

Moderator

Nazir Kabiri

Executive Director of the Biruni Institute



Nazir Kabiri, Founding Member, and the Executive Director of the Biruni Institute. Previously, he served as a Senior Policy Advisor to the Finance Minister of Afghanistan for over six years. Nazir Kabiri has been working in Afghanistan with NGOs and Government institutions since 2002 including working for the UK's DFID for five years. Nazir Kabiri holds a degree in Management from South Korea, a BA in Economics from Kabul University and a Master's Degree in Development Economics (Fulbright Scholar) from the United States. He frequently appears in the media speaking on issues related to the Afghan economy and regional issues.

Keynote Addresses

John Barsa

Acting Deputy Administrator, USAID



Barsa brings considerable experience from decades of service in the public and private sectors. Mr. Barsa comes to USAID from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), where he led the DHS Office of Partnership and Engagement (OPE) as the Acting Assistant Secretary and later as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary. John Barsa's civilian experience in the Executive Branch extends back to the Administration of President George W. Bush, when he was appointed to lead senior level coordination with the private sector and support legislative affairs efforts for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

Abdul Hadi Arghandwal

Minister of Finance, Government of Afghanistan



Mr. Arghandiwal is currently the Minister of Finance at the government of Afghanistan and has an extensive experience working in the development sector in Afghanistan. He led the Ministry of Economy and was Senior Advisor to the President on Social and Tribal Affairs from 2006 to 2008. Mr. Arghandiwal has also served as the Finance Minister of the Majaheedin government. Mr. Arghandiwal is fluent in English, Dari, Pashto, Urdu, and Arabic.

Kanni Wignaraja

Assistant Secretary General and Director of Regional Bureau, UNDP



Ms. Wignaraja previously served as the Acting Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau for Management Services, UNDP and as Special Adviser to the UNDP Administrator, roles that she has performed throughout 2019, after working as the Director of the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO) from 2014 to 2018.

She brings over 25 years of experience of the United Nations mission and UNDP's role in the sustainable development agenda. She has a deep knowledge of the Asia-Pacific region, as well as the global, regional, and country level workings of UNDP, across policy, programme, management and operations.

Panelists

Abdallah Al Dardari

Resident Representative of UNDP in Afghanistan



He was previously the Senior Advisor on Middle East and North Africa Reconstruction at the World Bank, Chief Economist at the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA) and Director of the Economic Development and Globalization Division, supporting Arab efforts to deepen regional economic integration, and assisting member states in designing policies that would lead to inclusive growth, job creation, and human security. Prior to UN ESCWA, he was Deputy PM for Economic Affairs (2005-11), and Minister of Planning and Chairman of the State Planning Commission (2003-05), in the Syrian government. He also served as Assistant Res. Rep. in UNDP Syria (2001-03).

Dr. Henry G. Kerali

Country Director of the World Bank Group for Afghanistan



Mr. Kerali joined the World Bank in 2003 as Senior Highway Engineer in the Infrastructure and Energy Department in Europe and Central Asia region. He has since held various positions, his most recent position being Country Director for Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone for the Africa Region. Before joining the Bank, he was a professor at the University of Birmingham, England, specializing in the development of transport infrastructure. He led the research of developed economic cost-benefit models for assessing the feasibility of infrastructure investments. He holds a BSc (Eng.) from Makerere University, and MSc and Ph.D. from the University of Birmingham, UK.

Jean-Louis Ville

Acting Director for Asia, Central Asia, Middle East/Gulf & Pacific in DEVCO, EU



Prior to this position, he was the Director for Human Development and Migration at the European Commission in the Directorate General for Development and Cooperation (DEVCO). Previously, he served as the Head of Unit in charge of Human Rights, Gender, and Democratic Governance. He is responsible for the policy and thematic issues related to development and implementing a variety of instruments directed to CSOs and International partners.

He also served for a period as Deputy Head of the private office of the Rt Hon C. PATTEN during his mandate as European Commissioner for External Relations. He studied political sciences in Strasbourg, European Affairs in Bruges, and European law in Paris.

Ajmal Ahmady

Acting Governor, Da Afghanistan Bank (Central Bank of Afghanistan)



He was previously Senior Advisor to the President of Afghanistan on Banking and Finance. He has an MBA from Harvard Business School, a Master of Economics and Public Administration from the Harvard Kennedy School, and a Bachelors in Mathematics and Economics from UCLA. He previously spent eight years in the asset management industry investing in global macro, emerging markets, and corporate strategies for some of the largest asset managers in the world. He has also worked for Booz Allen Hamilton, the World Bank, an EM private equity group, the US Treasury Department, and the Afghan Ministry of Finance.

