

LEAD INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT TO THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS



# OPERATION ENDURING SENTINEL

AND OTHER U.S. GOVERNMENT ACTIVITIES RELATED TO

# AFGHANISTAN



APRIL 1, 2024–JUNE 30, 2024



**On the cover:** A flood survivor stands near homes damaged by flooding in northern Baghlan Province in May. (WFP photo)



We are pleased to present this Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) report to Congress on Operation Enduring Sentinel (OES). This report discharges our quarterly reporting responsibilities pursuant to Section 419 of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended.

In October 2021, the Department of Defense (DoD) initiated OES as the U.S. mission to conduct over-the-horizon counterterrorism operations against threats emanating from Afghanistan and to engage with Central Asian and South Asian regional partners to combat terrorism and promote regional stability.

This quarterly report describes the activities of the U.S. Government in support of OES, as well as the work of the DoD, the Department of State (State), and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to further the U.S. Government's policy goals in Afghanistan during the period of April 1 through June 30, 2024. This report also discusses the planned, ongoing, and completed oversight work conducted by the Lead IG agencies—the DoD, State, and USAID OIGs—and our partner oversight agencies.

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**Robert P. Storch**  
Lead Inspector General  
for OES  
Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Defense

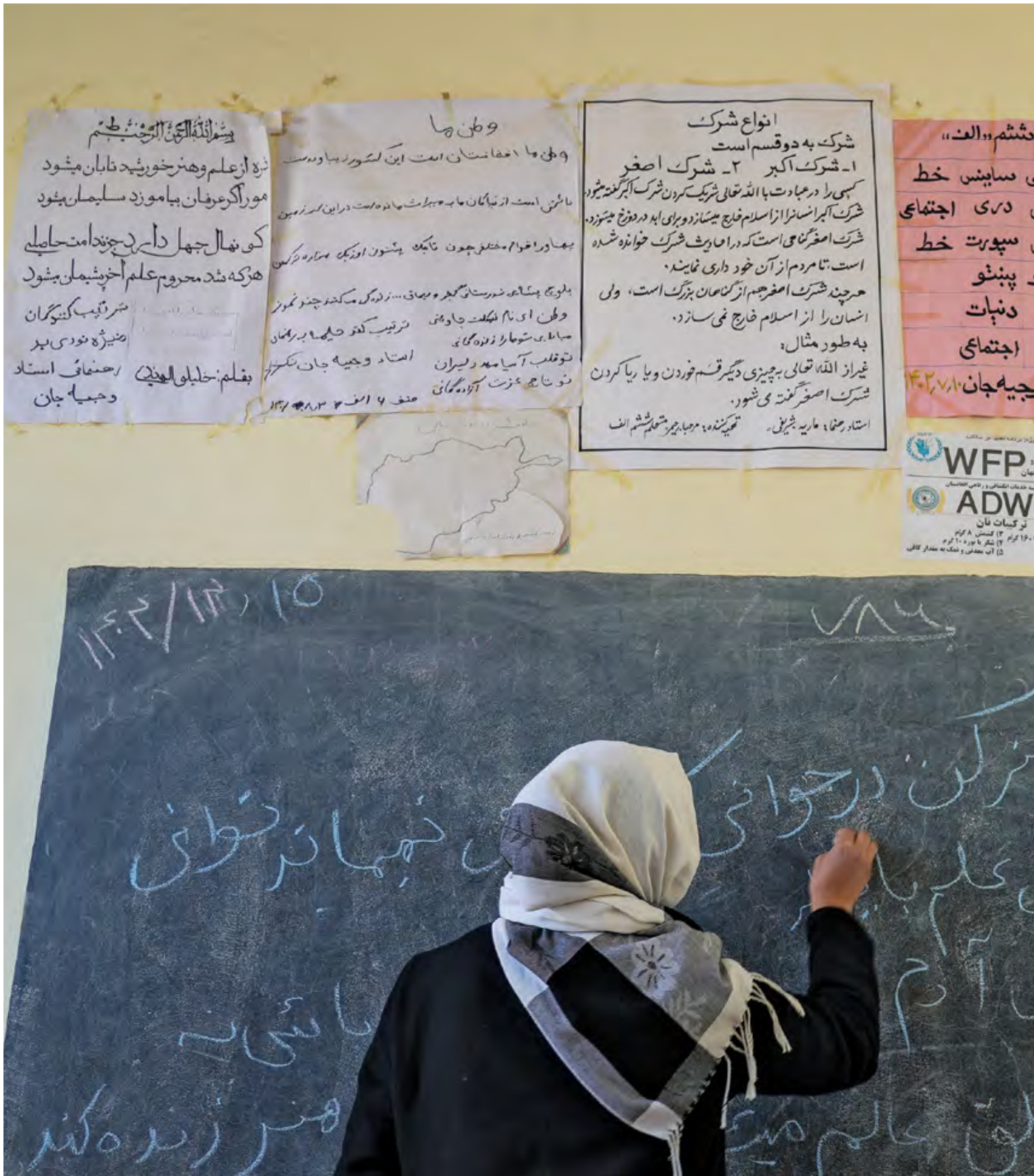
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**Cardell K. Richardson, Sr.**  
Associate Lead Inspector General  
for OES  
Inspector General  
U.S. Department of State

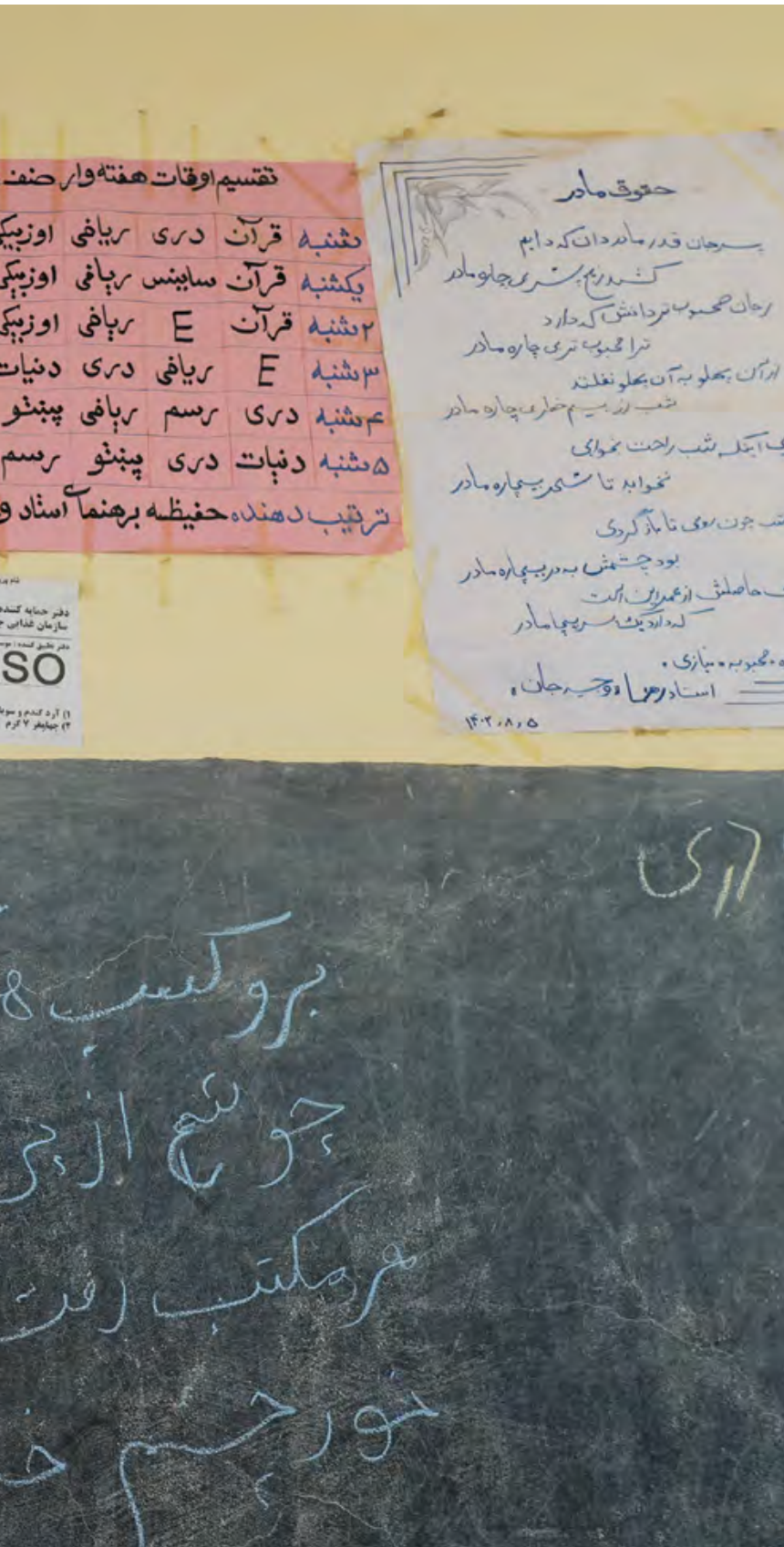
Handwritten signature of Paul K. Martin in black ink.

**Paul K. Martin**  
Inspector General  
U.S. Agency for International  
Development









A primary school classroom in Sar-e-Pol province, Afghanistan. (WFP photo)

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A flood survivor stands near homes damaged by flooding in northern Baghlan Province in May. (WFP photo)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**U.S. officials continued to express concerns about the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria–Khorasan (ISIS-K) threat to the United States and to its interests abroad.**<sup>1</sup> The Afghanistan-based ISIS-K has been recruiting Central Asians, especially Tajikistanis, for attacks.<sup>2</sup> The intelligence community fears that ISIS-K could use Central Asian recruits—as it had in deadly attacks in Iran and Russia—to mount similar attacks in Europe or the United States.<sup>3</sup>

**State sought to increase focus, coordination, and collaboration with members of the Coalition to Defeat ISIS and to expand cooperation with regional partners in South and Central Asia.** In 2024, State announced more than \$30 million in new counterterrorism programming for Central Asia in addition to the \$50 million in assistance previously invested in the region.<sup>4</sup>

**In May, the United States and Pakistan agreed to deepen cooperative counterterrorism efforts.**<sup>5</sup> The United States and Pakistan said in a joint statement that their partnership to counter ISIS-K, Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), and other terrorist organizations will advance security in the region and serve as a model of bilateral and regional cooperation to address transnational terrorism threats.<sup>6</sup>

**Senior State diplomats participated in the “Doha III” meeting to coordinate with envoys to Afghanistan from countries and multilateral organizations on an approach to Afghanistan and engagement with Afghans.**<sup>7</sup> For the first time, a Taliban delegation attended this meeting. UN officials confirmed that the talks were held without Afghan civil society representatives, including women, at the table, which was a Taliban precondition for attending.<sup>8</sup> The meeting concluded with no pledges of reform from the Taliban or concessions from the international community.<sup>9</sup> A Taliban spokesperson said that his delegation held 24 meetings with representatives of different countries on the sidelines of Doha III.<sup>10</sup>

**State continued to support relocations of Afghans.** During the quarter, State issued more than 8,000 Afghan Special Immigrant Visas. As of June 30, more than 29,500 Afghan Special Immigrant Visas have been issued in FY 2024.<sup>11</sup>

**According to the UN, approximately 23.7 million Afghans need humanitarian assistance, with 14.2 million experiencing acute food insecurity.** While harvests were expected to enhance food security, limited job opportunities and slow recovery from drought and floods continued to create the need for food assistance. The USAID-funded World Food Programme continued to provide food assistance during the quarter.<sup>12</sup>



## MISSION UPDATE

*This section, “Mission Update,” describes U.S. activities under the OES mission and related activity that affects the OES mission. The following section, “U.S. Policy Objectives in Afghanistan,” describes diplomatic, political, humanitarian assistance, and development activities in Afghanistan that are integral to the OES mission.*

**Flash floods from seasonal rains in May in northern Baghlan province killed dozens of people and destroyed homes. (WFP photo)**

### U.S. ACTIVITY

The mission of Operation Enduring Sentinel (OES) is to counter potential terrorist threats to the homeland emanating from Afghanistan and to support Central Asia regional partners to promote regional stability. Separate from OES military activities, the U.S. Government provides humanitarian and development assistance for the Afghan people through third-party implementers.<sup>13</sup>

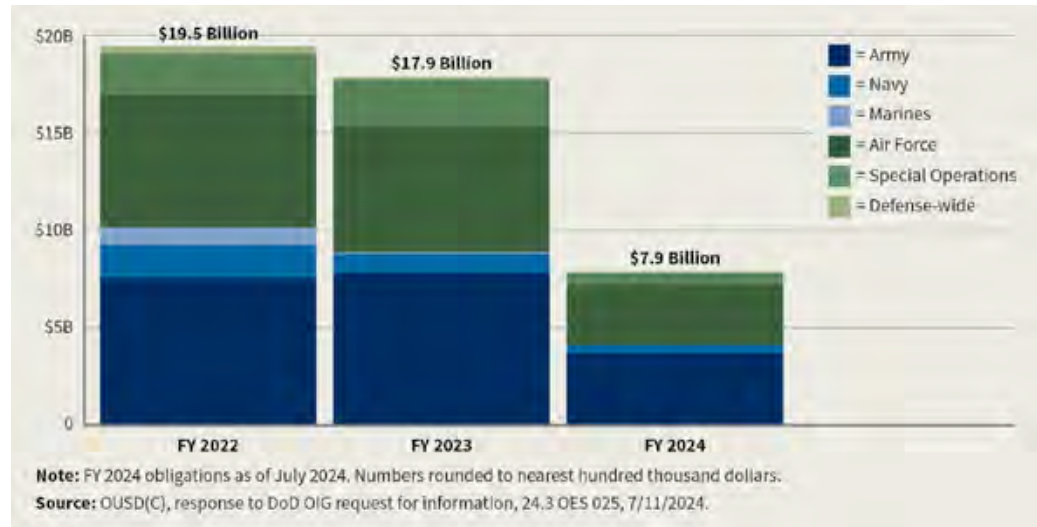
The DoD provided limited publicly releasable information about U.S. military activity related to OES during the quarter. More DoD information on OES counterterrorism activities this quarter can be found in the classified appendix.

#### **THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS NOT YET DECIDED WHETHER TO RECOGNIZE THE TALIBAN OR ANY OTHER ENTITY AS THE GOVERNMENT IN AFGHANISTAN**

The U.S. Government has not yet made a decision whether to recognize the Taliban or any other entity as the government of Afghanistan. Accordingly, any references in this report to so-called “Taliban governance,” the “Taliban’s ministries” and “officials,” a “former” Afghan government, and similar phrases are not meant to convey any U.S. Government view or decision on recognition of the Taliban or any other entity as the government of Afghanistan.



