



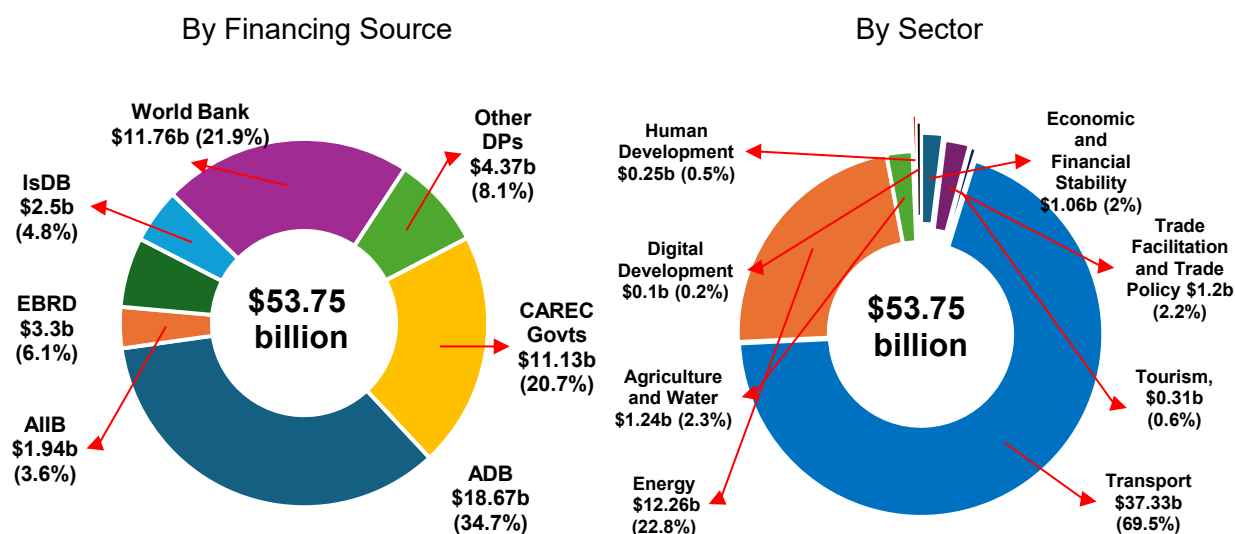
CAREC Development Partners' Retreat Side Event to the 24th Ministerial Conference

21 November 2025 | Burana Room, 6th floor, Sheraton Bishkek | Kyrgyz Republic

Background

Engagement of development partners has been a cornerstone of the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) Program, as six multilateral financial institutions have been part of CAREC since its early years.¹ The CAREC 2030 Strategy proposed to expand the range of development partners by inviting any multilateral and bilateral agency to support regional cooperation among CAREC countries and provide financial and technical expertise in their areas of comparative advantage. As of September 2025, development partners have contributed \$42.62 billion of CAREC-related investments since 2001. Of this, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) contributed \$18.67 billion, World Bank \$11.76 billion, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) \$3.3 billion, Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) \$2.57 billion, and the Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB) about \$1.94 billion, respectively, with the rest of the development partners contributing \$4.37 billion.

Figure 1. CAREC-Related Investments as of September 2025



Source: CAREC Secretariat, for further validation with development partners

CAREC countries recently endorsed the [CAREC 2030 Strategy Midterm Review](#) and showed support for its operationalization under the [CAREC 2030 Strategy Midterm Review Rolling Implementation Action Plan \(IAP\) 2025-2030](#). The IAP includes several actions aimed at strengthening the role and involvement of development partners in the CAREC Program, including (i) establishment of a framework for collaboration on pipeline development, project monitoring and evaluation, and project impact assessment; (ii) development of joint financing

¹ Asian Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Monetary Fund, Islamic Development Bank, United Nations Development Program and the World Bank Group.



modalities and resource mobilization methods; and (iii) enhanced coordination through the conduct of regular development partners' forums.

The first CAREC Development Partners' Forum was held in December 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.² During the forum, development partners agreed on the need to strengthen collaboration on several areas going forward such as: (i) regular information exchange, including compilation and sharing of development partners' plans on regional projects and programs, and regional events aligned with CAREC priorities and sectors; (ii) increased joint financing; and (iii) enhanced non-financial cooperation, including expanding development partners' participation in sector committees and working groups meetings, as well as exploring further cooperation in generation and dissemination of knowledge products in collaboration with CAREC Institute.

During the Senior Officials' Meeting last June 2025, development partners gave strategic comments and feedback on the overall CAREC implementation progress and the IAP 2025-2030. Development partners underscored the need to (i) prioritize program effectiveness and monitoring to better assess the impact of CAREC operations, (ii) establish a CAREC project pipeline that includes all development partners and pilot new resource mobilization methods; and (iii) increase coordination among development partners' regional and national activities.

Meeting Objectives

The objectives of the second CAREC Development Partners' Retreat are to:

- (i) Present and discuss a *framework* for CAREC development partners' collaboration on pipeline development, cofinancing, project monitoring and evaluation, and project impact assessments (IAP Operational Actions 6.1 and 6.2); and
- (ii) Explore areas for non-financial cooperation, including joint knowledge products and CAREC-related events for next year, improved information-sharing procedures, and the possibility of leading/co-leading work in selected sectors based on development partners' comparative advantage.

Expected Information from Development Partners

To support the discussions, the following information will be required from development partners ahead of the meeting:

- Project classification methodology, particularly on criteria for tagging projects as contributing to regional cooperation and integration, and climate change;
- Project pipeline for 2025-2027 in CAREC countries, including both regional and national projects with potential regional spillovers;
- Selected completed projects (CAREC-related) which could be used for CAREC impact stories; and
- List of development partners' potential initiatives, knowledge products, and events related to CAREC clusters for 2025-2026.

² [Summary of Discussions](#), First Development Partners' Meeting, 2 December 2020 (virtual).



Agenda

Friday, 21 November 2025	
08:45–09:00	Registration
09:00–09:10	Welcome Remarks Ms. Leah Gutierrez , Director General, Central and West Asia Department (CWRD), Asian Development Bank (ADB)
09:10–09:20	Session 1. Introduction and Context-Setting Objective: The CAREC Secretariat will present an overview of current Development Partners' (DPs) engagement under CAREC, and proposed DP-related actions in the IAP 2025-2030. Ms. Lyaziza M. Sabyrova , Regional Head, Regional Cooperation and Integration, CWRD, ADB
09:20–10:30	Session 2. Development Partners' Collaboration on Pipeline Development, Project Monitoring and Evaluation, and Resource Mobilization Objective: DPs will discuss options for further development of a regional project pipeline, and enhanced monitoring of CAREC projects. This session will also seek to identify complementarities and potential opportunities for co-financing of projects and scaling up resources in support of regional cooperation. Open Discussion
10:30–10:50	Group Photo and Coffee/Tea Break
10:50–11:45	Session 3: Institutional and Knowledge Coordination Objective: DPs will discuss and agree on institutional arrangements and procedures to enhance information-sharing on CAREC-related projects and initiatives. The session will also seek to identify areas for joint knowledge products and events, including ideas to commemorate CAREC's 25th anniversary in 2026. Open Discussion
11:45–12:00	Wrap-up Objective: Summary of key takeaways from the discussions and next steps. Ms. Lyaziza M. Sabyrova , Regional Head, Regional Cooperation and Integration, CWRD, ADB

