

CURRENT EMPLOYMENT	University of Central Asia, Non-resident Research Fellow Graduate School of Development (remote), Strasbourg, France	2025 – Present
ACADEMIC POSITIONS	Durham University , Teaching Fellow in Comparative Politics of Development School of Government and International Affairs, Durham, UK <ul style="list-style-type: none">Seminar lecturer, Political Economy of Development, undergraduate module (54 students)Assistant lab leader, Quantitative Methods and Analysis, postgraduate module (44 students)Lecturer, Quantitative Methods Workshops, undergraduate module (76 students)Lecturer, Research Project on Democracy, Good Governance and Development, undergraduate module (25 students)Lecturer and convenor, Democratic Political Systems, undergraduate module (83 students)Co-leader, Quantitative Labs for Researching Politics and International Relations, undergraduate module (138 students)Dissertation supervision, undergraduate (7 students)Marking (no. of scripts: approximately 490) and pastoral support	2023 – 2024
	SOAS University of London , Economic and Social Research Council Postdoctoral Fellow Department of Development Studies, London, UK <ul style="list-style-type: none">Published article in <i>Global Policy Journal</i>Coded 238 IMF policy documents (4,747 pages) for a research projectPublished op-eds (e.g., The Conversation) and participated in media interviews	2022 – 2023
	University College London , Senior Postgraduate Teaching Assistant Bartlett Development Planning Unit, London, UK <ul style="list-style-type: none">Tutor, Development in Practice, postgraduate module (student no.: 86)Coordinated the master’s in Development Administration and Planning programmePastoral support, marking, and communication management	2020 – 2021
	University College London , Postgraduate Teaching Assistant Bartlett Development Planning Unit, London, UK <ul style="list-style-type: none">Tutor, master’s in Urban Economic Development programmeResearch advisor for field research, postgraduate modulePastoral support, marking, and formative feedback	2017 – 2018
EDUCATION	University College London , PhD. Development Policy Bartlett Development Planning Unit, London, UK Dissertation: Habitus and Embodied Institutions: A Study of Manufacturing Enterprises in Kabul’s Conflict-Affected Market Economy and Adaptive Strategies for Enterprise Continuation Supervisors: Michael Walls and Le-Yin Zhang Examiners: Magnus Marsden and Alexandra Panman	2016 – 2021
	King’s College London , MA International Political Economy Department of European and International Studies, London, UK With Merit	2012 – 2013
	University of Pune , BA Economics (Special), Politics & Psychology Symbiosis College of Arts and Commerce, Pune, India With Distinction	2007 – 2010
	Deccan Education Society , Diploma, National Security and International Relations Jagannath Rathi Vocational Institute, Pune, India With Distinction	2009 - 2010
PUBLICATIONS	Peer-reviewed Journal Articles	
	Rafi, K. (2025). Ograyi and Bourdieusian social capital in Afghanistan’s manufacturing sector. <i>Third World Quarterly</i> , 46(16): 2178 – 2199 https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2025.2547089	
	Rafi, K. (2024). Minimalist economic management, deferred revenue regime and aid dependency: explaining contradictory post-war statebuilding aims. <i>Global Policy Journal</i> , 15(5): 869-885	

<https://doi.org/10.1111/1758-5899.13427>

Rafi, K. (2018). Information and communication technology in development: a contextual approach. *Indian Journal of Human Development*, 12(3): 453-461
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0973703018800197>

Rafi, K. (2015). The Afghan insurgency and the uncertainty of peace negotiations. *Journal of Perspectives on Terrorism*, 9(5): 69-72

Monograph

Rafi, K. (2022). *Patriarchal Hierarchy; Market Capitalism and Production in Afghanistan*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-98407-6>

Working Papers

Rafi, K., IMF in postwar economic reconstruction: a structured topic modelling. Manuscript submitted to *Development and Change* on 13th February 2026

Rafi, K., Technology-in-practice: ICT use in Afghanistan's manufacturing sector. Manuscript submitted to *The European Journal of Development Research*, currently undergoing revisions under the journal's Early Career Researcher Initiative

Rafi, K., Uncertainty mitigation in an emerging private manufacturing sector. Manuscript submitted to the *Economics of Transition and Institutional Change* on 2nd February 2026

