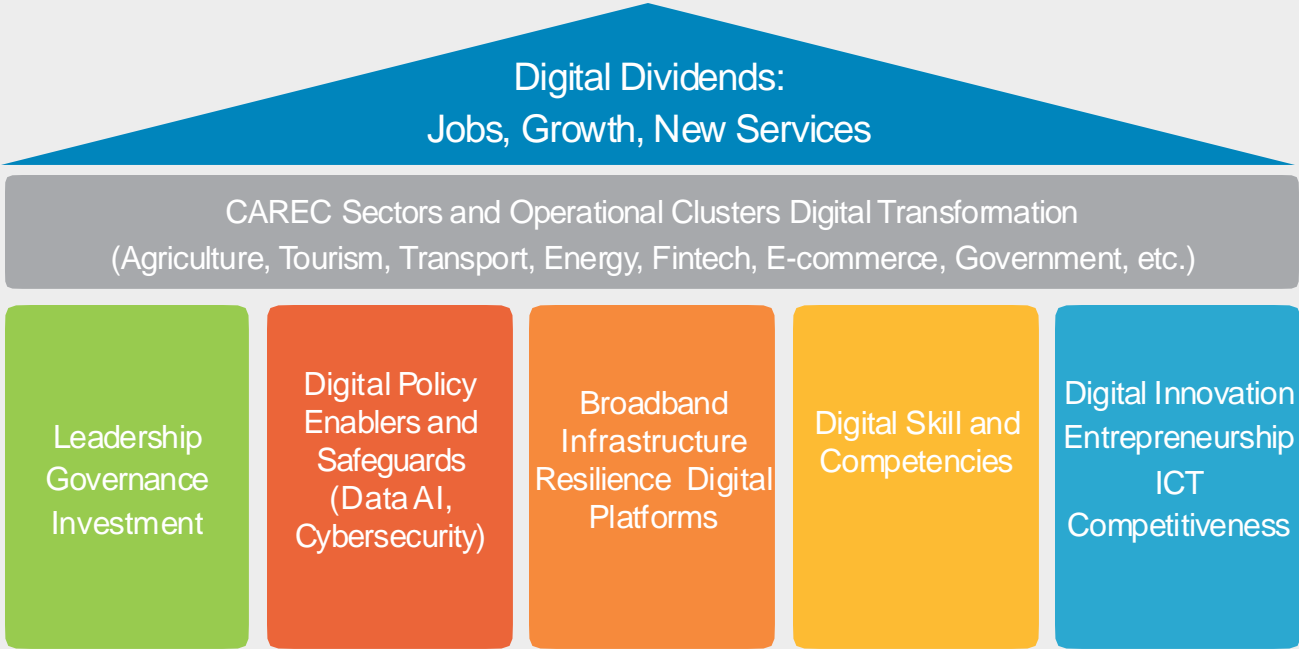
Download CAREC Digital Strategy 2030

3 Available in English, Russian & Chinese

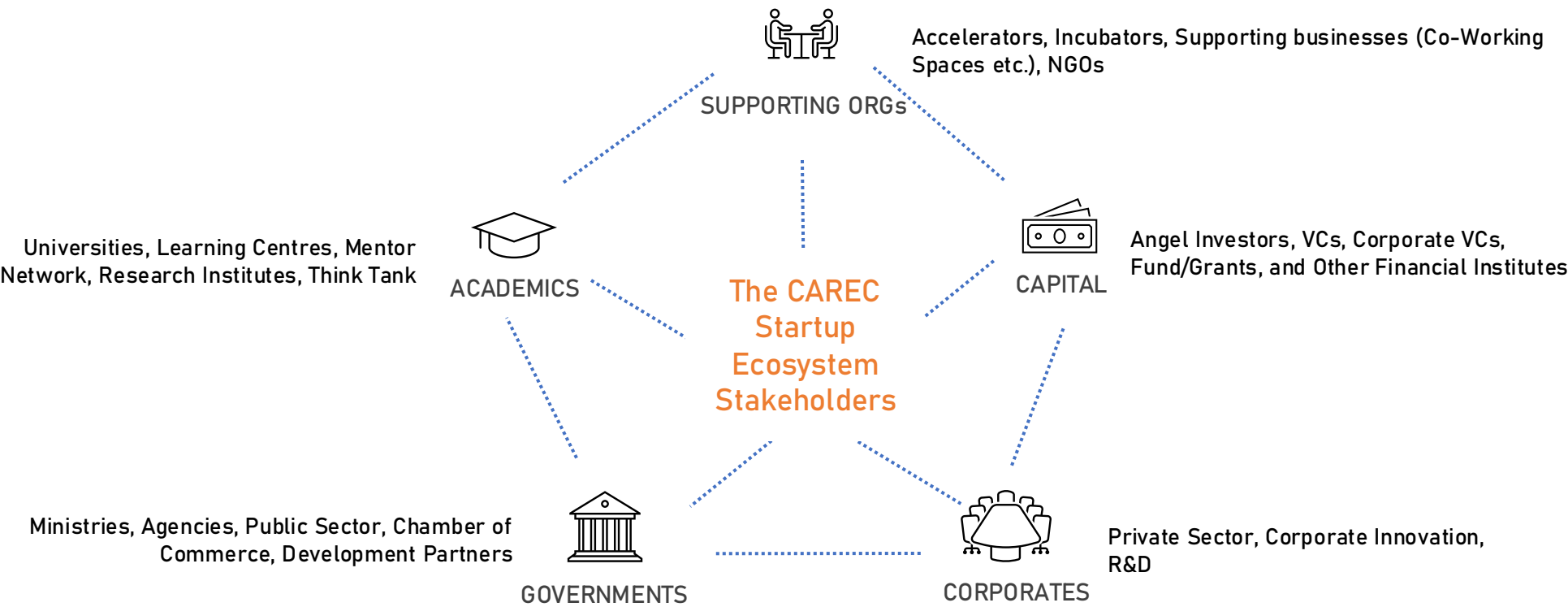
CAREC Digital Strategy 2030 – Overview

The 5 Pillars of the Digital Foundations

To achieve the **Strategic Objectives**, the CAREC Digital Strategy 2030 will strengthen the following **Five Interconnected Pillars** through improved cooperation between CAREC member countries



CAREC Start-up Ecosystem Development Hub



STARUP CAREC – VISUAL MAP

Startup Ecosystem Support Organisations

CAREC INNOVATION NETWORK

Registered Members

Overview of CAREC Initiatives for Startup Ecosystem



CAREC Startup Map

Visual Representation of
Startup Ecosystem
Supporting organizations in
the CAREC region



CAREC Innovation Network (CIN)

Network of Ecosystem
ecosystem-supporting
organizations that are
connected with CAREC
Secretariat



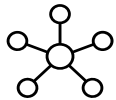
CAREC Innovation Decoded

A platform for Learning
and Connecting, by
analyzing success stories in
the region



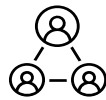
University Open Innovation Challenge

University open
innovation challenge,
organized by universities
under CAREC affiliation



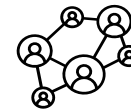
University Innovation Exchange Program

Regional study tour for
University Pre-seed
Startups on innovation
and entrepreneurship



CAREC Startup Bootcamp

Regional study tour and
boot camp for seed-
stage startups



CAREC Business Angel Network

A Network of Business
Angels interested in
investing startups with a
regional focus.