Figure 1.

**DoD Obligations for OES, FY 2022–FY 2024**

The overall cost for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) activities in the U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) area of operations was \$66 million from April to June. The Office of the Undersecretary of Defense-Comptroller (OUSD(C)), stated that it could not isolate operational costs for ISR flights related to Afghanistan. The OUSD(C) stated it does not track obligations and disbursements specifically by DoD task forces, support to partnered forces, and over-the-horizon counterterrorism operations.<sup>14</sup> DoD obligations for activities related to OES as of July 2024 are depicted in Figure 1.

Through diplomatic channels, the U.S. Government works to address the terrorist threat in Afghanistan by increasing focus, coordination, and collaboration with members of the Coalition to Defeat ISIS, as well as increasing cooperation with regional partners in South and Central Asia. State said that as the founding leader of the Defeat ISIS Coalition, the U.S. Government remained vigilant about the continuing threat ISIS still poses.<sup>15</sup>

Core components of the U.S. strategy to address the Islamic State–Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) threat in the region are strengthening law enforcement, providing border security assistance, and supporting reintegration initiatives in Central and South Asia. Humanitarian and development assistance, especially for populations susceptible to ISIS-K recruitment campaigns, are also key to the strategy, State said. In 2024, State announced more than \$30 million in new counterterrorism programming for Central Asia, in addition to the \$50 million in previous assistance invested in the region.<sup>16</sup>

State said that it is in the U.S. Government’s longstanding interests to ensure that Afghanistan is never again used for attacks against the United States and its allies. Preventing the growth of terrorist groups in Afghanistan helps bolster U.S. security and regional stability.<sup>17</sup> State continued to call publicly and privately on the Taliban to fulfill its counterterrorism commitments.<sup>18</sup>

**In 2024, State announced more than \$30 million in new counterterrorism programming for Central Asia, in addition to the \$50 million in previous assistance invested in the region.**

According to reports by the UN Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, the relationship between the Taliban and al-Qaeda remains close, and al-Qaeda operates terrorist training camps in 10 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces.<sup>19</sup> See below for more details.

## **U.S. Reportedly Considering Sharing Information with the Taliban About ISIS-K**

According to media reporting just after the quarter ended, the U.S. Government was reportedly considering expanding cooperation with the Taliban to help track ISIS-K due to the growing ISIS-K threat, as demonstrated in the group's external attacks in Iran and Russia earlier this year.<sup>20</sup>

In particular, media reported that the administration is debating sharing more information with the Taliban on shared concerns, such as ISIS-K, which the Taliban views as a threat to its rule of Afghanistan. According to the media report, some unnamed members of Congress also favor the approach, though they argue the United States would have to demand concessions from the Taliban in return, including ensuring more rights for Afghan women.<sup>21</sup>

U.S. intelligence agencies declined to comment for the media report.<sup>22</sup> Taliban officials did not comment on potential information sharing with the United States or U.S. allies about ISIS-K.<sup>23</sup>

## **CBP Encounters with Inadmissible Afghans at Southern U.S. Border Increase Significantly**

The DHS reported that CBP has seen an increase in the number of inadmissible non-citizen Afghans encountered at U.S. southwest border ports of entry since FY 2022. CBP had identified 1,478 Afghan inadmissible non-citizens at U.S. Southwest Border Ports of Entry in FY 2024 as of the end of May, compared to 342 in all of FY 2023 and 73 in all of FY 2022.<sup>24</sup>

According to U.S. law, an individual may not be admitted to the United States for a number of reasons, such as public health concerns, terrorist associations, criminal history, misrepresenting facts, and not being in possession of valid immigration documents.<sup>25</sup> The DHS did not provide any information as to why the Afghans were deemed inadmissible.<sup>26</sup>

The DHS coordinates interagency counterterrorism efforts—including investigation of ISIS-K threat streams—through ICE's Homeland Security Investigations team and the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force.<sup>27</sup> The DHS's biometric tracking systems and network seek to detect, identify, and disseminate information on known or suspected terrorists, military detainees, and transnational organized crime syndicates.<sup>28</sup>

The Department of Justice (DoJ), through the FBI, works to address intelligence gaps relating to ISIS-K. The DoJ stated that the FBI is reviewing closed leads and assessments predicated on intelligence derived from Afghanistan to identify potential sources who may have the capability to increase intelligence collection regarding the current threat environment emanating from Afghanistan. The FBI is also reviewing current source reporting on Afghanistan to identify, further develop, and focus those sources on the current threat environment.<sup>29</sup>



**Al-Adel attempted to use the war in Gaza to inspire people to travel to Afghanistan to gain training, experience, and knowledge before undertaking attacks against so-called “Zionist” and Western targets around the world, according to press reporting.**

The DHS stated that it was not aware of any violent extremist organization (VEO) intent or efforts to affect or infiltrate ongoing U.S. and coalition efforts to relocate American, Afghan, or other friendly personnel from Afghanistan during the quarter.<sup>30</sup>

The Department of the Treasury (Treasury) stated there are concerns about ISIS-K and its efforts to increase the use of its base in Afghanistan to establish external financial and logistical cells that could enable terrorist attacks worldwide. Additionally, ISIS-K serves as a regional hub, transferring hundreds of thousands of dollars to financial facilitators, and provides personnel and weapons to support external operations. ISIS-K continues to use kidnapping for ransom and extortion to generate a significant amount of funding for its operations.<sup>31</sup>

## **VIOLENT EXTREMIST ACTIVITY**

### **UN Assesses Al-Qaeda Still Running Training Camps in Afghanistan**

According to reports by the UN Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, al-Qaeda operates training camps in 10 of Afghanistan’s 34 provinces: Badghis, Helmand, Ghazni, Kunar, Laghman, Nangarhar, Nuristan, Parwan, Uruzgan, and Zabul. An al-Qaeda leader known as Hakim al Masri is responsible for the training camps and conducting suicide bomber training for TTP, an ally of al-Qaeda and the Afghan Taliban, according to press reporting.<sup>32</sup>

According to the DIA, members of al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) probably are involved in training activities at camps in Afghanistan, although it lacks reporting on the number of camps at which AQIS members are present.<sup>33</sup> The leaders of AQIS almost certainly continue to abide by both the Taliban’s restrictions and al-Qaeda leadership’s decision not to conduct attacks from Afghanistan. This compliance suggests that the members providing training are using their skills in a freelance capacity.<sup>34</sup> The DIA stated that it and other DoD elements continue to monitor for any reporting on al-Qaeda or AQIS-linked camps in Afghanistan.<sup>35</sup>

In June, al-Qaeda issued a call for supporters to migrate to Afghanistan. The open call, issued by Sayf al-Adel, believed to be al-Qaeda’s current overall emir, appeared to be the clearest invitation for foreigners to join al-Qaeda’s ranks in Afghanistan since the Taliban captured the country in 2021, according to a media report.<sup>36</sup> Al-Adel attempted to use the war in Gaza to inspire people to travel to Afghanistan to gain training, experience, and knowledge before undertaking attacks against so-called “Zionist” and Western targets around the world, according to press reporting.<sup>37</sup>

UN reports indicated that the Taliban “have done much to constrain the activities of al-Qaeda and their affiliates.” However, member states raised concern about al-Qaeda reorganization and training activities, as well as new travel into Afghanistan, indicating that the group still uses Afghanistan as a permissive safe haven under the Taliban.<sup>38</sup>

## Tajikistan a “Fertile Recruiting Ground” for ISIS-K

Since shortly after U.S. forces left in 2021, ISIS-K has used its base in Afghanistan to regroup and become the most capable branch of the global ISIS terror organization, according to terrorism experts.<sup>39</sup> In January and March, ISIS-K relied on Central Asian fighters to conduct large scale, mass-casualty attacks in Iran and Russia, further demonstrating a greater reach, and increased transnational terrorism capabilities.<sup>40</sup>

After the ISIS-K attack at a concert hall outside of Moscow in March that killed 145 people and wounded several hundred, Russian authorities arrested 12 young men, all of whom were from Tajikistan. Independent analysts identify several reasons why ISIS-K has found Central Asia, and especially Tajikistan, to be a fertile recruiting ground.<sup>41</sup>

According to regional experts, Tajikistan’s economy is weakening, youth unemployment is high, and its government is repressive and hostile to Islam and any kind of social dissent. For many young people in Tajikistan, extremist branches of Islam offer an attractive code of morality and discipline, as well as shelter from repression and poverty in their country.<sup>42</sup>

ISIS-K’s media strategy includes the promotion of religious content, news about ISIS activities, updates on regional and international affairs, and instructions for aspiring jihadis in Russian and Central Asian languages.<sup>43</sup> For example, ISIS-K publishes religious material and political messages through social media platforms in the Tajik language.<sup>44</sup>

ISIS-K may be recruiting Tajikistani citizens radicalized at home and targeting ethnic Tajikistani diaspora communities abroad, according to media reporting. Many Tajikistani migrants have been radicalized while living and working in France, Germany, Russia, and Türkiye. Far from their families and homeland, the disenfranchised Tajikistani migrants often live in impoverished conditions and face xenophobia and may therefore be more likely to be radicalized than those living in their own communities.<sup>45</sup>

Russia has treated Tajikistani migrants poorly, and after the Moscow attack, foreign policy experts observed that Russian authorities began cracking down on Tajikistani and other Central Asian migrants. The Russian government expelled several hundred who were in Russia illegally, detained hundreds in airports, and conducted intimidatory searches on migrant centers.<sup>46</sup> In April, Türkiye responded to the Moscow attack by ending an exemption that had allowed Tajikistani citizens to travel to Türkiye for up to 90 days without a visa.<sup>47</sup>

Tajikistanis have been involved in multiple other plots in Europe and Türkiye over recent years. In January, two ISIS-K militants from Tajikistan and Russia attacked a church in Istanbul, killing one person and injuring another.<sup>48</sup> Militants from Tajikistan were also linked to the January suicide bombing at a memorial for Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force Commander Qassem Soleimani, who was killed in Iraq in 2020 by a U.S. airstrike.<sup>49</sup>

According to foreign policy experts, without addressing root causes, Tajikistan will continue to be a cradle for jihadi recruitment. ISIS-K, which is growing fast because of its recruitment of Central Asians, will continue to threaten the region, and the West, according to media reporting.<sup>50</sup>



**In a May report on security in Afghanistan, the U.S. Institute for Peace warned that terrorist threats to U.S. interests emanating from Afghanistan and Pakistan were steadily rising.**

## **U.S. Officials Warn about ISIS-K Threat**

U.S. officials continued to warn about the ISIS-K threat to the United States and its interests abroad. In April, FBI Director Christopher A. Wray told Congress that he worried that events in the Middle East could inspire lone-wolf extremists or small groups to conduct terror attacks. He added that the potential for a coordinated attack like the March 22 ISIS-K attack in Russia, which killed 145 people, was “increasingly concerning.”<sup>51</sup>

Media reports stated that there is an increased focus within the U.S. Intelligence Community on ISIS-K following the attacks in Russia and Iran this year. The Intelligence Community fears that ISIS-K could use Central Asian recruits—as it did in the Russia attack—to mount similar attacks in Europe or the United States.<sup>52</sup> The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) stated that ISIS-K maintains the desire and capability to conduct attacks outside of its traditional area of operations.<sup>53</sup>

In a May report on security in Afghanistan, the U.S. Institute for Peace warned that terrorist threats to U.S. interests emanating from Afghanistan and Pakistan were steadily rising. The report labeled ISIS-K as a “rising threat” with reach beyond the region. It also identified Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) as a security threat to the region.<sup>54</sup> The report stated that al-Qaeda and its South Asian affiliate, AQIS, kept ties with the Taliban and continued to call for attacks against U.S. citizens, allies, and partners.<sup>55</sup>

## **Arrests Made in ISIS-linked Olympic Attack Plots**

Just after the quarter ended, French authorities announced a series of arrests of suspected suicide bombers with ties to ISIS-K who were reportedly planning attacks on the Paris Olympic games, according to media reporting.<sup>56</sup> French intelligence officers made several arrests in July, although they provided no details on the nature of the plots.<sup>57</sup>

The arrests came as France was on its highest level of security alert because of national elections on July 7 and the Olympic games that began on July 26 in Paris. The opening ceremony, which was the first of its kind to be held outside a stadium, presented unique security risks due to the large gatherings of athletes and spectators.<sup>58</sup>

Earlier, on May 31, French officials announced that security forces arrested an 18-year-old Chechen who was suspected of planning to attack a soccer game at the Paris Olympics. A French official told reporters that the man planned to attack spectators and security forces at a stadium in the name of ISIS, and he wanted to die as a martyr.<sup>59</sup>

On June 7, German officials arrested an ISIS-K supporter at the Cologne/Bonn Airport on suspicion of belonging to a terrorist organization and of violating the Foreign Trade and Payments Act. German officials said that the man, who has shared German, Moroccan, and Polish nationality, had applied for jobs outside of the stadium hosting the European Football Championship. According to press reporting, the man transferred about \$1,700 in crypto currency to ISIS-K.<sup>60</sup>

## Taliban Continues to Deny that al-Qaeda Has Presence in Afghanistan

The DIA reported no changes in its assessments from previous quarters that al-Qaeda and AQIS are maintaining a low profile in Afghanistan.<sup>61</sup> The Taliban continued to deny that VEOs, such as al-Qaeda, have a presence in Afghanistan and are using its territory to pose threats to outside countries, the DIA stated.<sup>62</sup> However, State said that the Taliban continued to host and shelter members of al-Qaeda.<sup>63</sup>

The DIA stated that it observed no indications that al-Qaeda senior leaders provided guidance, funding, or propaganda support to AQIS or other global affiliates during the quarter.<sup>64</sup> Since the U.S. withdrawal in 2021, al-Qaeda leaders have largely complied with the Taliban's public pledges that Afghanistan would not serve as a base for transnational attacks.<sup>65</sup> The leaders of AQIS almost certainly are abiding by the Taliban's restrictions under the February 2020 Doha Agreement—in which the Taliban agreed to prevent al-Qaeda from using Afghanistan to threaten the United States or its allies—and al-Qaeda leaders' decisions regarding attacks from Afghanistan.<sup>66</sup> The DIA stated that there were no credible indications that Afghanistan-based al-Qaeda or AQIS leaders sanctioned the planning, training, or execution of external operations during the past quarter, or that al-Qaeda was attempting to rebuild such a capacity there.<sup>67</sup> The DIA stated it has not seen indications of a shift in the relationship between al-Qaeda's or AQIS's behavior and the Taliban.<sup>68</sup> The DIA stated it had not observed the Taliban exerting command and control over AQIS and other global affiliates.<sup>69</sup> The DIA also stated there was no reporting indicating that the Taliban, in coordination with al-Qaeda or AQIS, has sheltered, supported, or trained TTP members during the quarter.<sup>70</sup>

The DIA estimated that overall numbers of VEO fighters probably remained roughly consistent with data from previous quarters.<sup>71</sup> (See Table 1.) The DIA said that Taliban restrictions on al-Qaeda activity as agreed to under the Doha Agreement, including a ban on conducting terrorist attacks from Afghan territory, has likely hindered recruitment and retention efforts.<sup>72</sup>

## TALIBAN ACTIVITY

### Taliban Continues Counterterrorism Raids Against ISIS-K

ISIS-K has probably failed to expand in Afghanistan due to Taliban counterterrorism pressure, the DIA stated, citing open-source reports.<sup>73</sup> The Taliban conducted raids against ISIS-K during the quarter and has likely maintained its capability to disrupt ISIS-K cells in Afghanistan, the DIA stated.<sup>74</sup> In April, Taliban forces conducted an operation in Kunar province resulting in the killing of two ISIS-K members. In June, also in Kunar, the Taliban engaged with Salafi scholars—ISIS is a Salafist jihadist movement—who pledged to cooperate in community reform and strengthen public trust, probably alluding to cooperation against ISIS-K recruitment efforts and safe havens, the DIA reported.<sup>75</sup>

Table 1.