Rafi, K., IMF policy advocacy responsiveness to rising insecurity: a structured topic modelling (target journal: *Review of International Political Economy*. Manuscript completion estimated date: April 30, 2026)

Rafi, K., IMF policy advocacy under wartime conditions: a structured topic modelling (target journal: *Development and Change*. Manuscript completion estimated date: May 31, 2026)

Enabling environment: tracing the concept in World Bank documents (target journal: *Review of International Political Economy*. Manuscript completion estimated date: August 31, 2026)

Formal institutions and administrative state in post-war state-building (target journal: *Human Geography*. Manuscript completion estimated date: November 30, 2026)

FUNDING	Research Grant, Canadian International Development Centre and the Aga Khan Foundation (administered by the Central Asian University), \$8,000.00	2023 – 2024
	Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Grant, Economic and Social Research Council, UK Research and Innovation, The Government of the United Kingdom, £110,000.00	2022 – 2023
	PhD Bursary (small grant), University College London, £500	2019
	John F. Richards Travel Fellowship, The American Institute of Afghanistan Studies, \$2,000.00	2017 – 2018
	Conference Fund, University College London, £1000	2017
	Fully Paid Undergraduate Scholarship (merit-based), The Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Government of India, ₹304,000.00	2007 – 2010
TEACHING PROFILE	Advance HE (formerly the UK Higher Education Academy), Associate Fellow	2024 - Present
	Curriculum Development <ul style="list-style-type: none">Democracy, Good Governance and Development (undergraduate research project)Political Economy of Development (undergraduate module)International Development and Postwar Reconstruction (undergraduate module)States, Markets and Civil Society in Development (postgraduate module)Introduction to International Political Economy (postgraduate module)	2023 – 2025
FIELDS	Development Economics, Economic Sociology, Formal and Informal Institutions, Digital Development, International Financial Institutions, Postwar Governance	

RESEARCH SKILLS	Quantitative data analysis and visualisation, structured topic modelling (quantitative and qualitative text analysis), qualitative interviews, thematic analysis, fieldwork (including in war-affected regions)	
LANGUAGES	English	Spoken: Bilingual Written: Bilingual Reading: Bilingual
	French	Spoken: Advanced Written: Advanced Reading: Advanced
	Persian	Spoken: Native Written: Native Reading: Native
	Pushto	Spoken: Advanced Written: Advanced Reading: Advanced
	Urdu	Spoken: Advanced Written: Intermediate Reading: Novice
	Hindi	Spoken: Advanced Written: None Reading: None
	Arabic	Spoken: Novice Written: Novice Reading: Novice
INVITED TALKS	The 18 th European International Studies Association Pan-European Conference on International Relations, <i>University of Bologna</i>	2025
	The 17 th European International Studies Association Pan-European Conference on International Relations, <i>Université Catholique de Lille</i>	2024
	International Initiative for Promoting Political Economy (IIPPE), <i>Universidad Rey Juan Carlos</i>	2023
	US Institute of Peace, American Institute of Afghanistan Studies, Centre for Governance and Markets at the <i>University of Pittsburgh</i> & Hollings Centre for International Dialogue	2023
	UNU-WIDER and European Union Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation	2022
	Alternative Scenarios for Afghanistan Conference, Center for Global Affairs, <i>New York University</i>	2022
	Sussex Afghanistan Forum Conference, <i>University of Sussex</i>	2019
	Afghanistan Inside Out – Afghanistan Centre at Kabul University, <i>Kabul University</i>	2018
	International Initiative for Promoting Political Economy, <i>Berlin School of Economics and Law</i>	2017
INVITED FELLOWSHIPS	Durham University , Honorary Visiting Fellow School of Government and International Affairs, Durham, UK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed and submitted a manuscript to the <i>European Journal of Development Research</i> 	2024
	Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit , Visiting Doctoral Fellow, Kabul, Afghanistan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributed to research and policy in this leading Central Asian think tank Conducted workshops on effective research methodologies for think tank researchers Authored blog articles and participated in seminars and conferences 	2018
CONSULTANCY	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization , International Consultant, Paris, France Programme: pilot studies on access to education for girls and women in Afghanistan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewed pilot studies, evidence, structure and narrative flow Ensured balanced and objective conclusions with actionable recommendations 	2024 – 2025
	SOAS University Enterprise Office , Consultant, London, UK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation round with the head of UNICEF for Afghanistan 	2022
	Government of the Republic of Afghanistan , Economic Advisor on UN SDGs Ministry of Economy, The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Kabul, Afghanistan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulated a policy roadmap for UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) implementation in Afghanistan Helped finalise an import substitution strategy 	2018 – 2020
ADMINISTRATIVE AND OTHER WORK	Durham University , Member of ‘Widening Participation Group’ (EDI initiative) School of Government and International Affairs, Durham, UK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supported higher education in underrepresented schools in Durham County 	2023 – 2024
	University College London , Coordinator The Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment, Global Change Initiative, London, UK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated the establishment of a think tank at UCL’s Bartlett Faculty. Organised debates, forums, and conferences, managing logistics and communication with guest speakers. 	2017
	EastWest Institute , Research Assistant Economic Security Initiative, Washington, D.C., US <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributed to the release of a study on trade connectivity in Central and South Asia Organised events (EastWest Institute, the Brookings Institution, the US Institute of Peace, and the United Nations Headquarters) 	2014

