



AFGHAN RESEARCH INITIATIVE

Afghanistan Research Initiative

The University of Central Asia’s Afghanistan Research Initiative (ARI) aims to help sustain the research and capacity gains made over the last decade and continue producing knowledge critical to the country’s present and future. ARI, a programme of the University’s Graduate School of Development, is supported by a three-year grant from Canada’s International Development Research Centre and the Aga Khan Foundation of Canada. ARI is based at the University’s main office in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic.

Non-Resident Research Fellows



ARI is pleased to announce the appointment of four non-resident research fellows. The fellows will work on subjects that fill knowledge gaps and are intellectually ambitious.

Dr. Lutfi Rahimi, “Re-Imagining Afghanistan’s Economic Development Doctrines between 2001–2021.” The project explores why the country did not move toward industrialization between 2001 and 2021. It looks at the impact of the neoliberal “Washington Consensus” approach to the economic development adopted by the government and examines ‘managed economic interventionism’ as an alternative policy supporting domestic producers’ growth. Dr. Rahimi holds a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Exeter, UK, and was an assistant professor of economics at the American University of Afghanistan and a World Bank consultant.

Dr. Daud Hamidi, “Flitting between Integrated Water Resource Management and Tradition: Lessons from Afghanistan’s Water Governance Reforms.” A detailed state holder analysis and data collection in three locations, Herat, Bamyan and Mazar-e-Sharif, to provide a better understanding of how water institutions and local communities manage water allocation at the sub-river basin level. The research identifies gaps between policy frameworks and actual practices regarding water allocation. Dr. Hamidi holds a Ph.D. in geochemistry from Durham University, UK and is a former lecturer at Jami University, Herat and worked with government agencies on water supply engineering.

Dr. Ghulam Mohammad Asim, “Basic Preservation Policy for the Landscape of Herat City.” The project addresses protecting and maintaining this historic town’s architectural, natural and cultural features. It involves data collection, surveys and interviews with current and former local leaders and old and current residents regarding conservation issues. The project uses the cities of Kyoto and Nara, Japan, as references for policy development. Dr. Asim holds a Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Intelligent Engineering Systems from the University of the Ryukyus, Japan and has held various positions in the Herat provincial administration.

Dr. Ramazan Ahmadi, “Economic and Sociological Examination of Opportunities, Challenges, and Agricultural Development Policies in Bamyan Province.” Based on a survey and stakeholder interviews, the project brings economic sociology insights to the study of agricultural development to understand the social, cultural, financial, and government policy factors that frame farmers’ decisions. Dr. Ahmadi holds a Ph.D. in sociology from Akdeniz University, Turkey. He worked as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at Bamyan University and is now an Associate Professor.

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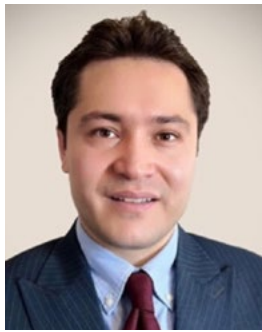
ARI Doctoral Grant Holder Receives Award

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Dr. Bismellah Alizada

Bismellah Alizada is a Ph.D. Candidate at SOAS University of London. His Ph.D. research focuses on political demands of Hazaras of Afghanistan between 1992 and 2021. His overall research interest includes decentralisation, political settlements, post-conflict institutional design, political participation, ethnic politics, and conflict. Dr. Alizada holds a Master of Science degree in Violence, Conflict, and Development from SOAS and an undergraduate degree in political science and diplomacy from Kabul University.

Dr. Alizada has previously worked as Deputy Director at the Organization for Policy Research and Development Studies, in Afghanistan. In that position, he co-led all the research, advocacy, and capacity-building activities of the organization. He also co-edited the third, fourth, and fifth volumes of the organization's peer-reviewed Women and Public Policy Journal between 2017 and 2019. Additionally, he co-founded Rahila Foundation, an organization working for youth empowerment through education, and capacity building.

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Dr. Hassan Aslami

Hassan Aslami boasts two decades of professional experience with a notable record of increasing responsibility, working with academic institutions, international organizations, and the United Nations.

