

**REPORT LAUNCH****Regional Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific:  
Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic and “Building Back Better”**

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# Mr. Syed Shakeel Shah

## Director, CAREC Institute

Mr. Shah joined CAREC Institute as Director in November 2019.

He is a career civil servant from Pakistan, working with Customs Service with extensive experience in public policy, international trade, and regional cooperation, spanning over two decades.

He played a leading role in a collaborative engagement with the World Bank in developing the reform vision and a plan for Pakistan Customs through a Technical Assistance funded by the Trust Fund for Accelerated Growth in Revenue.

Being a focal person for the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business report, he has led reforms in Pakistan Customs to enhance efficiency and reduce cost and time of border compliance. In another governmental capacity, he has contributed to ongoing negotiations regarding Free and Preferential Trade Agreements with Turkey, Thailand, and the PRC. Mr. Shah coordinated complex assignments across the government, private sector, and development partners as the Head of Economic Affairs Wing in the Prime Minister's Office, including activities pertaining to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, Prime Minister's Delivery Unit and the Youth Development Program. He also served as Attaché at the Consulate General of Pakistan in Barcelona (Spain).

At CAREC Institute, he has been part of efforts for augmenting research, capacity building and knowledge dissemination for better public policy formulation and implementation in CAREC region. Through augmentation of human resources and better coordination with CAREC member countries, research portfolio related to areas of regional cooperation and integration has been increased. E-Learning Platform has been developed to scale up public sector capacities in member countries. Institute now provides regular policy and economic briefs to member countries for policy advice.

Under his leadership, CAREC Institute has emerged as a recognized source of knowledge sharing and policy advice during and after pandemic, with its work recognized by University of Pennsylvania's prestigious Global Go to Think Tank reports in 2020 and 2021.

Mr. Shah holds Masters in International Trade Law and Economics from the World Trade Institute, Bern (Switzerland), and MSc in International Relations from Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad (Pakistan).