- Conducted research on the Israeli-Palestine issue
- Contributed articles to the EastWest Institute blog

The United Nations Headquarters, Assistant

2014

Permanent Mission of Afghanistan to the United Nations, New York, US

- Covered UN Security Council and Economic and Social Council meetings
- Reported on negotiations regarding the formulation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
- Participated in negotiations on the United Nations counter-terrorism financing strategy

COMPUTER	R Studio, NVivo, Text Analysis, MS Office Tools, Virtual Learning Technologies	
MEMBERSHIP	UNESCO Inclusive Policy Lab European International Studies Association	
ACADEMIC SERVICES	Lund University, Workshop Discussant Raoul Wallenberg Institute, Berlin, Germany	2025
	Durham University , College Mentor and Member of the Senior Common Room College of St Hild and St Bede, Durham, UK	2023 – 2024
	University College London , Organiser for Windsor Policy Simulation Workshop Bartlett Development Planning Unit, London, UK	2017
	University College London , Organiser for UCL Global Citizenship Programme Bartlett Development Planning Unit, London, UK	2017
PEER REVIEW	<i>Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding</i>	2026 – Present
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	Scuola Normale Superiore , Political economy of production and labour (spring school) Florence, Italy	2026
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Political economy today ▪ Gender and labour ▪ Labour in the digital age ▪ Labour activism ▪ The world economy and labour ▪ Industrial policy and politics ▪ Global production, global labour ▪ Frontline research: Labour and unions in global production systems 	
	UKRI Economic and Social Research Council , Postdoctoral fellows' professional development programme, London, UK	2022 – 2023
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strategic career development ▪ Funders and funding ▪ Policy engagement ▪ Policy challenge workshop ▪ Publications and communication ▪ Networks, teams and collaboration ▪ Parliamentary engagement 	
	The British Academy , Academic writing workshop Rethinking Liberal Peace Through Southern Eyes, London, UK	2021
	University College London , Doctoral skills development programme London, UK	2017 – 2018
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Statistical concepts in research ▪ Research methods for quantitative data ▪ SPSS ▪ Responsible research & innovation ▪ Introduction to qualitative thematic analysis ▪ Working with archives ▪ NVivo 	
POLICY BRIEFS	Rafi, K. (Ed.). (2025). <i>Project to improve the quality and reach of the accelerated non-formal education programme (ANEP)</i> [Unpublished manuscript]. Endline Evaluation, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.	

Rafi, K. (Ed.). (2025). *Project to improve the quality and reach of the accelerated non-formal education programme (ANEP)* [Unpublished manuscript]. Endline Evaluation, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Rafi, K. (Ed.). (2024). *Adult literacy assessment survey* [Unpublished manuscript]. Pilot Study Report, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Rafi, K. (Ed.). (2024). *Assessment of the youth and adult literacy and basic education model* [Unpublished manuscript]. Report, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Rafi, K. (2019). *Afghanistan Sustainable Development Goals Vision 2021–2030* [Unpublished manuscript]. Policy Brief, Ministry of Economy, Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