Ecosystem Health Check and Case Study Initiative

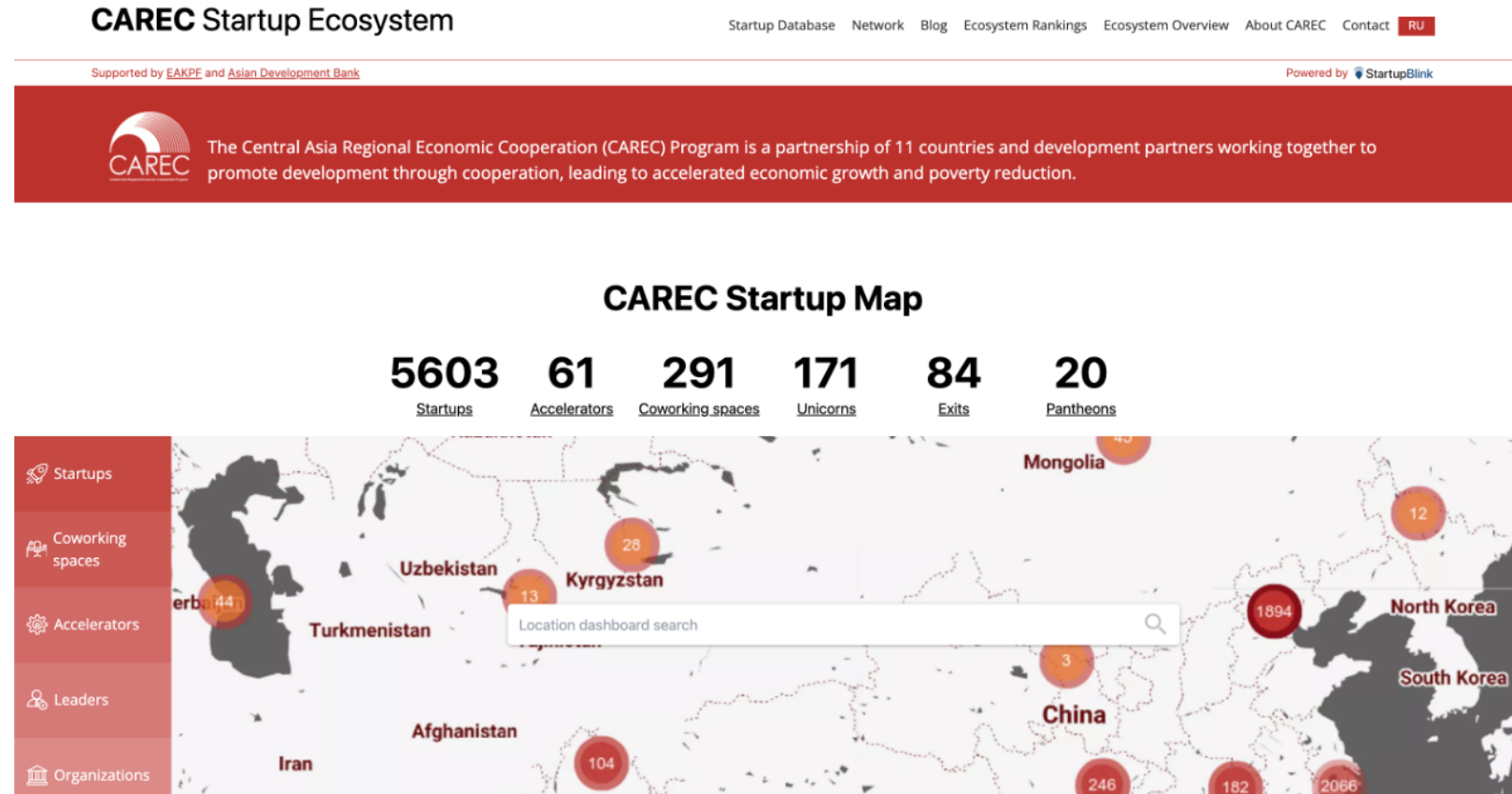
Evaluate and rank the
health and potential of
selected startup ecosystems
within the CAREC region.

CAREC Startup Map

Lists over **6,000 entities**
(Startups, Accelerators,
incubators, Universities, etc.)

The largest regional database
of startup ecosystem support
organizations

The map represents the target
audience of the CAREC Startup
Ecosystem Development Hub



<https://www.startupCAREC.org/>

CAREC Innovation Network (CIN)

- 60 Active members representing the Startup Ecosystem Support Organizations from the CAREC countries.
- 5 CIN Members' Workshop (virtual events)
- 250+ participants have attended the capacity-building sessions