### Estimated Number of VEO Fighters in Afghanistan and Region

<b>Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP)</b>	4,000-6,000
<b>ISIS-K</b>	2,000
<b>Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS)</b>	200
<b>Al-Qaeda</b>	Fewer than a dozen core members

Source: DIA, responses to DoD OIG request for information, 24.3 OES 035, 7/10/2024.



Additionally, in April the Taliban employed checkpoints around mosques, extra security forces, and disruption of mobile phone services to ensure Kabul's security during the Eid al-Fitr holiday, the DIA stated.<sup>76</sup> ISIS-K conducted no attacks during Eid al-Fitr, according to the DIA.<sup>77</sup> However, ISIS-K maintains the capability to conduct high-profile attacks, and the Taliban has struggled to dismantle ISIS-K's clandestine urban cells and prevent attacks on soft targets, according to State.<sup>78</sup> (See Table 2.)

## Unsanctioned Reprisal Killings Against Former Afghan Government Personnel Continue

Similar to previous quarters, the DIA reported that Taliban leadership is almost certainly not directing attacks against former Afghan government and military personnel.<sup>79</sup> However, low-level Taliban members continued to conduct unsanctioned reprisals against those individuals.<sup>80</sup>

During the quarter, Taliban or suspected Taliban members arrested, tortured, or killed at least 22 members of the former Afghan government.<sup>81</sup> The DIA stated that it is unable to verify reported reprisal attacks against former Afghan government personnel or the number of detained personnel since the Taliban's August 2021 takeover of the country.<sup>82</sup>

## Armed Opposition Groups Continue to Claim Attacks on the Taliban

Armed resistance groups continued to claim attacks on the Taliban in Afghanistan, but they did not threaten the Taliban's control of the country, State said.<sup>83</sup> Two opposition groups, the Afghanistan Freedom Front and the National Resistance Front, attacked Taliban security forces in Kabul during the quarter. The Afghanistan Freedom Front is believed to consist of members of the former Afghan National Defense and Security Forces and cadres of various resistance groups opposed to the Taliban.<sup>84</sup>

Table 2.

### High-Profile ISIS-K Attacks During the Quarter

**April 21:** ISIS-K conducted an IED attack on a Hazara vehicle in Kabul, killing 1 and injuring 10.

**May 1:** ISIS-K attacked a mosque in Herat city, killing six.

**May 8:** ISIS-K claimed a suicide bombing against a military counter-narcotics convoy in Badakhshan. The attack killed at least three Taliban security officers and injured five Taliban soldiers.

**May 17:** ISIS-K killed four Spanish tourists and injured three Afghans in Bamiyan province.

**May 20:** ISIS-K conducted a grenade attack in Kandahar city, killing one and injuring three.

**Sources:** USCENTCOM, response to DoD OIG request for information, 24.3 OES 026, 7/12/2024; DIA, response to DoD OIG request for information, 24.3 OES 048, 7/10/2024.

Between March and May, the Afghanistan Freedom Front carried out 14 attacks targeting Taliban security forces, compared with the 24 confirmed attacks recorded in the previous quarter. The National Resistance Front carried out 29 confirmed attacks, with 20 in Kabul, 6 in Takhar province, 2 in Baghlan province and 1 in Parwan province, according to the UN Secretary-General.<sup>85</sup>

## Afghans Deported from Pakistan Not Affecting Security

As of June 1, approximately 610,000 displaced Afghans had returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan, following Pakistan's announcement that it would repatriate foreigners without valid immigration and identification documents beginning in September 2023.<sup>86</sup> The returnees have probably exacerbated the unemployment situation in Afghanistan, and they rely on humanitarian aid to meet their basic needs, the DIA said.<sup>87</sup>

Immediate pressure to return to Afghanistan has been reduced because of the delayed implementation of the next phase of the deportation campaign. Also, Pakistan's extension of Afghans' registration cards gave some Afghans more time to stay in the country. The DIA stated that it has seen no significant updates to returnees' impact on Afghanistan's economy this quarter.<sup>88</sup>

The influx of Afghan returnees probably has diverted some resources from security to humanitarian issues, but the situation has not threatened the Taliban's control of Afghanistan.<sup>89</sup> In early June, the Taliban started evicting and damaging the settlements of about 6,000 internally displaced persons (IDP) throughout Kabul in accordance with its 2022 plan to relocate 70,000 people from Kabul IDP settlements. One of the settlements, Nasaji Bagrami, has been used for more than 10 years, and its residents, 90 percent of whom were originally displaced by conflict, were already experiencing severe poverty before their eviction.<sup>90</sup> The DIA said it had no information on whether ISIS-K, al-Qaeda, or the TTP were exploiting the Afghan returnee situation during the quarter.<sup>91</sup>

## REGIONAL STABILITY

### Afghanistan's Neighbors Discuss Regional Security at Summit in Kazakhstan

In June, leaders of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member countries met in Astana, Kazakhstan, and declared that a peaceful Afghanistan is beneficial for countries in the region. The SCO is a Eurasian political, economic, security, and defense international organization established in 2001 by the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Russia. Its members also include Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.<sup>92</sup>

Russian President Vladimir Putin, who attended the SCO summit, said that the resumption of an SCO contact group on Afghanistan would help "normalize" the situation in Afghanistan. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said that the UN was ready to cooperate with the SCO to fight terrorism. Russia, the PRC, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Türkiye were among the countries attending the summit. Afghanistan, which used to participate in the SCO meetings as an observer, was not invited, media reported.<sup>93</sup>

**As of June 1, approximately 610,000 displaced Afghans had returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan, following Pakistan's announcement that it would repatriate foreigners without valid immigration and identification documents beginning in September 2023.**



## Regional Countries Respond to Afghan Terrorist Threats

The DIA reported that countries neighboring Afghanistan voiced persistent concerns with the Taliban about terrorist threats emanating from the country.<sup>94</sup>

**Central Asian States:** The DIA said it has not observed Central Asian states developing military-to-military relationships with the Taliban or conducting military or counterterrorism operations related to Afghanistan. As of mid-June, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan have sought to develop their economic cooperation with the Taliban, while Tajikistan has opposed efforts to invite Afghanistan's participation in regional organizations.<sup>95</sup>

On June 3, Kazakhstani President Kassym Jomart Tokayev announced the removal of the Taliban from the country's prohibited terrorist organization list as part of an effort to develop bilateral trade. Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Afghanistan announced the establishment of a joint logistics center in the Afghan city of Torghundi to facilitate regional commerce, and Uzbekistan concluded a separate trade deal with Afghanistan worth \$44 million. Tajikistan remains concerned about the threat of instability that Afghanistan poses to Central Asia and has opposed the Taliban's participation in upcoming meetings of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.<sup>96</sup>

**PRC:** As of July, the PRC maintained its ad hoc relations with the Taliban, avoiding official legitimization of the movement as the ruling force in the country.<sup>97</sup> The PRC is interested in access to Afghanistan's natural resources, strengthening its influence in the region, and controlling Uighur militants in Afghanistan. The PRC advocates that the SCO play a more important role in the process of integrating Afghanistan into the regional security system.<sup>98</sup>

**India:** India pursued low-level engagement with the Taliban, focused on humanitarian assistance and counterterrorism.<sup>99</sup> On May 13, India and Iran signed a 10-year agreement to maintain Indian operations at Iran's Chabahar port, which will allow New Delhi to continue transporting humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan.<sup>100</sup>

**Iran:** Iran continued to emphasize security cooperation with the Taliban. Iran engaged in several meetings with the Taliban on water rights and efforts to pressure Israel, according to press reporting. In mid-June, the acting Iranian Foreign Minister discussed with the Taliban's foreign minister the need for unified Islamic efforts to press Israel.<sup>101</sup>

**Pakistan:** Pakistan continued to conduct counterterrorism operations against the TTP near the border with Afghanistan. Since Pakistan's March 18 airstrike in Afghanistan, Pakistan has refrained from conducting airstrikes and still publicly blames the Taliban for allowing crossborder militant attacks.<sup>102</sup> In May, Taliban and Pakistani border forces clashed using artillery attacks for 4 days near the Dand-e-Patan border crossing, following Taliban objections to Pakistani plans to build a security checkpoint.<sup>103</sup>

**Russia:** Russia is deepening relationships with the Taliban and regional governments, according to the DIA, citing press reporting. In June, Russia emphasized Moscow's support for the Taliban joining the SCO. In late May, Russia said it would remove the Taliban from its list of terrorist organizations and indicated that Moscow plans to officially recognize the Taliban. President Vladimir Putin claimed Moscow would coordinate cooperation between the Taliban and Central Asian States, according to an official statement.<sup>104</sup>

## TTP Continues Assaults on Pakistani Security Forces

The DIA stated that it observed no changes in TTP strategy, priorities, or activities during the quarter.<sup>105</sup> The TTP's primary objectives almost certainly remain to expel Pakistan's military from the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas and to replace the Pakistani government with an Islamic state. In late May, Pakistani officials continued to allege that the TTP was responsible for a March attack on PRC nationals, but the TTP has reiterated that Pakistan's military and security forces are the group's only targets, the DIA reported.<sup>106</sup>

The TTP continued to use its safe haven in Afghanistan to conduct attacks in Pakistan, the DIA stated.<sup>107</sup> From April through May, the TTP claimed 195 attacks against military and security targets, compared to its 207 claimed attacks from last quarter, the DIA stated.<sup>108</sup> The DIA said that the TTP attack claims are probably an inflation of its actual attacks.<sup>109</sup>

According to the DIA, the Tehrik-e Jihad Pakistan (TJP)—another terrorist group, whose official relationship with the TTP remains unclear—did not claim any attacks this year, but it has conducted attacks in Balochistan, Punjab, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces since its founding in early 2023.<sup>110</sup> The DIA stated it had no information as to why the TJP has not claimed attacks this year or whether they have conducted any this year, and some Pakistani media sources have previously speculated that TJP is a front group for TTP. Others have claimed the TJP is a splinter group, the DIA stated. Last year, Pakistani security forces and a TTP commander claimed that the TJP is a TTP cover organization. The majority of TTP and TJP attacks have occurred in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, the DIA stated.<sup>111</sup>

The TTP almost certainly does not have the intent or capability to launch attacks against U.S. or Western interests outside of Afghanistan or Pakistan.<sup>112</sup> However, U.S. or Western unilateral counterterrorism operations or direct involvement in Pakistan counterterrorism operations against the group may drive the TTP to revoke its ban on targeting Western interests, the DIA stated.<sup>113</sup> The DIA stated that TTP violence may present an indirect, collateral risk to U.S. interests in Pakistan.<sup>114</sup>

## Pakistan Announces New Counterterrorism Campaign Targeting Afghanistan-Based VEOs

Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's office announced a new national counterterrorism strategy on June 22, according to media reporting. The strategy includes a combination of military efforts, new legislation to bolster terrorism prosecutions, and steps to counter violent extremism in Pakistan.<sup>115</sup>

Although not yet finalized, media reporting suggested the strategy will focus more on intensifying existing intelligence-based operations than on launching new military offensives.<sup>116</sup> Pakistan Defense Minister Khawaja Asif later confirmed that Pakistan will continue to launch attacks against Afghanistan as part of the new military operation, media reported.<sup>117</sup> Asif also publicly accused the Taliban of providing shelter to terrorists and militants within Afghanistan and said Pakistan would strike TTP safe havens located inside Afghanistan, if required, State said.<sup>118</sup>

**From April through May, the TTP claimed 195 attacks against military and security targets, compared to its 207 claimed attacks from last quarter, the DIA stated.**

**As of late June, small numbers of U.S.-origin small arms and associated equipment provided to the former Afghan government were moving via illicit markets in the region, the DIA said.**

## **Pakistan Commits to Further Counterterrorism Cooperation with the United States**

In May, U.S. and Pakistani security officials met for counterterrorism talks in Washington, D.C. and agreed to intensify their work together to combat terrorist organizations, including the TTP and ISIS-K.<sup>119</sup> According to State, the U.S.-Pakistan Counterterrorism Dialogue addressed shared concerns of the growing TTP and ISIS-K threat both within Pakistan and the region and reaffirmed a shared determination to contribute to both regional and global security and stability. Both countries also discussed ongoing counterterrorism cooperation and identified areas—including border security and counter terrorist financing—for further coordination, State said.<sup>120</sup> According to a joint statement after the talks, “Pakistan and the United States recognize that a partnership to counter ISIS-K, the TTP, and other terrorist organizations will advance security in the region and serve as a model of bilateral and regional cooperation to address transnational terrorism threats.”<sup>121</sup>

In late June, Pakistani officials acknowledged that Afghanistan’s leaders presented solutions to Pakistan for tackling terrorism and expressed support for these solutions, according to news reporting.<sup>122</sup> However, the situation along the border remains tense.<sup>123</sup> The frequency of TTP attacks against Pakistani security forces increased, and Pakistani security forces carried out counterterrorism operations against suspected TTP affiliates in Karachi throughout June, State said.<sup>124</sup>