SELECTED NON-PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Rafi, K. (2024). The Taliban's harsh new 'vice and virtue' laws are a throwback to the oppression of the 1990s – especially for the women of Afghanistan, *The Conversation*, August
<https://theconversation.com/the-talibans-harsh-new-vice-and-virtue-laws-are-a-throwback-to-the-oppression-of-the-1990s-especially-for-the-women-of-afghanistan-237669>

Rafi, K. (2023). World Bank reports on Afghanistan (written in Persian), *BBC Persian*, June
<https://www.bbc.com/persian/articles/cglem6ylm07o>

Rafi, K. (2023). The politics of women's identity in Afghanistan (written in Persian), *BBC Persian*, April
<https://www.bbc.com/persian/articles/c87v1gz3mv7o>

Rafi, K. (2023). The political narrative regarding women's rights during the former Afghan republic (written in Persian), *Hasht-I Sobh*, March
<https://8am.media/fa/the-republics-narrative-of-women-remained-mostly-borrowed/>

Rafi, K. (2023). The Taliban is not playing straight with the West over easing of sanctions, *The Conversation*, April
<https://theconversation.com/the-taliban-is-not-playing-straight-with-the-west-over-easing-of-sanctions-and-women-and-girls-are-paying-much-of-the-price-199843>

Rafi, K. and Lucas, S. (2021). What's next for Afghanistan? Two experts make predictions, *The Conversation*, November
<https://theconversation.com/whats-next-for-afghanistan-two-experts-make-predictions-170684>

Rafi, K. (2021). Will China replace the US in Afghanistan? *Royal United Services Institute*, October
<https://www.rusi.org/explore-our-research/publications/commentary/will-china-replace-us-afghanistan>

Rafi, K. (2021). Afghanistan: Taliban face many obstacles to governing – not least their violent methods, *The Conversation*, September
<https://theconversation.com/afghanistan-taliban-face-many-obstacles-to-governing-not-least-their-violent-methods-168292>

Rafi, K. (2021). US must not neglect responsibility to Afghans post-pullout, *Asia Times*, May
<https://asiatimes.com/2021/05/us-must-not-neglect-responsibility-to-afghans-post-pullout/>

Rafi, K. (2020). Are Persian and Dari separate languages? (written in Persian), *BBC Persian*, October
<https://www.bbc.com/persian/blog-viewpoints-54376388>

Rafi, K. (2020). Afghanistan in need of systemic reforms to avoid election stand-offs, *Afghanistan Center at Kabul University*, March

Rafi, K. (2020). The long war in Afghanistan might be over. Who won? *The Diplomat*, March
<https://thediplomat.com/2020/03/the-long-war-in-afghanistan-might-be-over-who-won/>

Rafi, K. (2019). Lack of information on Afghan vote recount raises eyebrows, *Asia Times*, November
<https://asiatimes.com/2019/11/lack-of-info-on-afghan-vote-recount-raises-eyebrows/>

Rafi, K. (2019). Iran: Time is now for anti-war activism, *Asia Times*, July
<https://asiatimes.com/2019/07/iran-time-is-now-for-anti-war-activism/>

Rafi, K. (2019). Trust, naivety, and negotiating with the Afghan Taliban, *The Diplomat*, May
<https://thediplomat.com/2019/05/trust-naivety-and-negotiating-with-the-afghan-taliban/>

Rafi, K. (2019). Production during times of instability, *Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit*, June

Rafi, K. (2019). Give ordinary Afghans a voice in any peace deal with the Taliban, *Global Security Review*, June
<https://globalsecurityreview.com/give-ordinary-afghans-voice-regarding-peace-deal-taliban/>

Rafi, K. (2018). Why was a strategic port in Iran exempted from sanctions? *Asia Times*, November
<https://asiatimes.com/2018/11/why-a-strategic-port-in-iran-was-exempted-from-sanctions/>

Rafi, K. (2018). The political ramifications of Trump's haste to make peace with the Taliban, *Global Security Review*, December
<https://globalsecurityreview.com/political-ramifications-trumps-haste-negotiate-with-taliban/>

Rafi, K. (2014). Gender violence and the persistence of social indifference (written in Persian), *Hasht-I Sobh*, February
<https://8am.media/fa/women-violence-afghansitan/>

INTERESTS

Philosophy, contemporary history, Persian poetry, films and fiction. painting and drawing, football (i.e., soccer), travel, cuisine, museums and pubs

Last Updated: February 2026