



International Federation of  
Biosafety Associations

[www.InternationalBiosafety.org](http://www.InternationalBiosafety.org)

## 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Biosafety Heroes Award Winners

Ten years ago, the IFBA created a Biosafety Heroes program to identify and celebrate extraordinary individuals who make significant contributions to help others in the field of biorisk management. IFBA Biosafety Heroes continue to be exceptional and inspiring individuals honored by the global biosafety community as having made a difference for the better. Biosafety Heroes serve as role models, showing others that each individual is important and can contribute to the global fight against infectious diseases. The first awards were given at the IFBA meeting in Bangkok, Thailand in Feb 2011.

### ***Who are our Heroes?***

Nominees are selected on their uniqueness, the specific accomplishments he or she has achieved that are truly remarkable, and the impact their work has had on others.

Preference is given to individuals who

- operate in an environment where biosafety funds are limited, and/or where the importance of biosafety is not fully appreciated.
- have not yet been recognized with other biosafety awards.

***The following are the outstanding individuals who, through recognition by an international panel of their peers, have been awarded the distinction of being named IFBA's 2020 Biosafety Heroes.***

## Selmania Abderrahmen

*Head of Department, Prospective Analysis of Biotechnology  
Biotechnology Research Center, CRBt -Ali Mendjli  
Constantine, Algeria*



Dr. Selmania Abderrahmen is an IFBA-Certified biorisk management professional who has long been active in promoting biosafety and biosecurity in Algeria. In the face of the novel Corona virus pandemic, he has significantly increased his activities. As a key national resource, he visited a variety of COVID-19 testing laboratories throughout Algeria to assess their biorisk management practices, and, provided training and advice to improve them. Some of these visits were part of Algeria's COVID-19 National Emergency Action Plan. He also serves as a Global Mentee in IFBA's Global Mentorship Program. In these and other ways he tirelessly sacrifices his time to raise awareness in Algeria of the issues of biosafety and biosecurity, to promote the adoption of laboratory biorisk management systems there, and to do whatever else he can to help others around him work safely.

## Nasir Ahmed Stanikzai

*Technical Consultant, Ministry of Public Health  
Executive Board Member, Afghan Biorisk Association  
Kabul, Afghanistan*



Dr. Nasir Ahmad Stanikzai is currently a technical consultant for health system strengthening with the Ministry of Public Health of Afghanistan, and a former director of its Central Public Health Laboratories. He is a medical doctor who began his career with the NGO Première Urgence – Aide Médicale Internationale in Kabul, as a National Medical Lab Coordinator, and in 2010 joined the Afghanistan National Public Health Institute as Study Coordinator. There he was influential in developing Afghanistan's current lab networking system, including its biorisk management practices. Between 2014 and 2016 Dr. Stanikzai served as a consultant in several parts of Afghanistan for various organizations promoting biosafety and biosecurity in the country. He also founded the NGO Afghanistan Biosafety and Health Research Organization and became an Executive Board member of the Afghan Biorisk Association. Working regionally, he is a member of the Biosafety Association for Central Asia and the Caucasus, and in that capacity was involved in activities such as regional biosafety trainings. Dr. Stanikzai also continued his studies, receiving a diploma in Epidemiology/Research methodology and completing a master's level program in biosafety and biosecurity from Bradford University in the United Kingdom. In September 2016 Dr. Stanikzai was nominated as the Director of the Afghanistan Central Public Health Laboratories and the National Influenza Centre. On taking up the position he initiated several reforms to strengthen Afghanistan's public health laboratory network and its biorisk management practices. He continues to work voluntarily for MoPH as national polio containment coordinator, national focal point for CBRN issues, national focal point for antimicrobial resistance, and as an International Health Regulations lab advisory committee member. In these and other activities Dr. Stanikzai has shown a consistent commitment, in often very difficult circumstances, to strengthen Afghanistan's public health system in a wide variety of ways, including in its biorisk management practices.