## **VEOs Employ Limited Numbers of U.S.-Origin Weapons, Equipment**

Militants probably are using only limited numbers of U.S.-origin weapons and equipment from the former Afghan government’s stocks, including small arms and night-vision devices, to conduct attacks in Pakistan, the DIA stated.<sup>125</sup> Pakistani sources allege that TTP equipment comes from U.S.-origin equipment transferred to the former Afghan government. In May, the TTP released a video showcasing military equipment confiscated from the Pakistani army, however, the DIA stated it could not determine the origin of the equipment.<sup>126</sup>

As of late June, small numbers of U.S.-origin small arms and associated equipment provided to the former Afghan government were moving via illicit markets in the region, the DIA said.<sup>127</sup> In April, a Pakistani newspaper claimed that the TTP is armed with U.S.-origin weapons and equipment transferred to the former Afghan government, including night-vision devices, the DIA stated.<sup>128</sup> In May, Pakistani TV anchors and analysts claimed that Afghans, likely private citizens, were selling U.S.-origin weapons, equipment, and ammunition to Pakistanis and that Pakistanis preferred to purchase weapons from Afghanistan, the DIA stated.<sup>129</sup> The quantity of U.S.-origin weapons that Pakistani sources allege is in the hands of anti-Pakistan militants is likely an exaggeration, the DIA stated.<sup>130</sup>



## Training Underway for Pilots, Crew for Former AAF Aircraft Transferred to Uzbekistan

In August 2021, Afghan Air Force (AAF) and Special Mission Wing pilots flew their helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft to Uzbekistan and Tajikistan to escape advancing Taliban fighters as they seized control of the country.<sup>131</sup> On November 29, 2023, the commander of Uzbekistan's Air Force and Air Defense Forces signed U.S. Government-prepared letters of offer and acceptance for the transfer of 6 A-29s, 1 AC-208, 4 C-208s, 11 PC-12s, and 14 Mi-17s to Uzbekistan under the Excess Defense Articles program.<sup>132</sup>

The OUSD(P) reported that in March, 43 Uzbekistani pilots, maintainers, and intelligence analysts who will crew the former AAF aircraft began a 6-month DoD English language training program.<sup>133</sup> Between October 2024 and April 2025, the students are scheduled to complete technical training focused on their specific responsibilities as part of the aircraft mission, the OUSD(P) reported. Additionally, the DoD is refurbishing the first two former Afghan PC-12 aircraft that the DoD transferred to the Uzbek government.<sup>134</sup>

The Uzbekistani and Tajikistani governments continued to hold the former AAF aircraft flown to both countries after the fall of Kabul. The United States and Tajikistan continued to discuss the transfer of the aircraft now in Tajikistan. State's role in negotiating the transfer is to assess U.S. national security interests in the region and notify Congress on the Excess Defense Article transfer, State said.<sup>135</sup>

## DoD and State IGs Travel to the Middle East

In June, Department of Defense Inspector General Robert P. Storch and Department of State Inspector General Cardell K. Richardson, Sr. traveled together to Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iraq, and Syria to visit key leaders executing the OES and Operation Inherent Resolve missions and discuss U.S. policy priorities in the region.

In meetings with representatives from State's Coordinator for Afghan Relocation Efforts (CARE) at CARE-Doha (formerly known as Camp As Sayliyah), the two IGs discussed progress on the Special Immigrant Visa program, and issues related to the transfer of the facility authorities related to the processing and housing of Afghan evacuees in Qatar, from DoD to State. The two IGs also met with the chargé d'affaires of the Afghanistan Affairs Unit, located in the U.S. Embassy in Doha, Qatar, to discuss State's Special Immigrant Visa Program and U.S. policy toward Afghanistan.

In meetings with military leaders at Al Udeid Air Base, the two IGs received updates on urgent issues affecting the OES campaign, including the ISIS-K threat. The IGs from the DoD, State, and USAID and their staff engage regularly, both in person and virtually, with U.S. military, diplomatic, and humanitarian officials to obtain first-hand updates on overseas operations and discuss the impact of U.S. assistance.

# U.S. POLICY OBJECTIVES IN AFGHANISTAN

The United States, in cooperation with partners and allies, takes a whole-of-government approach to its counterterrorism efforts to prevent the re-emergence of external threats emanating from Afghanistan. State consistently presses the Taliban to fulfill its counterterrorism commitment and reiterated to the Taliban its responsibility to prevent Afghanistan from being used as a launch point for terrorist attacks.<sup>136</sup> The U.S. Government's national security interests in Afghanistan and neighboring countries include countering terrorist threats and fulfilling its commitment to relocate and resettle Afghan allies and partners.<sup>137</sup> Specific U.S. diplomatic and political objectives in Afghanistan are depicted in Table 3.

## DIPLOMACY AND POLITICAL OBJECTIVES

### U.S. ACTIVITIES

The Afghanistan Affairs Unit (AAU) is State's "embassy in exile" based in Doha, Qatar. The AAU manages U.S. diplomacy with Afghanistan, including consular affairs, administering humanitarian assistance, and working with allies and partners to coordinate U.S. engagement and messaging to the Taliban, State said.<sup>138</sup>

In July 2023, U.S. and Taliban senior representatives and technical professionals met in Doha for the first time since State suspended operations in August 2021. They discussed critical interests and areas for confidence building in support of the Afghan people. Subsequently, both sides have participated in follow-on technical talks on topics including economic stabilization and counternarcotics.<sup>139</sup>

Table 3.

#### U.S. Diplomatic and Political Objectives in Afghanistan

Preventing terrorist groups from using Afghanistan as a base for external operations that could threaten the United States or our allies;

Facilitating safe passage for U.S. citizens and Afghans of particular concern to the United States;

Facilitating the provision of humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people and mitigating a humanitarian disaster in Afghanistan;

Advocating for U.S. values and human rights, especially those of women, girls, and members of minority groups; and

Coordinating with the international community on shared interests and support for the Afghan people.

**Source:** State, "Integrated Country Strategy: Afghanistan," 11/14/2023.

One U.S.-based expert on Afghanistan agreed with this approach and observed that diplomatic talks with the Taliban should be “more focused” and that the way forward is to discuss technical issues, “topic by topic”—including economic engagement, climate adaptation, and security cooperation—rather than setting “impossible goals” like power-sharing and inclusive governance.<sup>140</sup>

## Taliban Attends Doha Talks, but Afghan Women and Civil Society Left Out

On June 30 and July 1, the United Nations hosted a third meeting in Doha (Doha III) to coordinate with envoys to Afghanistan from countries and multilateral organizations on the approach to Afghanistan and engagement with Afghans, State said.<sup>141</sup> The meeting concluded with no pledges of reform from the Taliban or concessions from the international community.<sup>142</sup>

Doha III was the first meeting in the series that the Taliban attended. Zabihullah Mujahid, the Taliban’s chief spokesperson, led the delegation. The Taliban was not invited to the Doha meeting in May 2023 and declined to participate in February 2024 for several reasons, including because Afghan women and civil society members were invited.<sup>143</sup> This time, UN officials confirmed that the talks would be held without Afghan civil society representatives, including women, at the table, a Taliban precondition for attending.<sup>144</sup> However, other Afghans, including women, did participate in a separate UN-organized civil society event with country envoys on July 2, a day after the Doha III meeting ended.<sup>145</sup>

At Doha III, the Taliban delegation demanded an end to financial sanctions and increased international engagement yet described curbs on women’s freedom as an internal policy matter, media reported.<sup>146</sup> Rosemary DiCarlo, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and organizer of Doha III, acknowledged criticism against holding the meeting without Afghan women participating. However, she noted that the Taliban representatives heard “very clearly” the need to include women and civil society in all aspects of public life.<sup>147</sup> DiCarlo also emphasized that engagement does not mean normalization or recognition.<sup>148</sup> One analyst called the talks a public relations win for the Taliban. He observed that the Taliban delegates discussed issues that mattered to them, and the meeting “excluded those they didn’t want at the table.”<sup>149</sup> The analyst also pointed out that it was the United Nations that took the brunt of the anger for excluding Afghan women, not the Taliban.<sup>150</sup>

U.S. Special Representative for Afghanistan Thomas West, U.S. Special Envoy for Afghan Women, Girls, and Human Rights Rina Amiri, and Karen Decker, Chargé d’Affaires of the AAU, participated in the Doha III talks as well as the follow-on meeting with civil society activists.<sup>151</sup> On the margins of Doha III, the Taliban met separately with several country envoys, including the U.S. delegation.<sup>152</sup> Special Representative West said that reintegration of Afghanistan into the global community was one of the key objectives of the talks, noting that envoys attended with the intent to “launch a process” that envisions the reintegration of Afghanistan and the community of nations.<sup>153</sup> According to State, Doha III was an opportunity to remind the Taliban that any step toward normalization required that it substantively address the rights of Afghan women and girls to education, and for women to work, and to participate in public life.<sup>154</sup> The United Nations is expected to schedule a follow-on meeting in the next few months.<sup>155</sup>

**The UN-hosted Doha III meeting concluded with no pledges of reform from the Taliban or concessions from the international community.**



## Afghanistan Not Making Significant Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking

On June 24, Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken announced the release of State's 2024 annual Trafficking in Persons Report.<sup>156</sup> State identified Afghanistan as 1 of 11 countries that do not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking.<sup>157</sup> The United States recognizes two primary forms of trafficking in persons: forced labor and sex trafficking.<sup>158</sup>

State reported that Taliban-run Afghan ministries and other public sector institutions did not take meaningful steps to eliminate trafficking and address labor and sex trafficking, nor did they identify or protect any trafficking victims. There was a pattern of the Taliban employing or recruiting child soldiers and a pattern of sexual slavery. Most Afghan trafficking victims were children forced to work in carpet making, brick kilns, domestic servitude, sex trafficking (including bacha bazi, a practice in which men exploit boys for social and sexual entertainment). Other forced labor included domestic, transportation, agriculture and livestock work, construction and other hard labor, poppy cultivation and drug smuggling, and weapons trafficking. State further reported that the Taliban and other armed groups—including ISIS-K and the National Resistance Front—recruit and use children in combat and support roles.<sup>159</sup>

State also reported that the Taliban made no anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts. Previously, the Taliban announced it would review all existing criminal laws and some would remain in effect unless they violated the Taliban's interpretation of sharia, as determined by Taliban courts. For a second consecutive year, the Taliban has not indicated which pre-August 2021 trafficking laws remain in effect and did not report any laws criminalizing sex or labor trafficking. State said that according to observers, the Taliban revoked Afghanistan's constitution and criminal code, including all laws on the protection of children, and judicial processes, based on interpretations of religious jurisprudence.<sup>160</sup>

In its 2024-2025 Anti-Trafficking Action Plan for Afghanistan, State made seven recommendations to further Afghanistan's anti-trafficking efforts over the next year. They included ceasing the Taliban's unlawful recruitment of children as soldiers or for sexual slavery, including at the local levels, and demobilizing children from all armed groups.<sup>161</sup>

In May, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Afghanistan reported that increased monitoring of trafficking in women, girls, and boys within and from Afghanistan was needed and indicators showed significant risks—particularly for trafficking for the purposes of forced marriage, domestic servitude, and sexual exploitation. He also said that Afghan girls suffer age- and gender-specific harms, including unequal access to education and increased risk of exploitation, including trafficking.<sup>162</sup>

**State reported that Taliban-run Afghan ministries and other public sector institutions did not take meaningful steps to eliminate trafficking and address labor and sex trafficking, nor did they identify or protect any trafficking victims.**



## U.S. Citizens Unjustly Detained in Afghanistan Remain a High Priority

U.S. officials, when meeting with Taliban representatives, continued to press for the release of all American detainees at every opportunity, State said. In meetings with the Taliban on the margins of Doha III, Special Representative West pressed for the immediate and unconditional release of U.S. citizens unjustly detained in Afghanistan, noting that the detentions impede progress in the Taliban’s desire for international recognition.<sup>163</sup> Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid also acknowledged that the discussions included American and Afghan detainees, media reported.<sup>164</sup>

Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken delivers remarks on the release of the 2024 Trafficking in Persons Report at the Department of State in Washington, D.C., on June 24. (State photo)

## Equal Rights in Afghanistan Remains a Key Tenet of U.S. Policy

During the quarter, State reiterated regularly to the Taliban that the Taliban would not achieve its self-stated goal of legitimacy if half of the population cannot participate in its society and in its economy.<sup>165</sup> According to Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken, the U.S. Government will continue to “rally global pressure on the Taliban to reverse these repressive policies, which are hurting women and girls.”<sup>166</sup> U.S. Special Envoy for Afghan Women, Girls, and Human Rights Rina Amiri continued to engage diplomatically, particularly with Muslim majority countries. On June 13, she and Special Representative West worked with UN and diplomatic counterparts at the Oslo Forum to reinforce the U.S. Government’s call for meaningful inclusion of women and girls’ rights ahead of Doha III. Special Envoy Amiri, through the U.S.-Afghan Consultative Mechanism, convened a town hall meeting as well as expert exchanges with U.S. Government officials and Afghan civil society leaders on key policy issues including women and girls’ involvement in madrassa education, disability rights, and diplomatic engagement with the Taliban. She also engaged Afghan business leaders to explore private sector engagement to expand opportunities for women.<sup>167</sup>

**The bans effectively deprive women of the ability to contribute to most of the Afghan economy and there is no indication that the restrictions will be reversed in the near term.**

Since April 2023, the Taliban has issued decrees banning women from participating in radio and TV shows where the presenters are men, prohibiting women from entering certain national parks, and banning beauty salons. The Taliban also re-iterated bans on female employment with NGOs, State said.<sup>168</sup> In June, the Taliban announced a new decree lowering the salary of female civil servants employed by the previous government that could discourage women from working at all.<sup>169</sup> The bans effectively deprive women of the ability to contribute to most of the Afghan economy and there is no indication that the restrictions will be reversed in the near term. Overall, the trend has been toward increased enforcement of restrictive edicts, including enforcement of rules regarding women’s attire, State said.<sup>170</sup>