CAREC INNOVATION NETWORK
MEMBERS' WORKSHOP

EAKPF CAREC ADB

**CHALLENGES OF A
STARTUP ECOSYSTEM**

27 April, 2023
16:00 - 17:00 GMT +8

SPEAKER
Eli David
CEO Startup Blink



CAREC INNOVATION NETWORK
MEMBERS' WORKSHOP

EAKPF CAREC ADB

**FUNDRAISING
AND ACCESSING
THE SINGAPORE
STARTUP ECOSYSTEM**

18 APRIL 2023
15:30 (GMT +8)

MUSTAFA RASHEED
ANGEL INVESTOR
STARTUP ECOSYSTEM PROFESSIONAL



CAREC INNOVATION NETWORK
MEMBERS' WORKSHOP

EAKPF CAREC ADB

**HOW STARTUPS CAN RAISE MONEY
IN EMERGING MARKETS TODAY**

9 June, 2023
10:00 a.m. (UK time)
5:00 p.m. (Manila time)

Speaker
Robin Butler
Partner and Head of Impact
Sturgeon Capital



CAREC INNOVATION NETWORK (CIN)
MEMBERS' WORKSHOP

Understanding startup ecosystems

16 NOV, 2022
04:00 PM
MANILA TIME



CAREC INNOVATION NETWORK
(CIN) Members' Workshop

Investing in frontier
and
Emerging Markets

December 8, 2022
4 P.M. MANILA TIME



CAREC Innovation Decoded (CID)

- CID aims to provide South-South **learning** and **networking** opportunities for the startup ecosystem players in the CAREC region.
- The first series of workshops focused on China's startup ecosystem. Four online sessions were organized to provide in-depth insights into the development of China's startup ecosystem and digital economy.



CAREC INNOVATION DECODED -
THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA EPISODE

ONLINE WEBINAR

INVESTMENT
AND INCUBATION

FROM ACADEMIA
TO INDUSTRY

 10 MAY, 2023
15.00 - 16.30 (GMT +8)

OUR SPEAKERS AND PANELISTS


DR. KAI YIN
MD of Chinese Academy of Sciences
Capital Management Co., Ltd


MR. JOHN REN
MD. and CM of Shanghai
SIMIC Incubator


MR. AIMING ZHOU
Deputy Country Director,
ADB PRC Resident Mission


MS. HIRA WAJAHAT
Ecosystem Specialist,
Consultant, ADB


MR. SHAYAN YAR
Head of Investments & Partnership,
National Incubation Center



CAREC INNOVATION DECODED -
THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA EPISODE

ONLINE WEBINAR

CREATE AN INTEGRATIVE INNOVATION
ECOSYSTEM FOR TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

DATE
20 July, 2023

TIME
15:00 (GMT +8)


SHUJUN ZOU
Senior Economist for the Transfer and
Transformation of Scientific and
Technological Achievements, Shanghai, PRC


JAHONGIR KAGIROV
Head of startup ecosystem
development department,
IT Park Uzbekistan


HAOSHU PENG
Ecosystem specialist,
ADB consultant



CAREC INNOVATION DECODED
The People's Republic of China episode

For a prosperous CAREC economy through
ICT based cross-border e-Commerce


Dr. Rui Zhang
Deputy dean of Zhejiang Gongshang
University's cross-border-commerce college


Mr. Daniel Zhou
Senior Business Manager of Central Asia
Alibaba ICBU

Online webinar

15 August, 2023 | 15:00 (GMT +8)

CAREC University Innovation Exchange Program (UIEP)

- A dynamic 2-week program across 4 countries in the CAREC region.
- 22 young entrepreneurs (12 startup teams), 4 university coordinators
- 18 training sessions for students
- 2 roundtable discussions for coordinators with key stakeholders. 40+ experts and mentors connected
- 14 site visits to startup ecosystem stakeholders