Manizha Wafeq**Executive Director, Afghan Women Chamber of Commerce & Industries**

Manizha Wafeq is a visionary leader for Afghan women's economic role and participation and for the last 15 years has consistently advocated for it. Her consistent advocacy led to AWCCI's establishment and several policy changes for the interest of businesswomen. She has over eighteen years of experience working with national, international and government agencies specially in gender mainstreaming and women's economic empowerment in Afghanistan. She earned her MBA from the American University of Afghanistan. She is founder of an annual award to recognize successful businesswomen called Bibi Khadija Award and she serves on the board International Chamber of Commerce and Microfinance Investment Support Facility for Afghanistan (MISFA)

Michael Kocher**General Manager, Aga Khan Foundation in Geneva**

He leads AKF's multi-sector efforts in agriculture and food security, economic inclusion, education, early childhood development, health and nutrition, and civil society across 20 countries of South and Central Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, North America and Western Europe. Within these contexts, Mr. Kocher engages AKF's sister agencies of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) and a broad range of external partners.

Before joining AKF, Mr. Kocher was the Vice President of International Programmes at the International Rescue Committee in New York City, where he led efforts in its multi-sector development, emergency response, and support for refugees and internally displaced persons. His field assignments have been extensive, including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Indonesia, Kenya, South Sudan, Haiti, Bosnia, and other places.

First Responders**Narendra Singru****Country Director for Afghanistan, Asian Development Bank**

Mr. Singru, an Indian national, joined ADB in 2005 and has since held numerous leadership positions. Prior to this appointment, he was the Head of the Project Administration Unit at ADB's Central and West Asia Department, as well as a Principal Transport Specialist in the Transport and Communications Division. Before joining ADB, he worked as a Senior Business Consultant at Halcrow Group Limited in the United Kingdom (UK).

He holds two master's degrees in development administration and planning from the University College London in the UK, and in business administration from the University of Pune in India.

Mr. Singru has extensive technical knowledge and experience in project processing and administration, portfolio management, sector policy dialogue, country programming, and project evaluation. He also has broad experience in various sectors including transport, energy, and water supply and sanitation in several ADB developing member countries, including Afghanistan.

Ambassador Kelley Currie**Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, USA**

She serves simultaneously as the U.S. Representative at the UNCSW. Prior to her appointment, she led the Department of State's Office of Global Criminal Justice (2019) and served under Ambassador Nikki Haley as the United States' Representative to the UN Economic and Social Council and Alternative Representative to the UN General Assembly (2017-2018). Throughout her career in foreign policy, Ambassador Currie has specialized in human rights, political reform, development and humanitarian issues, with a focus on the Asia-Pacific region. From 2009 until her appointment to the USUN leadership, she served as a Senior Fellow with the Project 2049 Institute. She has held senior policy positions with the Department of State, the U.S. Congress, and several international & non-governmental human rights & humanitarian organizations.

Keiichiro Nakazawa**Senior Vice President of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)**

He is responsible for East, Central, and South Asia, and for managing private sector partnerships and finance around the globe.

JICA, as an incorporated administrative agency of the government of Japan, is Japan's sole Official Development Assistance (ODA) implementing body.

Nakazawa has more than three decades of total work experience at JICA, JBIC (Japan Bank for International Cooperation) and OECF (Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund of Japan). Over the years, he has focused mainly on development assistance to Asian countries and on ODA operational strategies. As for overseas postings, Nakazawa served as the Chief Representative of JICA Myanmar Office (2015-17) and of JICA U.S.A. Office (2010-14), and as the Representative of OECF India Office (1991-94).

Hojat Fazli**CEO – International Chamber of Commerce in Afghanistan**

Hojat Fazly is the CEO of the International Chamber of Commerce in Afghanistan. He was previously a Research Analyst at the Society for International Development - Netherlands, a UNDP Advisor, and a Change Management Specialist at USDA. He holds Master's degrees from Leiden University and Erasmus University Rotterdam in the Netherlands.

Allison Minor**Managing Director, International Development Finance Corporation**

She was previously the Director for Yemen and Oman at the National Security Council and served as a Democracy Specialist and Yemen Desk Officer at USAID. She holds a dual Master's degree in Middle Eastern Studies and Global Policy Studies at the University of Texas at Austin.

Wagma Mohmand**Senior Country Officer International Finance Corporation, World Bank Group**

Wagma Mohmand grew up in Germany and since returning to Afghanistan (2002/2003) she is working for private sector development in the country. Wagma joined IFC in early 2013 as the Country Officer for Afghanistan. In her role she is overlooking IFC's investment and advisory portfolio, responsible for business development, liaison with the government and international partners, as well as for IFC's strategy in the country. Wagma is holding a Master Degree in Economics (University of Hagen) with focus on "Open Trade - Opportunity or Risk for Developing Countries?" and a Bachelor degree in Business Software Engineering (University of Cologne).