His work includes research, academic programme development, advising, monitoring, evaluation, proposal development, and managing large-scale education programmes. Dr. Aslami interests cover higher education policy, financing, teacher retention, faculty development, institutional autonomy, quality assurance, and curriculum development. He holds a Ph.D. and M.Ed. from the University of Massachusetts Amherst and a BSc in Agriculture from Kabul University.

Dr. Aslami is currently a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Massachusetts Boston. He has been involved in major USAID-supported higher education programmes in Afghanistan since 2006. He has collaborated with the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Academy for Educational Development, FAO, Afghanistan Land Authority, and CARE International in Afghanistan.

PUBLICATIONS BY ARI RESEARCH & DOCTORAL GRANT PROGRAMMES

2022: Determinants of poverty among urban households in Afghanistan: Case study of Mazar-e-Sharif. *Journal of Economics and Political Economy*.
Authors: Ahmad Walid Barlas, Mohammad Ehsan Sadiq, Ajmal Haidari.

9 March 2023: The Analysis of Large Dam Impacts on Sediment Grain Size Distribution in a Tropical River System. *Civil Engineering Journal*.
Author: Hairan, M. H.

26 July 2023: Physical features and social analysis of Gozar: The case of Quzzat quarter of Herat Old City. *Built Heritage*.
Authors: Gulam M. Asim, H. Zhumizu.

August 2023: Democratic Governance and Paradoxes on Women's Political Rights in Afghanistan. *International Journal of Research Education*.
Authors: Benafsha Yaqoobi, Gurjeet Kaur.

10 November 2023: The Fall of the Republic Government in Afghanistan and the Current Taliban Rule: A Survey of Public Attitudes. *Research in Social Sciences and Technology*.
Authors: R. Ahmadi, Ch. A. Hikmat.

December 2023: Surviving the Crisis: A Socio-economic Assessment of the Middle Class in Kabul. *Biruni Institute*.
Authors: Lutfi Rahimi, Omar Joya.

28 February 2024: National Budgeting and Revenue Collection under the Taliban. *Journal of Social and Political Sciences*.
Authors: Hamoon, W., & Tawakkoli, A.

31 May 2024: Food-Climate Nexus in the North River Basin of Afghanistan: A Case Study of Qush Tapa National Irrigation Canal. *Rumi Organization for Research*.
Author: Jalal Naser Faqiryar.

31 May 2024: Determinants Influencing the Financial Performance of Women Entrepreneurs. *IRJEMS International Research Journal of Economics and Management Studies*.
Authors: R. Pashtoon, N. B. Mohamad, Z. Hamid.

June 2024: Social Harms of Child Labor in Afghanistan (Case Study of Bamyan City). *Asian Institute of Research*.
Authors: Ahmadi R. & Akbari M. R.

2 June 2024: A study of Afghan University Graduates' Perspective on the Relevance of Higher Education. *Journal of Applied Learning and Education*.
Authors: Barlas, Ahamd Walid.

2024: The impact of INGOs and governmental assistance on women entrepreneurs' financial performance. *Journal of Enterprise and Development*.
Authors: R. Pashtoon, N. B. Mohammad, Z. Hamid.

2024: The Impact of University Closures on Students' Motivation After the Fall of the Afghan Government by the Taliban. *Journal of Social and Political Sciences*.
Authors: Hikmat, C. A., & Ahmadi, R.

ARI DOCTORAL GRANT HOLDER RECEIVES AWARD

Benafsha Yqoobi received the 2024 International Women of Courage Award from the U.S. State Department for her tireless efforts in defending women's rights and those of people with disabilities in Afghanistan. In 2021, BBC World selected her as one of the 100 influential women. In June 2024, she testified before the Human Rights Council on the human rights violations in Afghanistan.

Benafsha founded the Rahyab Organization for Rehabilitation Services for the Blind in Afghanistan, was a lawyer handling cases of violence against women, and was a Commissioner in the Independent Human Rights

August 2024: Between a rock and a hard place: A geosocial approach to water insecurity in Kabul. *Water Security*.
Author: Mohammad Dud Hamidi.

7 August 2024: Minimalist economic management, deferred revenue regime and aid dependency: Explaining contradictory post-war statebuilding aims. *Global Policy*. DOI: 10.1111/1758-5899.13427
Author: Kambaiz Rafi.