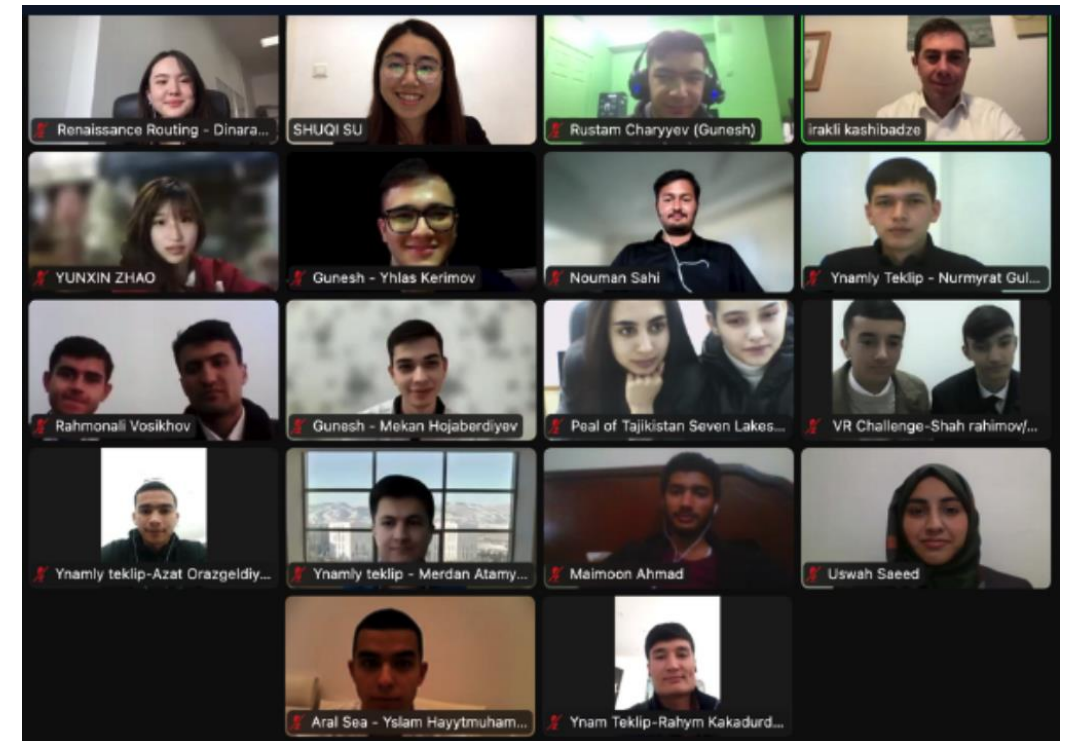
CAREC Regional Startup Bootcamp (RSBC)

- A Vigorus 2-week program across 3 countries in the CAREC region.
- 8 startup teams 3 incubation/ accelerator coordinators
- 10 training sessions for participants
- 3 roundtable discussions for coordinators with key stakeholders
- 15+ experts and mentors connected
- 14+ site visits to startup ecosystem stakeholders



CAREC University Open Innovation Challenge - 2023

- 168 teams, 580 students across 10 CAREC countries.
- 8 weeks of training, marketing research, brainstorming, validating ideas, developing business models, value proposition, mentorship, mock pitching, demo day, etc.
- 10 finalist teams for demo day; 4 winning teams received up to USD 5000 cash prize.



CAREC University Open Innovation Challenge - 2024

- 202 teams, 404 students across 10 CAREC countries.
- 10 National Finalists; 2 winning teams will win a visit to Singapore to explore the Singapore Startup Ecosystem.



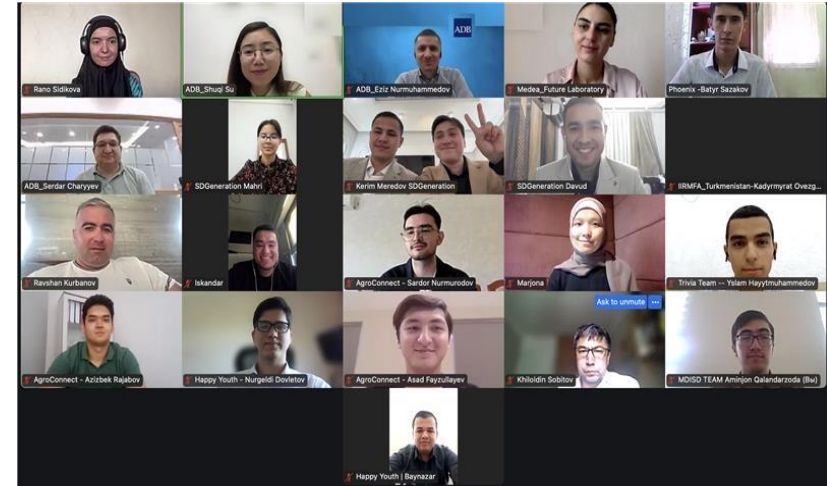
The banner features the logos of ADB, CAREC, and EAKPF at the top. The main title is "CAREC UNIVERSITY STARTUP GENERATOR 2024" with the tagline "Empowering Tomorrow's Innovators". Below the title, four winning teams are showcased with their names, placement, and member photos in circular frames.

