

SIGAR

Special Inspector General for
Afghanistan Reconstruction

JULY 30
2024

QUARTERLY REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS





The National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008 (Pub. L. No. 110-181) established the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR).

SIGAR's oversight mission, as defined by the legislation, is to provide for the independent and objective

- conduct and supervision of audits and investigations relating to the programs and operations funded with amounts appropriated or otherwise made available for the reconstruction of Afghanistan.
- leadership and coordination of, and recommendations on, policies designed to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the administration of the programs and operations, and to prevent and detect waste, fraud, and abuse in such programs and operations.
- means of keeping the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense fully and currently informed about problems and deficiencies relating to the administration of such programs and operation and the necessity for and progress on corrective action.

Afghanistan reconstruction includes any major contract, grant, agreement, or other funding mechanism entered into by any department or agency of the U.S. government that involves the use of amounts appropriated or otherwise made available for the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

As required by the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2018 (Pub. L. No. 115-91), this quarterly report has been prepared in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation issued by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency.

Source: Pub. L. No. 110-181, National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2008, 1/28/2008; Pub. L. No. 115-91, National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2018, 12/12/2017.

Cover photo:

Taliban forces destroy poppy fields in Kunar Province as the 2023 harvest season approached. (Photo by AP/Oriane Zerah)



SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR
AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION

To Congress, the Secretaries of State and Defense, and the American people, I am pleased to submit SIGAR's 64th quarterly report on the status of U.S. assistance to Afghanistan.

This quarter, the United Nations convened a third meeting of the special representatives for Afghanistan in Doha, Qatar, June 30–July 1, with the Taliban participating for the first time. While the UN has not confirmed the specific pre-conditions that convinced the Taliban to join Doha III after they refused to attend Doha II in February, Afghan women and other civil society representatives were excluded from the talks, sparking harsh criticism from human rights advocates. The State Department told SIGAR that the United States was waiting to see what, if any, action the UN might take on the basis of Doha III.

This report features an essay on the Taliban's 2022 narcotics ban. While the ban has led to a dramatic decrease in opium cultivation, landed Afghan farmers in the south and southwest of the country continue to sell and profit from opium they stockpiled prior to the prohibition. In other areas, the ban faces considerable resistance. This has led experts to conclude that the ban may not be sustainable once the farmers' stockpiles have been depleted.

The report also includes a highlight comparing the experiences of Afghan refugees resettled in Canada with those resettled in the United States. This year SIGAR interviewed 29 refugees in Ottawa and Toronto as well as 61 refugees in Houston, Texas; Sacramento, California; Omaha, Nebraska; and Washington, DC. The groups faced some of the same challenges, such as a lack of support, difficulty finding a job, and culture shock. They also expressed discontentment with international engagement with the Taliban and fear for the safety of their friends and family who remain in Afghanistan. However, there was one important difference between each group's experience: while the interviewees in the United States were primarily concerned about their uncertain future legal status, Afghans in Canada had the legal right to stay permanently, although some were not sure they wanted to.

SIGAR issued 13 products this quarter, including this quarterly report. SIGAR issued a performance audit report and an evaluation report, both partly in response to a March 2023 request from the Chairman of the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee, examining U.S. taxpayer money being paid to the Taliban. The performance audit found that 38 of the 65 implementing partners who responded to SIGAR's questionnaire (58%) reported paying a total of at least \$10.9 million of U.S. taxpayer money to the Taliban-controlled government, in taxes, fees, duties, or utilities. The evaluation found that UN shipments of U.S. currency provide direct and indirect benefits to the Taliban, such as revenue generation, stabilizing and strengthening the regime, and providing it access to untraceable U.S. currency. SIGAR also issued a second performance audit that assessed State's compliance with vetting its contractors.

SIGAR completed nine financial audits of U.S.-funded projects in Afghanistan that identified \$1,917,456 in questioned costs as a result of internal-control

deficiencies and noncompliance issues by U.S. government contractors. SIGAR's criminal investigations led to one conviction. SIGAR closed two investigation cases this quarter, bringing the total number of ongoing cases to 24.

SIGAR's work to date has identified approximately \$3.97 billion in savings to the U.S. taxpayer. During this reporting period, SIGAR's national and international engagements showcased the continuing interest in learning from the United States' experience in Afghanistan, especially in conducting oversight of U.S. assistance in a country whose regime the United States and other donors do not recognize.

My colleagues and I look forward to continuing the work of protecting U.S. taxpayer funds in Afghanistan with the assistance of Congress, the Administration, and other stakeholders.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John F. Sopko', written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above the printed name.