In June, UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Afghanistan Richard Bennett released a report documenting the Taliban’s systematic discrimination and segregation of women and girls in Afghanistan. It noted that after seizing power in 2021, the Taliban swiftly imposed a ban on secondary education for girls, subsequently expanding this restriction to encompass universities and, more recently, private learning centers.<sup>171</sup> The report release date marked 1,000 days since the ban on adolescent girls from school.<sup>172</sup> Bennett said that Afghan women and girls were “pushing back” against the Taliban’s institutionalized efforts to erase women from society.<sup>173</sup> Women and girls have been protesting in public to demand that their rights be restored, risking detention, arrest, and violence. With schools closed to them, a small percentage of girls have moved online to take classes, studying English, math and science, and female entrepreneurs are finding creative ways to circumvent the Taliban’s harsh restrictions, Bennett said.<sup>174</sup>

During the quarter, Special Envoy Amiri continued to advocate for additional State-supported agreements to allow Afghan women and girls access to online educational materials translated into local languages to continue their studies.<sup>175</sup> Special Representative West noted in a media interview that women and girls have demanded and must be allowed to have a proper education at all levels so that they can join the workforce.<sup>176</sup>

## **U.S. Government Continues Relocating Afghans Under Enduring Welcome**

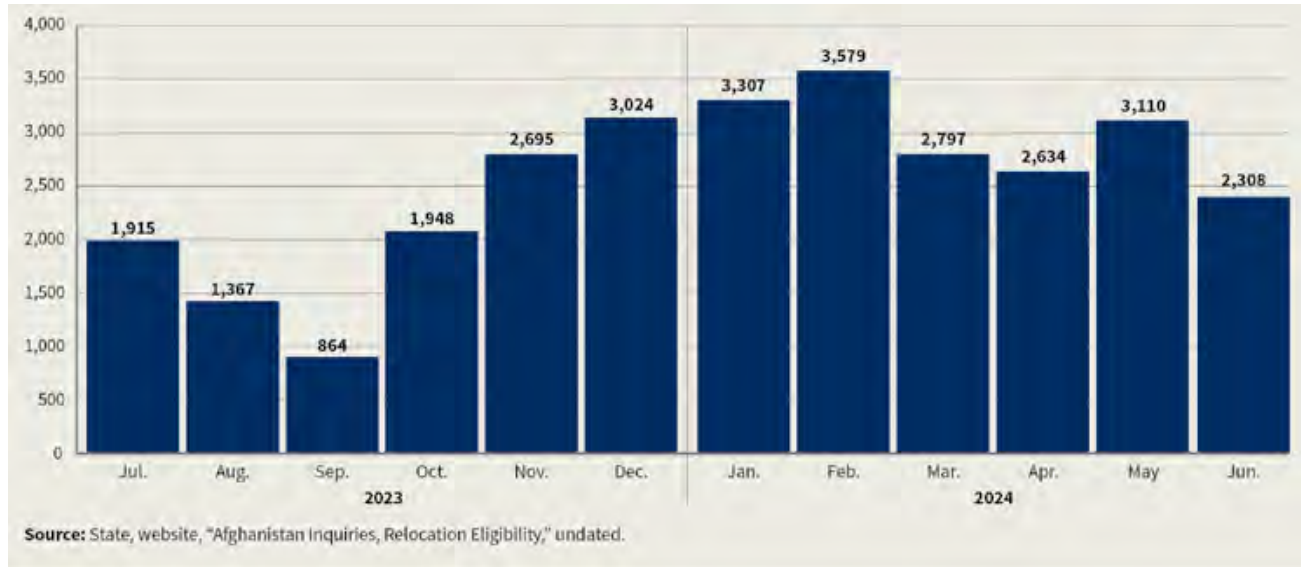
Enduring Welcome is a whole-of-government effort to relocate and resettle eligible Afghan allies and their families from Afghanistan. The previous interagency effort to relocate Afghan allies, Operation Allies Welcome (OAW) formally ended on September 30, 2022, with the shift to Enduring Welcome.<sup>177</sup>

### **Special Immigrant Visas**

State’s Office of the Coordinator for Afghan Relocation Efforts (CARE) handles the planning and logistics of relocating eligible Afghans—including those who qualify for Special Immigrant Visas (SIV) as well as Immigrant Visas and approved U.S. Refugee Assistance Program cases—on flights or by ground transportation to processing sites.<sup>178</sup> During the quarter, State issued more than 8,000 SIVs to individuals from Afghanistan. As of June 30, more than 25,500 SIVs have been issued in FY 2024.<sup>179</sup>



Figure 2.  
Special Immigrant Visa Issuances, July 2023–June 2024



USCIS Refugee Processing, as of June 21, 2024

**18,000**

Refugee Applicants Interviews in FY 2024

**293**

Afghans Applied for Asylum Since April

**2,715**

OAW Asylum Cases Completed

Source: DHS OIG, response to DoD OIG request for information, 24.3 WOG DHS 02, 7/2/2024.

Refugee and Asylum Cases

DHS stated that USCIS continues to expand Afghan refugee processing of all priority categories in countries worldwide. USCIS also continues to prioritize OAW-related asylum applications while handling surges of cases at the Southwest border where an individual has expressed a credible fear of returning to their country due to persecution or torture, the DHS stated.<sup>180</sup>

According to the DHS, individuals who were paroled under OAW passed security screening before being paroled into the United States. Those who did not pass vetting were not permitted to travel to the United States. The DHS also ensures that parolees undergo recurrent vetting to identify any new information that may need evaluation.<sup>181</sup> As of May 22, over 8,400 Afghan refugees had arrived in the United States in FY 2024, the DHS stated.<sup>182</sup>

All refugee and SIV applicants undergo the required and established interagency vetting process and other required steps for adjudication, to include interviews while at overseas processing locations, the DHS stated. Only those individuals who successfully complete all aspects of their U.S. Refugee Admissions Program or SIV applications, including security vetting, are authorized to apply for admission to the United States.<sup>183</sup> Any individual found

**The Taliban continued to stifle civil society by limiting or banning political and other civic activity, using harassment, intimidation, coercion, surveillance, and detention, including journalists, human rights defenders, and girls' education and women's rights advocates.**

to be linked to VEOs via vetting is not authorized to travel to the United States. According to the DHS, no Afghan refugees relocated to the United States during this quarter failed to complete required vetting processes or were otherwise assessed to have links to VEOs.<sup>184</sup>

The DHS clarified that USCIS does not determine the number of pass/fail security screenings, but rather determines whether an individual is eligible for an immigration benefit based on the Immigration and Naturalization Act including results of interagency security checks.<sup>185</sup> The DHS stated that it continued to provide biometric match results to CBP and USCIS, for the purposes of biometric vetting for admissibility adjudication and identity analysis for employment authorization. Biometric services allow the DHS to facilitate an accurate and timely identification and verification processes. Identity adjudications that would result in passed or failed security screenings are the responsibility of the operational components performing the identity analysis.<sup>186</sup>

In FY 2024, USCIS operated Afghan Support Centers in San Antonio, Denver, Atlanta, Chicago, Raleigh, Northern Virginia, Detroit, St. Louis, Syracuse, Buffalo, and Anaheim. USCIS also participated in Afghan Support Centers in Houston, Dallas, and Portland hosted by State Refugee Coordinators.<sup>187</sup>

## TALIBAN ACTIVITY

The Taliban continued to stifle civil society by limiting or banning political and other civic activity, using harassment, intimidation, coercion, surveillance, and detention, including journalists, human rights defenders, and girls' education and women's rights advocates.<sup>188</sup>

### Sanctioned Taliban Officials Travel to UAE, Saudi Arabia

On June 4, Taliban Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani, who is a U.S.-designated Specially Designated Global Terrorist with a \$10 million bounty for information leading to his arrest, visited the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and met with the UAE president in Abu Dhabi.<sup>189</sup>

On June 5, Haqqani and several other Taliban leaders reportedly traveled to Saudi Arabia to perform the annual Muslim pilgrimage of Hajj.<sup>190</sup> The United Nations temporarily lifted travel restrictions for Haqqani and three other Taliban leaders, including intelligence chief Abdul-Haq Wassiq, and Noor Mohammad Qaqib, minister of Hajj and religious affairs.<sup>191</sup> The UN 1988 Sanctions Committee granted a travel ban exemption for this travel only. Otherwise, the travel ban remains in effect, State said.<sup>192</sup>

The Taliban remained sanctioned under U.S. counterterrorism authorities and many Taliban leaders also remained sanctioned under UN authorities, according to State.<sup>193</sup> Sanctioned Taliban members are required to seek permission for travel through an exemption process outlined in sanctions imposed on the Taliban.<sup>194</sup> Countries that expect to receive listed Taliban members are required to request an exemption at least 3 weeks prior to travel except where humanitarian considerations require a shorter period. Exemption requests are confidential State said. Under the UN's 1988 sanctions regime, 135 Taliban individuals are subject to the travel ban.<sup>195</sup>

Although UN Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs DiCarlo acknowledged that sanctions were raised as "a concern" by the Taliban at the Doha III meeting, she said that "sanctions are on people, not on the country."<sup>196</sup>

## Taliban Increasing Ties with Countries Across the Region

State said that, during the quarter, it continued to track the nature of interactions between the Taliban and other countries and was not aware of any country that has formally announced that it recognized the Taliban as Afghanistan’s government. However, many countries have sent delegations to visit Afghanistan. The Taliban continued to press for regional countries to accept the credentials of their so-called diplomats.<sup>197</sup> The Taliban claimed that there is now Taliban “diplomatic” representation in more than three dozen cities in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East.<sup>198</sup>

In May, Russian officials made statements to the media that they would be taking steps to remove the Taliban from the list of Moscow-designated terrorist organizations.<sup>199</sup>

State continued to urge other countries not to take any steps to lend unearned legitimacy to the Taliban until it shows a sustained track record of meeting its commitments.<sup>200</sup> Taliban spokesperson Mujahid told reporters that his delegation held 24 meetings with representatives of different countries on the sidelines of the Doha III conference, which were “as productive” as the conference itself.<sup>201</sup>

## Taliban Engaged in Severe Violations of Religious Freedom

On June 26, Secretary of State Blinken released State’s annual report on International Religious Freedom which stated that the Taliban systematically restricts religious freedom in Afghanistan and that religious minorities continued to face violence and discrimination. On December 29, 2023, Secretary Blinken redesignated the Taliban as an “entity of particular concern” under the International Religious Freedom Act for engaging in particularly severe violations of religious freedom.<sup>202</sup>

Secretary of State Blinken, joined by Ambassador at Large for Religious Freedom Rashad Hussain, speaks at the roll-out of the International Religious Freedom Report at the State Department in Washington, D.C., on May 15, 2024. (State photo)





The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, an independent, bipartisan U.S. government advisory body, also released a report on the Taliban's restrictions on religious freedom during the quarter. The Commission reported that in 2023, religious freedom conditions in Afghanistan deteriorated under Taliban rule.<sup>203</sup>

State's report chronicles the Taliban's violation of religious freedoms for all but Sunni Muslims, who constitute approximately 89 percent of the Afghan population. Shia Muslims make up approximately 11 percent. Throughout the year, U.S. officials and other sources blamed the Taliban for marginalization and systematic attacks against the minority Shia Muslim population to force them to leave the country.<sup>204</sup>

### **Afghanistan's Economy Stable but Extremely Fragile**

Afghanistan's economy remained stable but was marked by low overall economic activity and extreme fragility, State said. The World Bank reported that Afghanistan's economy continued to grapple with inflation.<sup>205</sup> In April 2024, it recorded a decline of 7.5 percent for the price of goods compared to April 2023. Exports declined in the first quarter of calendar year 2024, while imports increased by 29 percent from 2023 to the first quarter of 2024. In May, the World Bank said that Pakistan and India remained Afghanistan's primary export destinations, accounting for 47 percent and 29 percent of exports respectively.<sup>206</sup>

During the quarter, the Taliban sought to shift international aid from humanitarian to infrastructure support. In a June 2024 report to the Security Council, the UN Secretary-General stated that Taliban authorities remained focused on implementing their strategy of economic independence through infrastructure construction, private investments, and increased domestic production.<sup>207</sup> In a June speech to the private sector, the Taliban's commerce minister outlined the Taliban's economic priorities, including sanctions relief, return of central bank assets, "normalized" banking relations with the international community, and donor-funded infrastructure and development aid.<sup>208</sup>

However, these goals remain difficult to achieve due to the Taliban's restrictions on women and girls. State, citing UN reporting, estimated that the Afghan economy is losing approximately \$1 billion per year by limiting the role of women in the economy. This number will likely increase with each generation that is kept out of schools and universities. The bans on secondary and tertiary education are directly associated with gross domestic product loss. Further, restrictions on women's employment and movement, and caps on salaries for women in the public sector, diminish their contributions to the economy and reduce productivity for the men who must escort them on travel outside the home, State said.<sup>209</sup> The UN Secretary-General reported that Taliban-imposed restrictions have significantly impacted women entrepreneurs, a crucial part of Afghanistan's private sector. Some female traders reported facing gender discrimination in market access.<sup>210</sup>

State said that it continued to advocate for women's access to the labor market and women-led business opportunities in Afghanistan. State funds the Afghan Women Economic Empowerment Through Leveraging the Private Sector program in Afghanistan which began in September 2022. Key goals of the program include advancing economic security and resilience of Afghan women in Afghanistan as well as third countries, and supporting the ability of the private sector, NGOs, and other civil society organizations to engage and provide assistance to Afghan women.<sup>211</sup>

## Taliban Calls for Release of Frozen Assets and Asks for Technical Banking Assistance

At the Doha III meeting, the Taliban called for the release of frozen Afghan funds and the lifting of banking sanctions.<sup>212</sup> The Taliban delegation head called for unfreezing all foreign reserves of the Afghan Central Bank (DAB), which, he said were the legitimate property of the Afghan people. Restoring the funds to the bank’s control will enhance the implementation of monetary policy, strengthen the commercial banks, and enable DAB to fulfill its foreign currency obligations to commercial banks, he added.<sup>213</sup> Nevertheless, Treasury reported that it did not take any action this quarter to unfreeze DAB assets held in the United States.<sup>214</sup>

State also reported that the Taliban continued to pressure Afghan banks into sharia compliance. There were reportedly two parallel transition processes: one run by DAB and the other by the Academy of Sciences of Afghanistan.<sup>215</sup>

The Fund for the Afghan People (Afghan Fund) assets reached \$3.84 billion at the end of June 2024 due to investment gains.<sup>216</sup> The Fund’s Board of Trustees met on June 28 in Washington, D.C. As of the June 28 meeting, the Fund had not made a disbursement, State said.<sup>217</sup>

## United Nations Continues Cash Transfers, For Now

The February 2024 World Bank Afghanistan Economic Monitor stated that Afghanistan’s currency, the afghani, appreciated 27 percent against the U.S. dollar in 2023. The increase was due to an influx of approximately \$1.8 billion in UN cash shipments and \$2 billion in remittances compensating for the approximate \$3.5 billion Afghan trade deficit. During the quarter, the United Nations continued to transport cash into Afghanistan for use by UN agencies, State said.<sup>218</sup> It does this due to “disruption in international banking transfers and liquidity issues” since the Taliban takeover in August 2021.<sup>219</sup>

According to the United Nations, the amount of cash transferred is “proportional to the UN’s program of humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan.”<sup>220</sup> The World Bank assessed that a reduction in UN currency shipments could have negative economic impacts, including the depreciation of the afghani, increased inflation, increased Afghanistan trade deficits, a decline in gross domestic product, and increased potential for negative regional spillovers.<sup>221</sup>

## State Continues to Monitor Conventional Weapons Destruction Funding

State’s Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM) continued to fund humanitarian demining, survey, munitions destruction, and mine-risk education in Afghanistan. (See Table 4.) Delivered through NGOs, the programs support Afghan civilians who face the dangers of landmines and explosive remnants of war, State said.<sup>222</sup> In 2023, the International Committee of the Red Cross reported 673 deaths from landmine explosions in Afghanistan. More than 66 percent of these deaths were children.<sup>223</sup>

Table 4.