The Struggle for Women's Political Rights in Afghanistan: A Review of Legal Frameworks and Implementation Challenges (2001–2021). *International Journal of Research Culture Society*.
Authors: Benafsha Yaqoobi, Gurjeet Kaur.



Commission. She completed a Ph.D. in political science at Lovely Professional University, India, and is currently a Ph.D. student in sociology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

ARI IN SOCIAL MEDIA

To keep Afghan scholars in the diaspora informed about upcoming opportunities, ARI has established a [LinkedIn page](#) that now has over 2,400 followers. This page is a valuable resource for sharing information about scholarships, calls for papers, academic events related to Afghanistan, and scholars' gatherings. It provides opportu-

nities for networking and collaboration while delivering timely news feeds relevant to the academic and professional interests of Afghan scholars. Through this platform, ARI effectively connects Afghan scholars worldwide, fostering a sense of community and facilitating the exchange of knowledge and opportunities.

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

30 May 2024: The Truth About the Afghan Economy Under the Taliban. *International Policy Digest*.
Author: Ahmad Sayer Daudzai.

17 June 2024: The Daily Hustle: Eid-e Qurban, a time to reflect and be grateful. *Afghan Analysts Network*.
Authors: Ali Mohammad Sabawoon & Roxanna Shapour.

17 June 2024: Unemployment and Economic Struggles Leave Badghis Residents Unable to Afford Eid Sacrifices and Sweets. 8AM Daily.
Author: Mohammad.

23 June 2024: The Border Business: A Political Economy Analysis of Checkpoints Taxation in Afghanistan. *Danish Institute for International Studies*.
Author: Sarajuddin Isar.

27 June 2024: The Fate of the Village Councils: The Emirate's effort to institute hegemony over rural Afghanistan. AAN.
Author: Elena Bjelica.

September 2024: The Mis-Education of Women in Afghanistan. From Wage Premiums to Economic Losses. *Education Global Practice*.
Authors: R. Najam, H. A. Patrinos, R. B. Kattan.

UPCOMING EVENT



Organizer: Kenilworth Open Meetings

AFGHANISTAN: THE RETURN OF TALIBAN

Dr Meyer spent five years in Kabul, Afghanistan, working with the Afghan government to implement governance structures in the new democratic government. It would be natural for her to be disappointed after all that hard work, that the Taliban who returned to government in 2021 are now leading the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

Location: 61 Priory Road Kenilworth CV8 1SB United Kingdom.

Date: Thursday, 21 November 2024.

Time: 2:30 pm EDT.

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

NEW BOOKS



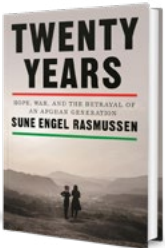
How to Lose a War: The Story of America's Intervention in Afghanistan

By *Amin Saikal*

The author traces the full story of America's intervention, from 9/11 to the present crisis. After an initial swift military strike, the US became embroiled in a drawn-out struggle to change Afghanistan but failed to achieve its aims.

Published: 25 June 2024.

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Twenty Years: Hope, War, and the Betrayal of an Afghan Generation

By *Sune Engel Rasmussen*

The author draws on more than a decade of reporting from the country to tell Afghanistan's story from a new angle.

Published: 6 August 2024.

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SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



University of Padua
Research Fellowships
For Scholars at Risk



Study Level: Research.

Fields: Various.

Deadline:

31 October 2024.

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

AGHA AZ
FELLOWSHIP

Empowering Afghan
Women Leaders

Funder: Several organizations.

Availability: For Afghan women in the U.S.

Submission:

nohaalkamcha@vitalvoices.org

Deadline: Open.

[LEARN MORE >>](#)

UK Chevening Scholarships

Afghanistan and other Countries 2025/26

Fields: Leadership.

Availability: For Afghans residing outside Afghanistan.

Fund: Fully funded.

Deadline: Open.

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The University of Central Asia is a private, not-for-profit, secular, regional university founded in 2000 through an International Treaty signed by the Presidents of Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, and His Highness the Aga Khan, ratified by their respective parliaments and registered with the United Nations. The Graduate School of Development is the home for multi-disciplinary research on Central Asia's social, economic, and cultural development conducted by five entities (www.ucentralasia.org).