John F. Sopko



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“We work with like-minded countries, regional countries, and international organizations to mitigate the effects of internal displacement and migration and offer protection to those Afghans with compelling protection concerns.”

—*State Department, Afghanistan Integrated Country Strategy, October 2023*

1 WHAT THE UNITED STATES IS DOING IN AFGHANISTAN



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Afghan women weave carpets as part of a U.S.-funded economic development program.
(Photo by Lorenzo Tugnoli for Turquoise Mountain Trust)

WHAT THE UNITED STATES IS DOING IN AFGHANISTAN

The United States remains the largest donor to the Afghan people.¹ Since U.S. forces withdrew from Afghanistan in August 2021, the United States has appropriated or otherwise made available \$20.71 billion in assistance to Afghanistan and to Afghan refugees, as shown in Table I.1. This includes nearly \$2.97 billion in U.S. appropriations for Afghanistan assistance, for humanitarian and development aid, and \$3.50 billion transferred to the Afghan Fund that is intended to protect macro financial stability on behalf of the Afghan people that could, in the long-term, include recapitalizing Afghanistan’s central bank should the conditions materialize.²

In addition, \$8.70 billion was made available in support of Afghan evacuees resettling in the United States through the Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) program. Of this amount, the Department of Defense (DOD) obligated \$5.36 billion in Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid (OHDACA) appropriations and other funds; the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) obligated nearly \$3.00 billion in appropriated funds; and the Department of Homeland Security obligated \$284 million of appropriated funds in support of OAW.³

The Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024, mandated the creation of a new Department of State appropriations account, Enduring Welcome—the whole-of-government successor program to OAW.⁴ DOD transferred \$3.00 billion in OHDACA funds in FY 2023 to State for Enduring Welcome.⁵ State has employed this funding and other appropriations, totaling \$5.53 billion, for ongoing Enduring Welcome programming.⁶

TABLE I.1

U.S. ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN AND AFGHAN REFUGEES SINCE AUGUST 2021	
U.S. Appropriations for Afghanistan Assistance—October 1, 2021 to June 30, 2024 ¹	\$2,967,343,887
Operation Allies Welcome—Appropriated Funds, Both Obligated and Remaining Available for Obligation ²	8,704,452,572
Enduring Welcome—Appropriated and Transferred Funds, Both Obligated and Remaining Available for Obligation ³	5,533,300,000
Afghan Fund—U.S.-Authorized Transfers of Afghan Central Bank Assets to the Fund for the Afghan People ⁴	3,500,000,000
TOTAL	\$20,705,096,459

Note: Numbers have been rounded.

¹ U.S. government funding appropriated or otherwise made available for all Security, Development, Humanitarian, and Agency Operations accounts as presented in Table F.10, U.S. Appropriations, on page 142.

² DOD response to SIGAR data call, 4/22/2024. \$5.36 billion in DOD obligations of Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid, Transportation Working Capital Funds and Military Personnel appropriations as of 9/30/2023; Health and Human Services (HHS) response to SIGAR data call 7/8/2024. HHS \$3.00 billion in HHS appropriations (remaining available for obligation) and obligated (expired) funds as of June 30, 2024; Department of Homeland Security (DHS) response to SIGAR data call, 7/18/2024. \$349 million in appropriations and obligated funds (\$193 million un-expired, \$156 million expired, and total obligations of \$284 million), as of June 30, 2024.

³ State, response to SIGAR data call, 7/18/2024 and 4/24/2024. State has obligated \$3.46 billion of the \$5.53 billion made available for Enduring Welcome programming—\$3.00 billion in funds transferred from DOD and \$2.53 billion in other appropriations and transfers—through 6/30/2024. All Enduring Welcome funding is available until expended. State reported unliquidated obligations of \$2.07 billion as of 6/30/2024.

⁴ Transfer of Da Afghanistan Bank reserves held at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York to Switzerland-based entity.

WHAT THE UNITED STATES IS DOING IN AFGHANISTAN

The United States also continues to respond to humanitarian crises in Afghanistan as they evolve. Since 2021, State and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) have used pre- and post-withdrawal appropriated funds to restart and begin new programs to address critical needs of the Afghan people in several key sectors—health, education, agriculture, and food security—and are also supporting civil society and media, focusing on women, girls, and broad human rights protections. These efforts are being implemented through nongovernmental organizations, international organizations, and other partners.⁷

As shown in Table I.2, some \$2.09 billion of the nearly \$2.97 billion appropriated for assistance to Afghanistan since the end of FY 2021 has gone toward humanitarian assistance, representing more than 70% of the total. Another \$459 million, or 15% of the total, went to development assistance.