**Total U.S. Government Conventional Weapons Destruction Funding in Afghanistan FY 2021–FY 2023**

<b>FY 2021</b>	\$20,330
<b>FY 2022</b>	\$15,193
<b>FY 2023</b>	\$5,260
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$40,783</b>

**Source:** State, “To Walk the Earth in Safety: Documenting the U.S. Commitment to Conventional Weapons Destruction,” 4/4/2024.

From 1997 through June 1, 2024, State-funded implementing partners have cleared more than 417 million square meters of land and removed or destroyed over 8.5 million landmines and other explosive remnants of war such as unexploded and abandoned ordnance, stockpiled or cached munitions, and homemade explosives. State PM programs for Afghanistan continued 12 humanitarian mine action projects (through nine implementing partners) valued at approximately \$32 million.<sup>224</sup> The Taliban did not interfere with State-funded humanitarian mine action projects or processes in Afghanistan during the quarter, State said.<sup>225</sup>

State PM employs a third-party monitoring entity that provides weekly and monthly situation reports that document monitoring and evaluation site visits of all U.S.-funded projects (humanitarian demining; technical survey; information management of the Mine Action database; and victim assistance). The weekly site assessment visits are designed to identify any operational non-conformities and ensure implementing partner compliance with both national and international mine action standards.<sup>226</sup> During the quarter, one implementing partner received a non-conformity report from the Taliban’s Directorate of Mine Action Coordination quality assurance team in which they questioned the veracity of individual training and qualification documents for site supervisors. Although the Taliban’s quality assurance team suspended clearance operations on May 11, the program implementor was able to present requested documentation and resumed clearance operations within 2 weeks, State said.<sup>227</sup>

Table 5.

**Total State Counternarcotics Funding for Afghanistan FY 2021–FY 2024**

<b>FY 2021</b>	\$8,000
<b>FY 2022</b>	\$4,500
<b>FY 2023</b>	\$5,000
<b>FY 2024*</b>	\$3,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$20,500</b>

\*Program funds authorized.

Source: State INL, vetting comment, 8/12/2024.

**U.S. Supports Counternarcotics Programs**

State’s Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) supports counternarcotics and gender justice programs focusing on drug treatment and prevention efforts to combat substance abuse as well as assistance to rural farmers to grow licit, high-value alternatives to poppy.<sup>228</sup> (See Table 5.) In 2022, the Taliban banned opium and encouraged Afghan farmers to grow alternative crops. However, some farmers were considering a return to poppy cultivation due the low price of alternatives and climate change-induced extreme weather conditions in Afghanistan, media reported.<sup>229</sup>



## HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

The U.S. Government’s primary humanitarian objectives in Afghanistan are to promote a principled humanitarian response that advocates for the independence of humanitarian partners in facilitating aid; to support and provide appropriate protection assistance to vulnerable Afghans, including women and girls; and to improve available protection and health conditions of Afghan internally displaced persons, refugees, returnees, and new Afghan arrivals in neighboring countries, State said.<sup>230</sup>

The 2024 UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs’ (OCHA) Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan for Afghanistan prioritizes the needs of 23.7 million Afghans, of which 17.3 million are targeted for assistance.<sup>231</sup> Key priorities in this plan include food assistance, safe drinking water, health care, education, and addressing acute water, sanitation, and hygiene needs.<sup>232</sup> Priorities also include the protection of vulnerable groups, especially women, girls, boys, and those living with disabilities, through safe spaces, legal support, psychosocial services, and long-term resilience initiatives.<sup>233</sup>

With USAID support, humanitarian aid organizations provide emergency food and nutrition assistance, health care services, and livelihood, multipurpose cash, protection, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene support to populations in need countrywide.<sup>234</sup> USAID-funded implementers prioritize maintaining safe spaces for women, children, and marginalized groups amid heightened vulnerabilities.<sup>235</sup>

### United States Remains the Leading Donor of Humanitarian Assistance to the Afghan People

The United States continued to be the leading provider of humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, contributing more than \$2.2 billion since August 2021.<sup>236</sup> The U.S. Government works closely with other donors to encourage international financial institutions, including the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, to make additional resources available to meet Afghans’ basic needs.<sup>237</sup>

As of June 14, USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) had a total of 18 active awards during the quarter (total award amount: nearly \$470 million) that were related to Afghanistan.<sup>238</sup> USAID initiated a new award for United Nations Development Program/UN Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund, while the FY 2023 UN World Food Programme (WFP) award ended during the quarter.<sup>239</sup> State PRM had three active awards during the quarter (total award amount: \$7.5 million) that were related to Afghanistan.<sup>240</sup>

### Food Insecurity Remains Biggest Challenge in Afghanistan

State reported that humanitarian aid challenges included continued food insecurity, the effects of climate change, and Taliban restrictions on women’s participation in relief efforts. In June, NGOs noted that humanitarian assistance remained essential given widespread food insecurity and repeated natural and man-made disasters, including the floods in northeast and northwest

Table 6.

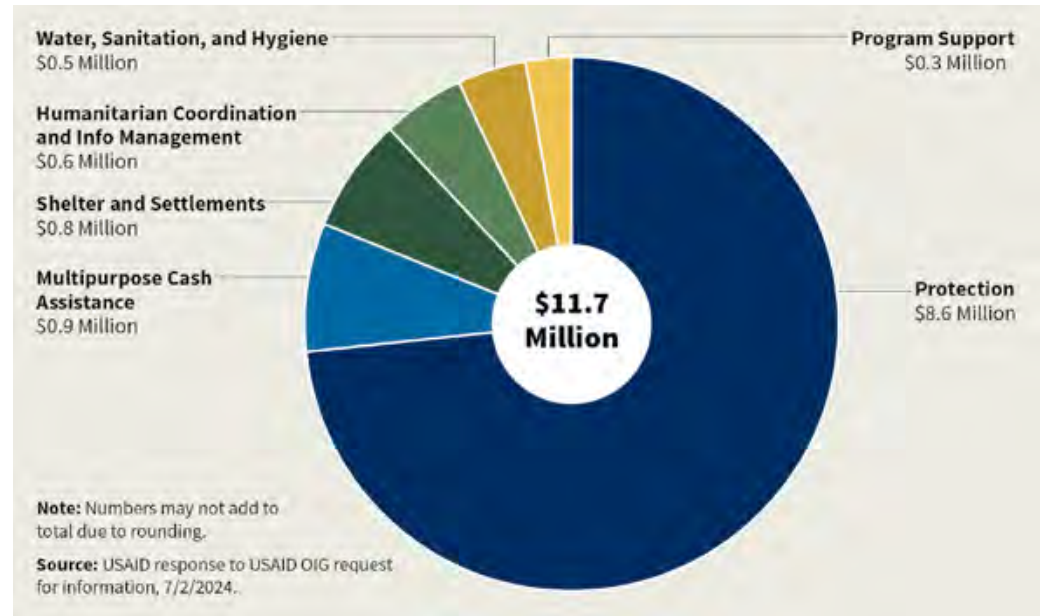
#### U.S. Government Humanitarian Funding for the Afghanistan Response in FY 2024

<b>USAID BHA</b>	\$231,581,223
<b>State PRM</b>	\$26,060,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$257,641,223</b>

**Note:** Funds committed or obligated in FY 2024.

**Source:** USAID, “Afghanistan–Complex Emergency Fact Sheet #3,” 6/14/2024.

Figure 3.

**USAID Humanitarian Assistance Funding by Sector, as of June 30, 2024**

Afghanistan in May, earthquakes in Herat in October 2023, and the return of more than 500,000 Afghans from Pakistan in late 2023.<sup>241</sup> Table 6 and Figure 3 depict U.S. Government humanitarian funding and USAID humanitarian assistance funding by sector.

State said that the highest level of need continued to be in the food security sector with 14.2 million people, or 32 percent of the total Afghan population, currently experiencing the most acute food insecurity. Of that number, more than 2.9 million people experienced emergency levels of acute food insecurity. In addition, income available for food purchases continued to decrease due to the decline in available labor opportunities. The Taliban's decision to ban women from working with NGOs and the UN in Afghanistan continued to impact the provision of humanitarian assistance inside Afghanistan.<sup>242</sup>

A June report of the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan on the Situation in Afghanistan and its Implications for International Peace and Security detailed the mismatch between humanitarian assistance needs and donor funding. The report stated that an estimated 23.7 million people will require humanitarian assistance, yet as of May 15, the Afghanistan Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan for 2024 had received only 16.2 percent of the required \$3.06 billion in funding. Because of limited funding, the WFP was forced to cut general food assistance to some populations. However, the WFP located resources for targeted response to support up to 2 million people facing extreme food insecurity from May to September 2024.<sup>243</sup>

USAID reported that harvests that began in June are expected to enhance food security for many Afghan households.<sup>244</sup> However, limited job opportunities and slow recovery from drought and floods continue to create a need for food assistance.<sup>245</sup>

Joonkook Hwang (at podium), Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations and President of the Security Council for the month of June, briefs the press on climate change in Afghanistan. (UN photo)



With USAID funding, the WFP is providing food assistance to similar numbers of people as the previous quarter.<sup>246</sup> WFP continues to offer higher levels of support during the lean season when needs are greater and plan to scale down assistance over the summer when harvests and market availability improve.<sup>247</sup> WFP provided food assistance to 2.5 million people across Afghanistan in April.<sup>248</sup> Additionally, USAID BHA-funded international NGOs are distributing seeds and livestock feed to areas at risk of food insecurity to strengthen vulnerable households, along with food and other aid.<sup>249</sup>

In April, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) warned that heavy rainfall and warm temperatures could lead to increased growth of yellow rust, locusts, and other pests.<sup>250</sup> The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has also cautioned that these factors may negatively impact future crop yields and food availability.<sup>251</sup>

## Severe Flooding Again Stresses Humanitarian Response

According to a UN- and EU-produced Risk Index, Afghanistan is the fourth-most vulnerable country to the impacts of climate change, particularly drought, disease outbreaks, and flooding.<sup>252</sup> Recent flooding in Afghanistan was driven by the heaviest rainfall figures recorded since 1991.<sup>253</sup>

Severe flooding in northern Afghanistan in May posed additional challenges to USAID BHA and State PRM implementers this quarter.<sup>254</sup> OCHA reported that more than 59,100 people were affected, with 225 confirmed deaths, more than 2,800 houses destroyed, and more than 4,060 houses damaged.<sup>255</sup> USAID BHA-funded implementers continued to support response and early recovery activities for flood-impacted communities through existing programs.<sup>256</sup> Initially, flooding caused road closures and destruction, leading to transportation delays.<sup>257</sup> However, implementers found alternative routes to reach populations in need.<sup>258</sup>

Relief organizations, including USAID BHA-funded implementers provided food, cash for non-food items, health, protection, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) assistance in areas affected by flooding.<sup>259</sup> This support covered both existing program areas and new areas with increased needs due to the flooding.<sup>260</sup>

**Recent flooding in Afghanistan was driven by the heaviest rainfall figures recorded since 1991.**

Between May 10 and June 3, humanitarian organizations, including USAID BHA-funded implementers, provided food assistance to approximately 43,000 people and health care to around 56,500 people in flood-affected areas.<sup>261</sup> This included specialized maternal and child health services, mental health and psychosocial support, and treatment for traumatic injuries.<sup>262</sup> The UN Food and Agriculture Organization and other implementers are still repairing damaged irrigation systems and safely disposed of dead livestock to reduce disease risk.<sup>263</sup> The UN World Health Organization (WHO) and other Health Cluster members are still monitoring for any rise in waterborne diseases.<sup>264</sup> With support from USAID BHA and other donors, the UN Children’s Fund had delivered safe drinking water to over 28,300 people per day and provided essential WASH supplies, such as soap and water containers, to around 23,000 people in flood-affected areas as of June 6.<sup>265</sup>

State PRM implementing partners provided humanitarian assistance to more than 35,300 households in the affected areas. U.S. Government partners noted that the floods, which were preceded by multiple years of droughts, highlight the threat of climate-related extreme weather events and the impact these events have on vulnerable Afghan households.<sup>266</sup>

### **Flooding Impacted Women and Girls Disproportionately**

Flooding disproportionately impacted women and girls, according to a UN Gender in Humanitarian Access Working Group assessment released during the quarter.<sup>267</sup> The Working Group found that women were more likely to be in their homes during heavy rains, while men were more likely to be outside and to take shelter in sturdier buildings such as mosques. Additionally, Taliban restrictions and prevailing Afghan cultural norms limited women’s access to early warning information and resources that could have allowed them to evacuate. Some female-headed households had difficulties accessing post-flood humanitarian assistance in cases when humanitarian organizations communicated the processes for accessing assistance via mosques, where women are not allowed.<sup>268</sup>

The ability of women to participate in humanitarian responses varied across Afghanistan. Aid agencies report being able to mobilize female staff to participate in the humanitarian response, including in both needs assessments and assistance delivery, is in line with existing strategies and methods to ensure women’s participation in the delivery of aid. In most places, partners reported, local Taliban did not obstruct female participation. However, this varied widely by locality, with some provincial-level Taliban personnel more receptive to aid agencies’ demands for women’s participation than others.<sup>269</sup>