Filtresha
1st Place

Genesis - Nurture Nest Team
2nd Place

AgroConnect
3rd Place

Team Louq
3rd Place



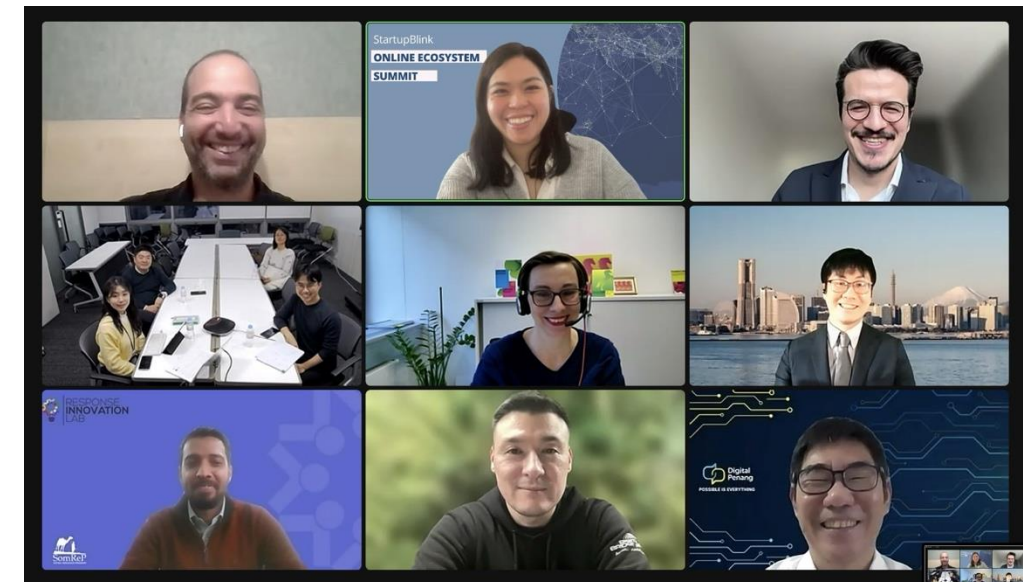
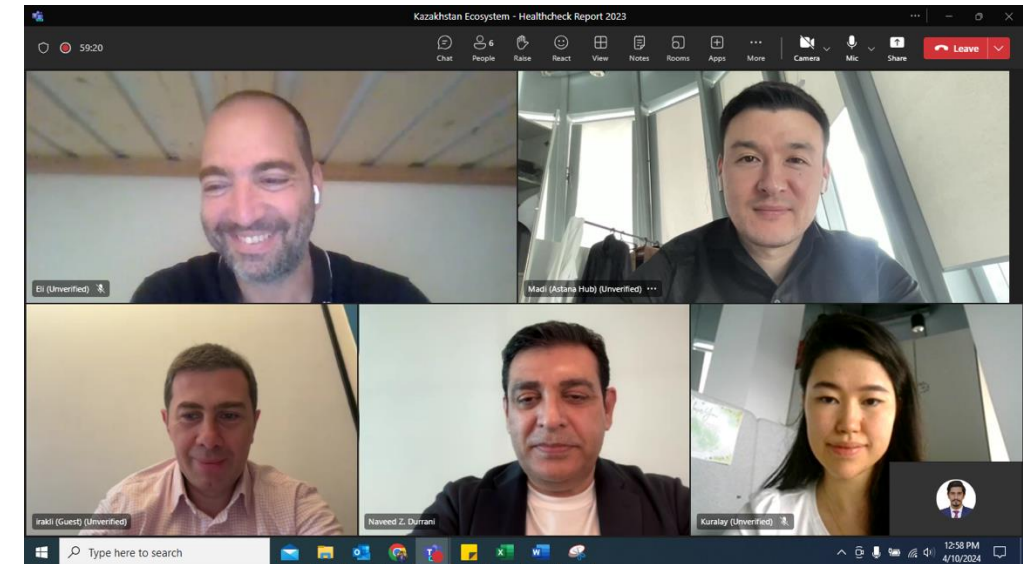
Workshop and Korea Showcase: University as Enablers of Vibrant Startup Ecosystems

- 21 representatives from government and universities across Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan
- International Practice Sharing by 4 countries
- Site Visits to Soongsil University, Hannam University, Global Digital Innovation Network, Korea Development Institute, and Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology
- 4 thematic areas identified to support startup ecosystem: Commercialization, Curriculum, Incubation and Acceleration Program, Regulation



CAREC Ecosystem Health Check and Case Study Initiative

- Evaluate and rank the health and potential of selected start-up ecosystems within the CAREC region.
- Focused on those ecosystems that are ranked within the top 500 globally.
- The objective is to provide a comprehensive analysis, leveraging the Global Start-up Ecosystem Index (GSEI) framework



CAREC Business Angel Network

Analysis & Mapping of the existing Angel Networks covering the CAREC region and promoting a Regional focus.