TABLE I.2

U.S. APPROPRIATIONS FOR AFGHANISTAN ASSISTANCE				
OCTOBER 1, 2021, TO JUNE 30, 2024 (\$ MILLIONS)				
Funding Category	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	Total
Humanitarian	\$1,077.69	\$656.20	\$358.46	\$2,092.35
Development	217.76	185.85	54.99	458.59
Agency Operations	229.19	57.44	29.77	316.40
Security	100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Total	\$1,624.65	\$899.49	\$443.21	\$2,967.34

Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, 6/30/2024, Appendix A.

In the first three quarters of FY 2024, the U.S. government has committed and obligated over \$257 million to support humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan, as shown in Table I.3. This quarter, USAID committed an additional \$5 million to support the UN Development Programme’s protection programs. Some \$150 million will be disbursed to the UN’s World Food Programme (WFP) to provide food assistance cash transfers, vouchers, and logistical support. In April 2024, 2.5 million people across Afghanistan received food assistance from USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) support for the WFP. USAID/BHA and the State Department’s Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) continued to partner with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other implementing partners to support Afghan refugees, returnees, and other vulnerable persons. Between September 15, 2023, and June 1, 2024, State/PRM reported it has reached over 538,000 returnees with emergency assistance. This quarter, State/PRM obligated an additional \$12 million to support UNHCR’s programs in both Pakistan and Afghanistan. Following severe flooding in northeastern, northern, and western Afghanistan in May, over 28,300 people received clean drinking water daily from the USAID/BHA-supported United Nations Children’s Fund.⁸

WHAT THE UNITED STATES IS DOING IN AFGHANISTAN

TABLE I.3

HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR AFGHANISTAN – AMOUNTS COMMITTED AND OBLIGATED, FY 2022 TO FY 2024 Q3 (\$ MILLIONS)					
Implementing Partners	Activity	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	Total*
USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance					
Implementing Partners Other Than UN Agencies	Agriculture; Food Assistance-Cash Transfers; Local, Regional, and International Procurement; Economic Recovery and Market Systems (ERMS); Health; Humanitarian Coordination, Information Management, and Assessments (HCIMA); Multipurpose Cash Assistance (MPCA); Natural Hazards and Technological Risks; Nutrition; Protection; Shelter and Settlements; Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)	\$78.43	\$167.90	\$9.39	\$255.72
UN FAO	Agriculture; MPCA; HCIMA	30.50	0.50	0.50	31.50
IOM	Shelter and Settlements; WASH	63.06	0.43	31.00	94.49
UNICEF	Health; HCIMA; Nutrition; Protection; MPCA; WASH	33.65	35.25	30.25	99.15
UN OCHA	HCIMA	1.00	1.20	1.20	3.40
UNFPA	Health; Protection; HCIMA	2.36	8.31	-	10.67
UNDP	Protection	-	-	5.00	5.00
WFP	Food Assistance-Cash Transfers; Vouchers; Local, Regional, and International Procurement; Logistics Support; Program Support*	460.72	422.10	150.00	1,032.82
WHO	HCIMA; Health; WASH	1.00	7.00	3.58	11.58
	Program Support	0.62	0.78	0.68	2.08
Total		\$671.34	\$643.47	\$231.60	\$1,546.41
State Department Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration					
Implementing Partners Other Than UN Agencies	Education; Food Security; Health Livelihoods; Mental Health and Psychosocial Support; Protection; Program Support	\$70.75	\$67.15	\$14.06	\$151.96
IOM	Health and Program Support-Kosovo	16.50	24.50	-	41.00
UNHCR	Education; ERMS; HCIMA; Logistics Support; MPCA; Protection; Shelter and Settlements; WASH	116.20	87.40	12.00	215.60
UNICEF	Education; Health; Nutrition; Protection; WASH	9.30	6.65	-	15.95
UNFPA	Health; Protection	52.39	35.55	-	87.94
WHO	Health	2.81	-	-	2.81
Total		\$267.95	\$221.25	\$26.06	\$363.30
TOTAL		\$939.29	\$864.72	\$257.66	\$1,909.71

Note: Numbers have been rounded. *USAID, BHA obligated ESF funds for WFP programming presented above. Programs without figures operate on previously committed or obligated funds but for which there were no new amounts committed or obligated in FY 2022, FY 2023, or FY24Q1-Q3.

