



Organized by:

Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Institute

Asian Development Bank

Biruni Institute (Afghanistan)

CAREC Chai VIII

Surviving Socioeconomic Challenges in Afghanistan: The Resilience of the Middle Class

Webinar

20 February 2024

18:00 – 19:30 (Beijing time, UTC+8)

In August 2021, the republic government in Afghanistan collapsed, opening the door for the Taliban's swift takeover. This transition from democratic to autocratic rule brought about a humanitarian crisis, denial of basic human rights, and economic instability. Two years later, the situation is further deteriorating, marked by a high unemployment rate, a fragile banking sector, and an escalating need for humanitarian aid. Urban areas, particularly Kabul, face heightened vulnerability due to the absence of formal and informal insurance mechanisms, which are prevalent in rural regions. The psychological shock triggered mass migration, altering economic behavior and societal activism. Understanding these dynamics is crucial to explore the resilience of the middle class amid socioeconomic challenges following the 2021 political collapse.

The Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Institute, in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the CAREC Secretariat and the Biruni Institute (Afghanistan), is organizing the 8th CAREC Chai event on February 20, 2024, at 18:00 Beijing time. The primary objective of this webinar is to delve into the specific socioeconomic challenges faced by the middle class in Afghanistan after the Taliban's takeover in August 2021. Through research findings, the webinar aims to highlight the resilience, adaptability, and survival strategies employed by this social class during challenging times. The dialogue aims to provide valuable insights for policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders seeking to understand and support the resilience of the middle class in Afghanistan.

Please register here:

https://carecinstitute-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Sp1Kfz4DTumquasvuNi77A

Panelists will receive individualized Zoom links for their participation in the event.

Background Reading: [Surviving the Crisis: A Socioeconomic Assessment of The Middle Class in Kabul](#), this study provides an assessment of the socioeconomic status of the urbanite middle class in Kabul and how they coped with radical institutional changes and persistent economic shocks since the Taliban's takeover in August 2021. The survey is collected from about 300 professionals in Kabul city, and interviews from another 24.

Agenda

February 20th, 2024 (Beijing time, GMT+8)¹

18:00-18:10

Opening Remarks

Ms. Lyaziza Sabyrova, Regional Head, Regional Cooperation and Integration, ADB

Mr. Kabir Jurazoda, Director, CAREC Institute

Photo Session

18:10-18:15

Introduction of the Speaker by the Moderator

Ms. Jingjing Huang, Deputy Director One, CAREC Institute

Keynote presentation

18:15-18:30

Introduction and Key Findings Related to the Specific Socioeconomic Challenges Faced by the Middle Class in Kabul

Mr. Lutfi Rahimi, Head of Research, Biruni Institute, Afghanistan

18:30-19:15

Panel

Mr. Artur Andrysiak, Country Director, Turkmenistan Resident Mission, ADB

Mr. Ayoob Ayoobi, Director of NGO and Government Relations, Project C.U.R.E. International, Washington, D.C., USA

Ms. Patricia Mclaughin, Educational Consultant, Independent

Mr. Narendra Singru, Country Director, Afghanistan Resident Mission, ADB

Moderator Mr. Hans Holzacker, Chief Economist, CAREC Institute

19:15-19:30

Q&A and Discussion: Moderator will pick up questions from the audience and engage in discussion with panelists.

Concluding Remarks by the Moderator

Moderator Mr. Hans Holzacker, Chief Economist, CAREC Institute

¹ Simultaneous Interpretation will be available. Please select from the bottom panel your language of preference, English or Russian.