Current Challenges

Lack of financial literacy and an understanding of the importance of investment diversification among high-net-worth individuals.

Key Strategies and Interventions

Encourage cross-border investments and cooperation between angel networks and regional venture funds.

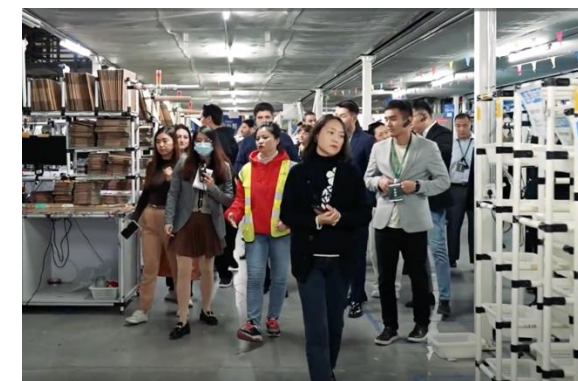
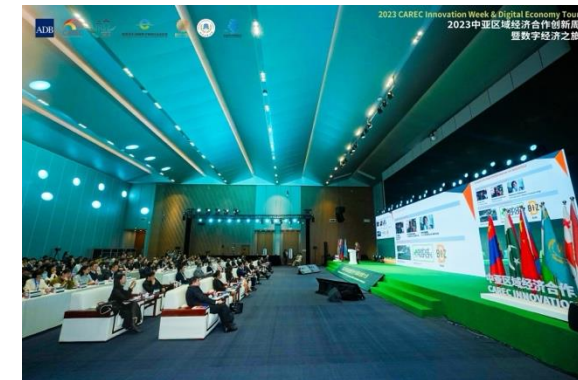
Improve venture legislation in CAREC countries.

Explore the possibility and cooperative potential for a CAREC Fund of Funds.



CAREC Innovation Week and Digital Economy Tour (Hangzhou, PRC)

- 54 CAREC delegates and 150 PRC delegates attended
- Several MoUs, collaboration agreements, and letters of intent were signed during the event.
- Participants explored the Global Digital Trade Expo and joined the Digital Economy Tours featuring Alibaba Group, Cainiao Smart Warehouse, Ant International, etc.



TA 6602 - Events in 2024

| Planned Events | Schedule | Venue | Consultant | Under Initiative |
|--|-----------|------------|-------------------|--|
| University Innovation Exchange Program 2024 | Feb 2024 | Korea | Shuki Su | University Innovation Exchange Program |
| 2nd Digital Strategy Steering Committee meeting (with DTF) | Apr 2024 | Kazakhstan | Naveed D. | Digital Strategy 2030 Implementation |
| University Start-up Generator 2024 | Aug 2024 | Virtual | Shuki Su | Open Innovation Challenge |
| ADB Startup Ecosystem Development Workshop | Sept 2024 | Jakarta | Irakli Kashibadze | Business Angel Network |
| AI-Driven Transformation in Digital Trade and E-Commerce | Sep 2024 | China | Hao Shu | Innovation Decoded |
| CAREC Venture Connect 2024 | Oct 2024 | Pakistan | Naveed D. | Regional Start-up Boot Camp |
| AlxADB Workshop (In collaboration with ADB ITD) | Nov 2024 | Singapore | Naveed D. | CAREC Innovation Network |



Lyaziza Sabyrova

Regional Head, Regional Cooperation and Integration CWRD



Dorothea Lazaro

Regional Cooperation Specialist, CWRD



Khalid Umar

Regional Cooperation Specialist, CWRD



Naveed Durrani

Team Lead
ICT Specialist



Irakli Kashibadze

Ecosystem Specialist



Hira Wajahat

Ecosystem Specialist



Shuqi Su

Open Innovation
Challenge Coordinator



Eli David

Team Lead
Eco System Specialist



Haoshu Peng

Ecosystem Specialist



**Muhammad
Muddassir Naveed**
TA/ Project Coordinator

Thank you.