Source: USAID, Afghanistan – Complex Emergency, Fact Sheet #3, Fiscal Year 2024, 6/14/2024; USAID, Afghanistan – Complex Emergency, Fact Sheet #2, Fiscal Year 2024, 3/8/2024; USAID, BHA, response to SIGAR vetting, 4/11/2024; State, PRM, response to SIGAR vetting, 4/11/2024; USAID, BHA, response to SIGAR vetting, 1/10/2024; State, PRM, response to SIGAR vetting, 1/16/2024; USAID, Afghanistan – Complex Emergency, Fact Sheet #9, Fiscal Year 2022, 9/23/2022; USAID, Afghanistan – Complex Emergency, Fact Sheet #3, Fiscal Year 2023, 8/29/2023; USAID, Afghanistan – Complex Emergency, Fact Sheet #1, Fiscal Year 2024, 12/22/2023; USAID, BHA, response to SIGAR data call to report adjustments to FY 2022 data for full year as reported in Fact Sheet #9, 10/12/2023; State, PRM, response to SIGAR data call to report adjustments to FY 2022 data for full year as reported in Fact Sheet #9, 10/11/2023.

WHAT THE UNITED STATES IS DOING IN AFGHANISTAN

USAID reported it obligated \$645 million to the Economic Support Fund and Global Health Programs account from FY 2022 through the third quarter of FY 2024, supporting 37 active programs, as shown in Table I.4. About a third of these funds, or \$210 million, support economic growth and public health programs. USAID did not obligate any funds in FY 2024 Q3.

TABLE I.4

USAID PROGRAMS (ESF AND GHP), OBLIGATED, FY 2022 TO FY 2024 Q3 (\$ MILLIONS)*					
USAID Managing Office	Activity	Obligated Amounts			
		FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	Total
Office of Social Services					
Keep Schools Open	Education	\$40.00	-	-	\$40.00
Urban Health Initiative (UHI) Program	Health	17.34	18.52	16.63	52.49
New Disease Early Warning System (DEWS) Plus	Health	14.50	4.00	3.00	21.50
Assistance for Families and Indigent Afghans to Thrive (AFIAT)	Health	10.16	23.55	-	33.71
Consolidated Grant - COVID-19 Response	Health	6.00	-	-	6.00
Local Health System Sustainability (LHSS)	Health	5.15	2.85	-	8.00
Central Contraceptive Procurement (CCP)	Health	5.00	-	-	5.00
Global Health Supply Chain Management (GHSCM-PSM)	Health	5.00	-	-	5.00
Technical Capacity Building for the American University of Afghanistan	Education	4.51	-	-	4.51
Let Girls Learn Initiative and Girls' Education Challenge (GEC)	Education	4.00	-	-	4.00
SHOPS Plus	Health	0.86	-	-	0.86
DEWS Plus	Health	-	-	-	-
Strengthening Education in Afghanistan (SEA II)	Education	-	-	-	-
Accessible and Quality Basic Education (AQBE)	Education	-	31.70	-	31.70
Young Women Lead (YWL)	Education	-	4.94	-	4.94
Supporting Student Success in Afghanistan (SSSA)	Education	-	12.56	-	12.56
Total		\$112.52	\$98.12	\$19.63	\$230.27
Office of Program and Project Development					
Contributions to the Afghanistan Resilience Trust Fund	Crosscutting (WASH + Econ. growth)	\$53.72	\$50.00	-	\$103.72
Afghanistan Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Activity (AMELA)		3.36	4.50	3.00	10.86
Total		\$57.08	\$54.50	\$3.00	\$114.58
Office of Infrastructure, Energy, and Engineering					
Rural Water Supply, Sanitation & Hygiene (Ru-WASH)	WASH	\$20.00	-	-	\$20.00
20 MW Watt Floating Solar - Naghlu	Power	0.70	-	-	0.70
Total		\$20.70	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$20.70