### **Pakistan’s “Phase-Two” of Afghan Deportations Remains on Hold**

More than 500,000 Afghans have returned from Pakistan since the first phase of Pakistan’s plan to deport Afghans announced in October 2023. The UN estimates that 60 percent of Afghans returning from Pakistan are children. The Pakistani government announced a second phase of Afghan deportations in April; an additional 800,000 Afghans could return by the end of 2024, media reported.<sup>270</sup> According to State, the repatriation plan remained in effect, but Pakistani officials paused progression to the second phase.<sup>271</sup>



The deportation of Afghans living in Pakistan who are not in U.S. resettlement or immigration pathways declined since January 2024. Between January 1 and June 29, 2024, approximately 155,000 Afghans—the vast majority of whom were undocumented individuals—returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan; 3,550 of these returnees were deported by Pakistani authorities, according to the IOM and the UN Refugee Agency.<sup>272</sup>

Despite the plan's delay, Afghans are still returning from Pakistan, with some Afghans reporting fear of arrest in Pakistan as the most common reason to return to Afghanistan.<sup>273</sup> Many returnees and host community members continue to face significant humanitarian needs.<sup>274</sup> The IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix reported that there were more than 6 million IDPs in Afghanistan since December 2022.<sup>275</sup>

State PRM implementing partners have reached over 556,000 returnees with lifesaving post-arrival assistance. This overall returnee figure is higher than returns in the first quarter but still lower compared to the larger numbers seen in the fall of 2023.<sup>276</sup> Of the 86,900 Afghans who returned from Pakistan, the Border Consortium reports that 64 percent returned to their village of origin.<sup>277</sup>

Returnees often have high needs, with food assistance being the top priority, followed by cash, health, and shelter assistance.<sup>278</sup> The Taliban has destroyed IDP settlements in Kabul, affecting more than 6,000 people, further increasing the burden on stretched resources.<sup>279</sup>

USAID-funded implementers and other relief actors have been integrating returnees into existing assistance programs (health, shelter, WASH, protection, and food).<sup>280</sup> However, implementers have not yet expanded programs into new areas with large influxes of returnees, such as parts of Kabul and Kandahar.<sup>281</sup> According to USAID, its implementers were ready to address the increased humanitarian needs of returnees who met the criteria for assistance.<sup>282</sup>

Following the implementation of Pakistan's repatriation plan, the U.S. Government shared with the Pakistani government a list of Afghan individuals in U.S. immigration or resettlement pathways to ensure their protection from deportation. In addition, a variety of U.S. agencies provided letters to Afghan individuals to be shared with Pakistani authorities to help identify them as currently in a U.S. pathway. Following the November 30 acceptance of the list, State did not receive reports of any individuals in U.S. pathways as deported or arrested, and Pakistani authorities at the local level were reportedly also respecting the status of these individuals. State remained in close communication with the Pakistani government on the safety of individuals in U.S. resettlement and immigration pathways.<sup>283</sup>

## Efforts to Help Afghans Prepare for Winter Continue

Shelter needs among populations in Afghanistan remain significant due to natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, harsh winter weather, landslides, and displacement driven by conflict, according to USAID.<sup>284</sup> USAID-funded implementers pre-position shelter materials each year for distribution ahead of the harsh winter months and support heating costs for at-risk households.<sup>285</sup> With support from USAID BHA and other donors, from October 2023 to March 2024 the UN IOM provided cash assistance to nearly 97,600 people for immediate winterization needs this past winter.<sup>286</sup> Additionally, IOM assisted over 75,000 people affected or displaced by conflict or natural disasters with emergency shelter items such as blankets, clothing, and shelter repair tool kits.<sup>287</sup>

The IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix reported that there were more than 6 million IDPs in Afghanistan since December 2022.

## Monitoring and Oversight of Humanitarian Programs

State requires that all implementing partners have safeguards in place to ensure that assistance reaches those who need it.<sup>288</sup> Implementing partners, including those in unstable and unfriendly environments, must have robust monitoring and reporting in place. When there is cause for concern related to the delivery of assistance, State said it has protocols in place to respond, and continues to monitor all assistance programs and mitigate the risk that U.S. Government assistance could indirectly benefit the Taliban or could be diverted to unintended recipients.<sup>289</sup>

During the quarter, State PRM leveraged desk monitoring and site visit feedback by a third-party monitor to track program progress and compare performance over time.<sup>290</sup>

USAID also uses a third-party monitor to oversee USAID BHA activities. There were no changes in the third-party monitor's ability to perform during the quarter, except for a brief pause due to the detainment of staff unrelated to BHA programs.<sup>291</sup> USAID BHA plans to gradually increase third-party monitoring visits from 100 to 150 sites per month across Afghanistan, starting in May.<sup>292</sup> This expansion aims to enhance monitoring of WFP food distribution points and third party monitoring of sub-awards to NGOs.<sup>293</sup>

USAID reported that it circulates third-party monitor reports with monitored implementers, and reports instances of fraud, waste, and abuse to the OIG, unless implementers have already done so.<sup>294</sup> USAID also sends questions to implementers whose programs received red and significant yellow flags during monitoring for clarification at a field level.<sup>295</sup>

One USAID-funded implementer had three staff members detained by Taliban officials for three days.<sup>296</sup> The staff were released unharmed, and their laptops and cell phones were returned.<sup>297</sup> Interference issues have mostly involved local Shuras (community leaders) attempting to redistribute aid to a broader segment of the population.<sup>298</sup>

## Taliban Restrictions on Women Continue to Challenge Aid Organizations

During the quarter, the de facto Ministry of Economy removed the requirement for the gender of staff members of aid organizations to be indicated in the registration portal for project operators.<sup>299</sup> Since July 2023, USAID-funded implementers had been facing challenges in registering female staff in the portal, risking that female staff would be unable to continue in their jobs as they could not be paid if they were not officially registered as part of the project.<sup>300</sup> The removal of this requirement has enabled organizations to continue to register projects involving Afghan female staff.<sup>301</sup> The announcement, which followed sustained NGO engagement with the Taliban, was expected to enhance the ability of female staff to deliver aid and increase Taliban approval of memorandums of understanding, which are frequently denied to organizations that have female staff.<sup>302</sup> However, despite this announcement, Taliban interference has continued to limit the effectiveness and scope of aid operations in Afghanistan, particularly women's ability to access and deliver assistance, USAID said.<sup>303</sup>

The recent June Taliban decree reducing female government employees' monthly salaries has not yet impacted the programs or staff of USAID BHA and State PRM implementers.<sup>304</sup> The salary reduction is part of a series of decrees by the Taliban that marginalize women and restrict their rights.<sup>305</sup> USAID BHA and State PRM reported that their implementers have managed to find workarounds to maintain women's meaningful participation in response activities (as noted in the previous quarter's report) and will continue to seek creative solutions if this new decree affects their programs.<sup>306</sup> Nevertheless, it could pose an additional challenge, and partners are closely monitoring its implementation.<sup>307</sup>

Local authorities in some provinces and districts tend to be more flexible than others, allowing for a looser interpretation of the newly imposed edicts.<sup>308</sup> Edicts are still enforced, but USAID-funded humanitarian assistance implementers persist in using workarounds, according to USAID BHA.<sup>309</sup>

In addition to gender restrictions, the Taliban continued to interfere in some U.S.-funded assistance programs. The reasons behind Taliban interference are not entirely clear, according to USAID and State.<sup>310</sup> Some interference seems aimed at maintaining local control over program areas, while other interference appears focused on prioritizing development and reconstruction over humanitarian aid.<sup>311</sup> USAID and State implementers address interference by adhering to humanitarian principles and award requirements.<sup>312</sup> They negotiate for operational independence and humanitarian space in memoranda of understanding with local and national authorities and retain the flexibility to suspend activities if these principles are not upheld.<sup>313</sup> There have been no attacks, although one staff member was abused while in custody.<sup>314</sup>

**USAID BHA and State PRM reported that their implementers have managed to find workarounds to maintain women's meaningful participation in response activities and will continue to seek creative solutions if this new decree affects their programs.**

## DEVELOPMENT

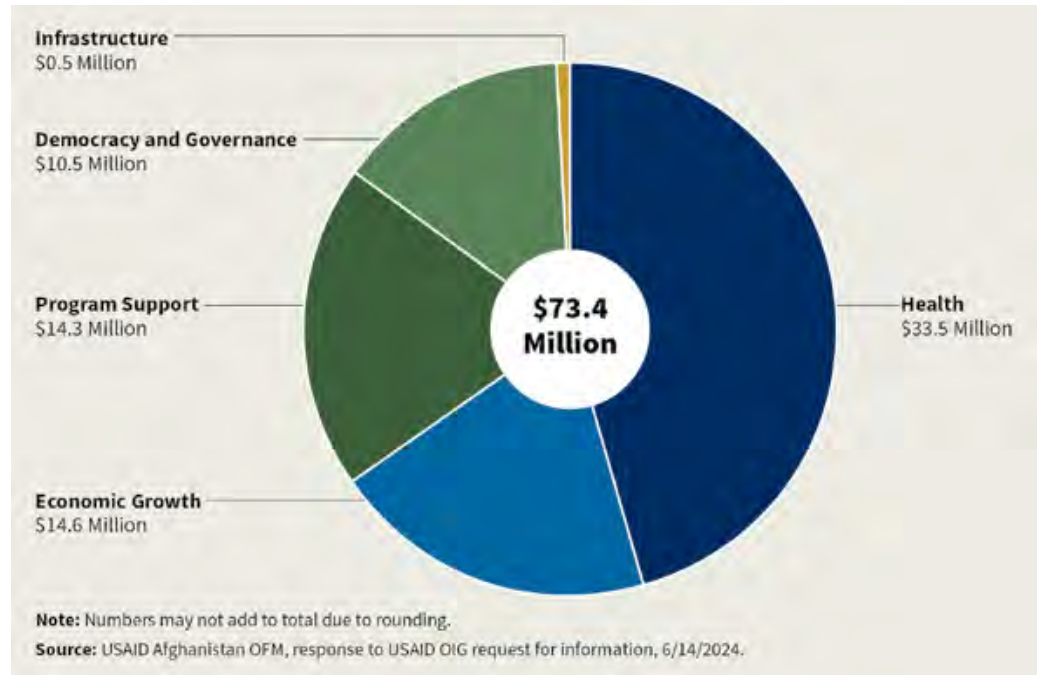
### USAID Afghanistan Continues Funding Development Activities

USAID supported 22 active awards during the quarter.<sup>315</sup> Total funds obligated in FY 2024 as of June 30 for development were \$73.4 million, with total funds disbursed \$110.1 million.<sup>316</sup> Of the obligated amount, \$35.1 million were funds that were appropriated from FY 2012 through FY 2016.<sup>317</sup> The total of unobligated (pipeline) funding remaining at the end of the quarter was \$134.4 million.<sup>318</sup> USAID development funding by sector is depicted in Figure 4.

### Taliban Continue Restrictions on Women's and Girl's Activities

According to the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Afghanistan, the Taliban issued approximately 52 edicts from June 2023 to March 2024 that restrict the rights of women and girls across the country.<sup>319</sup> These edicts have banned foreign NGOs from providing educational programs, including community-based education. They edicts also banned women from participating in radio and television shows alongside male presenters, and forced female beauty salons to close, among other restrictions.<sup>320</sup>

Figure 4.

**USAID Development Funding by Sector (FY 2024, as of June 30, 2024)**

Enforcement of Taliban edicts that restrict women varies at the provincial and local levels.<sup>321</sup> Implementers reported office visits by de facto Taliban authorities, General Directorate of Intelligence inquiries or detentions, or work stoppage if proper documentation or approvals to operate were not provided.<sup>322</sup> These activities cannot be linked solely to the ban on women working but are rather the Taliban's general approach for enforcing its edicts, according to USAID.<sup>323</sup>

Taliban restrictions on women also vary by sector. The media sector and civil society organizations have experienced increased scrutiny, with constraints on how women are able to work in these areas.<sup>324</sup>

**Education:** USAID reported there has been no explicit edict banning secondary education for girls, however the restriction has been in place since September 2021 when boys were allowed to return to secondary schools but not girls.<sup>325</sup> The ban on women's participation in public and private universities was put in place in December 2021.<sup>326</sup> The ban on women and girls participation in private learning centers was subsequently lifted and USAID has evidence that women are attending informal learning centers.<sup>327</sup>

**Employment:** Women were also restricted from registering organizations and from working in NGOs (with limited exceptions in health and education).<sup>328</sup> Female civil servants were instructed not to report to work and physical access to job sites was further limited by the mahram (escort by a male relative) requirement.<sup>329</sup> On June 3, the acting head of the Taliban General Directorate of Administrative Affairs sent a letter to all Taliban officials stating that



the monthly salary of female government staff employed by the previous government is now reduced to a uniform 5,000 Afghani (\$71) per month.<sup>330</sup> The de facto Ministry of Finance issued a letter on July 7, according to USAID, that stated unequivocally that the salary cap applies only to female public servants required to work from home, not to those still going to work in person.<sup>331</sup>

**Livelihoods:** Livelihood activities that focus on sectors that traditionally include women have been the least impacted by Taliban decrees.<sup>332</sup> Livelihood activities that focus on women are only done with the implementer’s coordination with and the authorization of local authorities.<sup>333</sup> In nearly all cases, the activities have been permitted through a focus on sectors that traditionally include women.<sup>334</sup>

USAID reported that the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) engaged extensively with the de facto Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock to secure a sectoral carve-out and exemption for the agriculture sector.<sup>335</sup> While an exemption was not formally provided by the Taliban leadership in Kandahar, the Ministry actively supported FAO’s efforts, to put in place local solutions across Afghanistan at both the provincial and district levels, according to USAID.<sup>336</sup> For USAID’s Strengthening Rural Livelihoods and Food Security activity, implemented by the FAO, the FAO continued to recruit Afghan female employees.<sup>337</sup> Afghan female employees undertook an increased number of missions to communities, led training activities, and participated in monitoring activities.<sup>338</sup>

However, some of FAO sub-awardees (national and international NGOs) continued to report challenges regarding both the recruitment of additional female employees and with female employees working in both offices and community locations.<sup>339</sup> This led to delays in implementing some types of activities, such as forming the female Farmer Field Schools in one province in the West and similarly, access to female-headed households—often the most vulnerable in a community—in the same province.<sup>340</sup> However, in other regions, FAO implementing partners are not reporting significant challenges related to Taliban restrictions.<sup>341</sup>

USAID funded 18 active programs (total award amount \$825 million) in Afghanistan during the quarter that provide some level of support for women and girls across several sectors including education, health, economic growth (including agriculture and other livelihood support), and media and civil society organizations.<sup>342</sup> (See page 45.)