Continued on the following page

WHAT THE UNITED STATES IS DOING IN AFGHANISTAN

USAID PROGRAMS (ESF AND GHP), OBLIGATED, FY 2022 TO FY 2024 Q3 (CONTINUED)					
USAID Managing Office	Activity	Obligated Amounts			
		FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	Total
Office of Livelihoods					
Strengthening Rural Livelihoods and Food Security (SRL-FS)	Agriculture	\$40.00	-	-	\$40.00
Afghanistan Competitiveness of Export-Oriented Businesses Activity (ACEBA)	Economic growth	36.87	33.72	11.14	81.73
Afghanistan Value Chains Program	Agriculture	26.43	23.78	-	50.21
Agriculture Marketing Program	Agriculture	15.00	-	-	15.00
Extractive Technical Assistance by the U.S. Geological Survey	Economic growth	-	-	-	-
Livelihood Advancement of Marginalized Populations (LAMP)	Economic growth	5.00	-	-	5.00
Carpet and Jewelry Value Chains	Economic growth	2.82	2.50	-	5.32
Total		\$126.12	\$60.00	\$11.14	\$197.26
Office of Democracy, Gender, and Rights					
Enabling Essential Services for Afghan Women and Girls	Crosscutting	\$21.29	-	-	\$21.29
Afghan Support Project	Civil society	7.22	11.38	-	18.60
Conflict Mitigation Assistance for Civilians (COMAC)	Aid to conflict-affected Afghans	5.00	5.00	-	10.00
Information, Dialogue, and Rights in Afghanistan	Civil society	3.25	1.00	-	4.25
Supporting Transformation for Afghanistan's Recovery (STAR)	Livelihood assistance	-	18.34	-	18.34
Promoting Conflict Resolution, Peace Building, and Enhanced Governance	Good governance	-	-	-	-
Initiative to Strengthen Local Administration	Good governance	0.40	-	-	0.40
Women's Scholarship Endowment	Crosscutting (Gender + Edu.)	-	-	-	-
Total		\$37.16	\$35.72	\$0.00	\$72.88
Executive Office					
ISC to hire former Afghan FSNs		\$6.02	\$3.14	-	\$9.16
Total		\$6.02	\$3.14	\$0.00	\$9.16
Office of Financial Management					
Audits AMP (Agriculture Marketing Program) 2021	Financial Audit	\$0.18	-	-	\$0.18
Total		\$0.18	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.18
TOTAL (37 programs)		\$359.78	\$251.48	\$33.77	\$645.03

Note: Numbers have been rounded. *Programs without figures operate on previously committed or obligated funds but for which there were no new amounts committed or obligated in FY 2022, FY 2023, or FY24Q1-Q3.

Source: USAID Transaction Detail Report, 7/12/2024, 4/12/2024, 1/13/2024, 1/4/2023, 10/9/2023.

For more information on active USAID programs as of July 12, 2024, see pages 73-84.

The Afghanistan Resilience Trust Fund changed its name from the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund on July 21, 2023.

WHAT THE UNITED STATES IS DOING IN AFGHANISTAN

In 2022, the United States transferred \$3.5 billion in Afghan central bank assets previously frozen in the United States to the Swiss-based Fund for the Afghan People or Afghan Fund. Although no disbursements to benefit the Afghan people have yet been made, the Fund is intended to protect macro financial stability on behalf of the Afghan people that could, in the long-term, include recapitalizing Afghanistan's central bank should the conditions materialize, keep Afghanistan current on debt payments to international financial institutions to preserve its eligibility for development assistance, and pay for critically needed imported goods. According to the Fund's website, the Fund's balance stood at \$3.84 billion as of June 28, 2024, including interest accrued.⁹

INTRODUCTION ENDNOTES

- 1 Appendix A, Civilian Sector Account Disbursements; State, SCA, response to SIGAR vetting, 7/14/2023.
- 2 SIGAR, Table F.10 on page 142; Treasury, response to SIGAR vetting, 4/12/2024.
- 3 DOD, response to SIGAR data call, 4/22/2024; HHS, response to SIGAR data call, 7/8/2024; DHS, response to SIGAR data call, 7/15/2024.
- 4 Further Consolidated Appropriation Act, 2024, Pub. L. No. 118-47.
- 5 DOD, response to SIGAR data call, 4/22/2024.
- 6 State, response to SIGAR data call, 7/18/2024.
- 7 State, SCA, response to SIGAR data call, 3/16/2022; State, SCA, response to SIGAR vetting, 4/13/2022; USAID, Afghanistan–Complex Emergency Fact Sheet #3, FY 2023, 8/29/2023, p. 7.
- 8 USAID, Afghanistan–Complex Emergency Fact Sheet #3, FY 2024, 6/14/2024, p. 7; USAID, Transaction Detail Report, 7/12/2024.
- 9 Treasury, response to SIGAR data call, 12/13/2022; Treasury, response to SIGAR vetting, 1/11/2023; Treasury and State press release, “Joint Statement by U.S. Treasury and State Department: The United States and Partners Announce Establishment of Fund for the People of Afghanistan,” 9/14/2022; Treasury, response to SIGAR vetting, 4/12/2024; State, “Department Press Briefing – September 14, 2022,” 9/14/2022; Fund for the Afghan People, Press Statement, 6/28/2024.

“With the banning of opium,
the price went up to the sky. My life is
better with this order.”

—*Afghan farmer*