**USAID funded 18 active programs (total award amount \$825 million) in Afghanistan during the quarter that provide some level of support for women and girls across several sectors including education, health, economic growth (including agriculture and other livelihood support), and media and civil society organizations.**





**FY 2024  
Comprehensive  
Oversight Plan  
for Overseas  
Contingency  
Operations**

## OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES

Under the Lead Inspector General (IG) framework, the DoD OIG, State OIG, USAID OIG, and partner agencies conduct audits, inspections, evaluations, and investigations related to Operation Enduring Sentinel (OES).

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Overseas Contingency Operations Joint Planning Group serves as the primary venue to coordinate audits, inspections, and evaluations of U.S. Government-funded activities supporting overseas contingency operations, including those relating to Afghanistan and the Middle East. The Joint Planning Group meets quarterly to provide a forum for coordination of the broader Federal oversight community, including the Military Service IGs and audit agencies, the Government Accountability Office, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), and the OIGs of the Departments of Justice, the Treasury, Energy, Homeland Security (DHS), the Social Security Administration and of the Intelligence Community. Additionally, the DHS OIG hosted the Afghanistan Project Coordination Group as a forum for IG community representatives to coordinate ongoing and planned oversight work stemming from the August 2021 U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. The group held its last meeting on March 5, though participants have continued to coordinate oversight work through the overseas contingency operation Joint Planning Group.

Pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, the Lead IG develops and implements a joint strategic plan to guide comprehensive oversight of programs and operations for each overseas contingency operation. The Lead IG agencies update the oversight plan annually.

The *FY 2024 Joint Strategic Oversight Plan for Operation Enduring Sentinel*, issued on September 26, 2023, as part of the *FY 2024 Comprehensive Oversight Plan for Overseas Contingency Operations*, is organized by three strategic oversight areas: Military Operations; Diplomacy, Development, and Humanitarian Assistance; and Support to Mission.

## AUDITS, INSPECTIONS, AND EVALUATIONS

The Lead IG agencies use dedicated, rotational, and temporary employees, as well as contractors, to conduct oversight projects, investigate fraud and corruption, and provide consolidated planning and reporting on the status of overseas contingency operations.

DoD OIG oversight and investigative personnel continued to work on OES-related projects and cases from the United States, Bahrain, Germany, Kuwait, and Qatar. State OIG personnel performed their oversight duties from Washington, D.C., and Frankfurt, Germany. USAID OIG personnel continued oversight work from the USAID Asia Regional Office in Bangkok, Thailand, and from Washington, D.C.

## COMPLETED PROJECTS

From April 1, 2024, to June 30, 2024, the Lead IG and partner agencies issued six oversight reports related to OES, as detailed below. Completed reports by the Lead IG and partner agencies are available on their respective web pages.

### FINAL REPORTS BY LEAD IG AGENCIES

#### DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

##### ***Evaluation of Combatant Command Military Deception Planning***

DODIG-2024-085; May 23, 2024

The DoD OIG conducted this evaluation to determine the extent to which the combatant commands have effectively conducted military deception planning in support of ongoing OES operations. The report is classified at a level higher than the classified annex to this report. To file a Freedom of Information Act request, submit a request to FOIA.gov.

##### ***Management Advisory: Evaluation of the DoD's Handling of Operational Data from Afghanistan***

DODIG-2024-079; May 6, 2024

The DoD OIG issued this management advisory as part of an evaluation of the DoD's handling of operational data from Afghanistan. This report contains controlled unclassified information. Details are contained in the classified appendix to this report.

#### INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

##### ***Special Review of Intelligence Community Support to Vetting of Persons from Afghanistan***

INS-2022-003; June 28, 2024

The Intelligence Community OIG conducted a review of Intelligence Community support to screening and vetting of persons from Afghanistan. The report is classified at a level higher than the classified annex to this report. To file a Freedom of Information Act Request, submit a request to FOIA.gov.

#### DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

##### ***DHS Has a Fragmented Process for Identifying and Resolving Derogatory Information for Operation Allies Welcome Parolees***

OIG-24-24; May 6, 2024

The DHS OIG conducted this evaluation to assess the DHS' identification and resolution of potentially derogatory records for Operation Allies Welcome (OAW). Three DHS components—U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)—have three separate but interconnected processes for identifying and resolving derogatory information for individuals evacuated from Afghanistan and paroled into the United States under OAW.

The DHS OIG found vulnerabilities in the USCIS and ICE processes for resolving derogatory information, identifying a potential for USCIS enforcement action gap for OAW parolees denied immigration benefits; USCIS' case referral criteria not aligning with ICE's case acceptance criteria; changes to DHS immigration law enforcement priorities that may result in different enforcement action thresholds for certain cases; and complex ICE process for removing OAW parolees to Afghanistan that depends on a third-party country.

In addition, the DHS OIG found that the DHS does not have a process for monitoring parole expiration and that the guidelines for determining re-parole for OAW parolees were undefined. The DHS OIG also found data errors in USCIS and ICE records for the OAW population. The DHS concurred with the five recommendations, which are considered resolved and open.

### **SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION**

#### ***U.S. Funds Benefitting the Taliban-Controlled Government: Implementing Partners Paid at Least \$10.9 Million and Were Pressured to Divert Assistance***

SIGAR-24-22-AR; May 20, 2024

SIGAR conducted this audit to review U.S. Government donor support for the Afghan people since the former Afghan government collapsed and the Taliban returned to power in August 2021. To carry out programs in Afghanistan, U.S. agencies rely heavily on nongovernmental organizations and public international organizations, such as the UN, to implement humanitarian and development assistance.

SIGAR found that since August 2021, 38 of the 65 implementing partners who responded to its questionnaire (58 percent) reported paying taxes, fees, duties, or utilities to the Taliban-controlled government. The 38 respondents have paid at least \$10.9 million of U.S. taxpayer money to the Taliban-controlled government. Of this amount, \$10.4 million stemmed from payroll withholding taxes; \$346,839 were payments from utilities; \$176,596 from fees; and \$9,215 from customs duties.

Additionally, SIGAR found that the \$10.9 million paid by 38 State, USAID, and U.S. Agency for Global Media implementing partners is likely only a fraction of the total amount of U.S. assistance funds provided to the Taliban in taxes, fees, duties, and utilities because UN agencies receiving U.S. funds did not collect data or provide relevant information about their sub awardees' payments. From October 2021 through September 2023, the UN received \$1.6 billion in U.S. funding for programming in Afghanistan, approximately 63 percent of all U.S. funding assistance funding for Afghanistan during that period.

SIGAR made four recommendations to the Secretary of State and the USAID Administrator to improve tax reporting on U.S. funds and ensure adherence to the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control requirements.



### ***Afghanistan Competitiveness of Export-Oriented Business Activity Program: USAID Did Not Perform All Required Oversight and the Program Has Yielded Mixed Results***

SIGAR-24-20-AR; April 24, 2024

SIGAR conducted this audit to review USAID’s \$105.7 million Afghanistan Competitiveness of Export-Oriented Business Activity (ACEBA) program. ACEBA promotes employment and economic growth of Afghan exporters and businesses associated with five selected industries: carpets, natural stones, gemstones and jewelry, saffron, and cashmere. The program has continued, despite the Taliban takeover in 2021.

SIGAR found that USAID did not conduct all the monitoring and oversight of the ACEBA program required by USAID’s policies. SIGAR did not issue any recommendations since USAID has taken corrective action.

## **ONGOING AND PLANNED OVERSIGHT ACTIVITIES**

As of June 30, 2024, the Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies had 16 ongoing and 9 planned projects related to OES, including the examples highlighted below. Tables 9, 10 and 11, contained in Appendixes F and G, list the titles and objectives for all ongoing and planned projects.

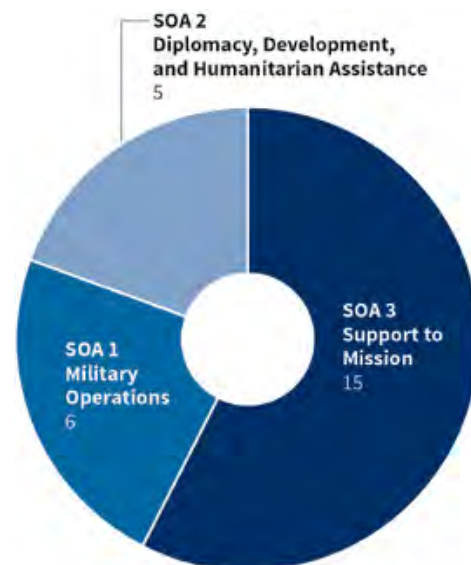
### **Military Operations**

- **SIGAR** is conducting a review to determine the current use and disposition of military equipment and weaponry funded by the DoD that it left in Afghanistan. The review will also determine the efficacy of any U.S. efforts to track or capture military equipment and weaponry provided to the former Afghan Army that the DoD left behind.

### **Diplomacy, Development, and Humanitarian Assistance**

- **State OIG** is conducting a multipart review of the Afghan special immigrant visa (SIV) program, covering SIV application processing times, adjustments to the SIV application process, the status of previous recommendations, the status of SIV recipients, and the status of SIV and refugee screening and vetting since August 2021. A final report will cover all of State OIG’s reporting on the SIV program. Four of the reports have been issued.
- **USAID OIG** is conducting an audit to assess USAID oversight of implementer efforts to manage security and safety risks and mitigate Taliban interference with assistance in Afghanistan.

Figure 5.  
**Ongoing and Planned Projects by Strategic Oversight Area**



### Support to Mission

- **State OIG** is conducting an audit to determine whether the U.S. embassies in Kabul, Afghanistan, and Kyiv, Ukraine managed, safeguarded, and disposed of sensitive security assets in advance of the evacuation and suspension of operations at each post in accordance with State guidance.
- **SIGAR** intends to conduct an evaluation to determine the extent to which U.S. Government agencies providing continuing assistance to Afghanistan coordinate their ongoing activities with other U.S. Government agencies, and international donors and organizations.

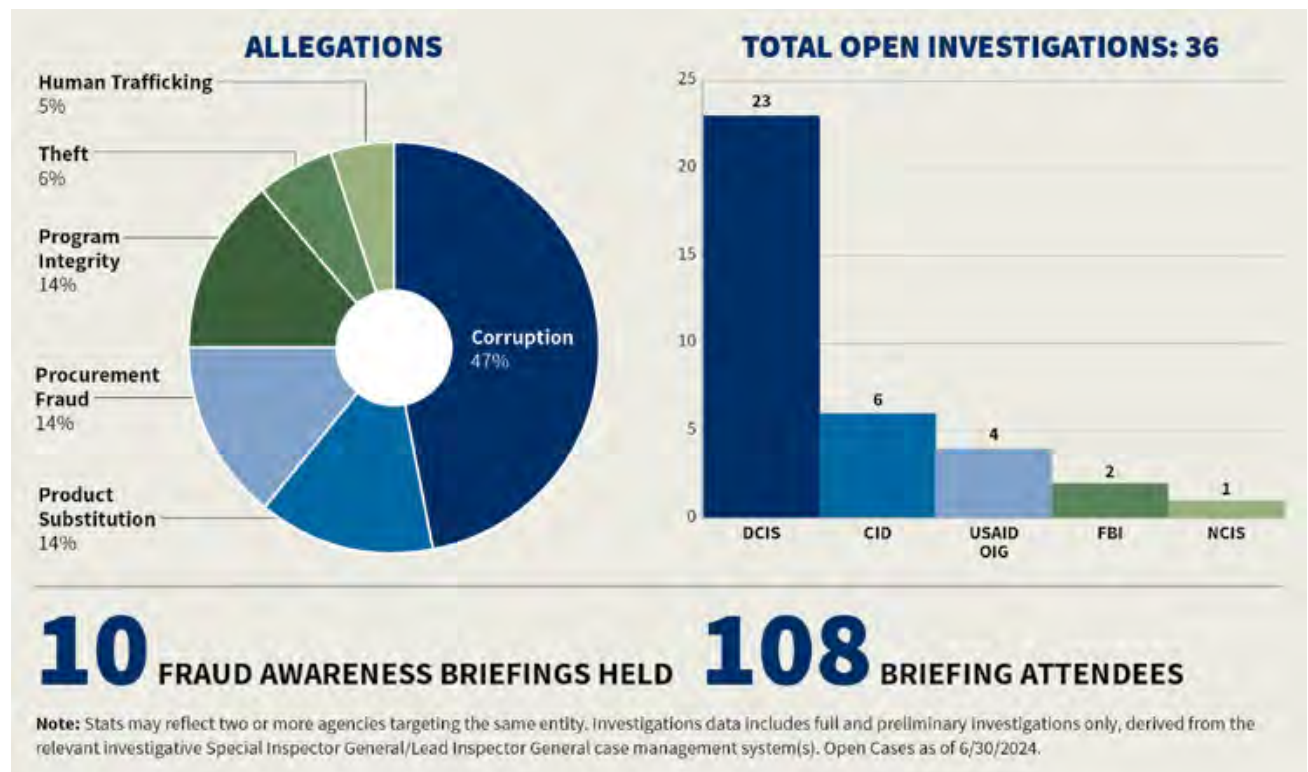
## HOTLINE AND INVESTIGATIONS

### INVESTIGATIONS

The investigative components of the Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies continued to conduct investigative activity related to OES during the quarter. Lead IG investigators worked on OES or Operation Freedom’s Sentinel (OFS) related matters from offices in Bahrain, Germany, Kuwait, El Salvador, Israel, South Africa, and Thailand, and the United States.

Figure 6.

OES-Related Investigation Activities, April 1–June 30, 2024



During this quarter, investigative branches of the Lead IG agencies and their partner agencies initiated 1 new investigation, closed 4 investigations, and coordinated on 36 open investigations. The open investigations involve grant and procurement fraud, corruption, computer intrusions, theft, and human trafficking allegations. In addition to the 36 ongoing investigations are 7 “legacy” investigations, related to crimes involving the OFS area of operation that occurred prior to the formal designation of OFS and OES.

The Lead IG agencies and partners continue to coordinate their investigative efforts through the Fraud and Corruption Investigative Working Group framework, which consists of representatives from the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS, the DoD OIG’s criminal investigative component), State OIG, USAID OIG, the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. This quarter, investigative agencies conducted 10 fraud awareness briefings for 108 participants.

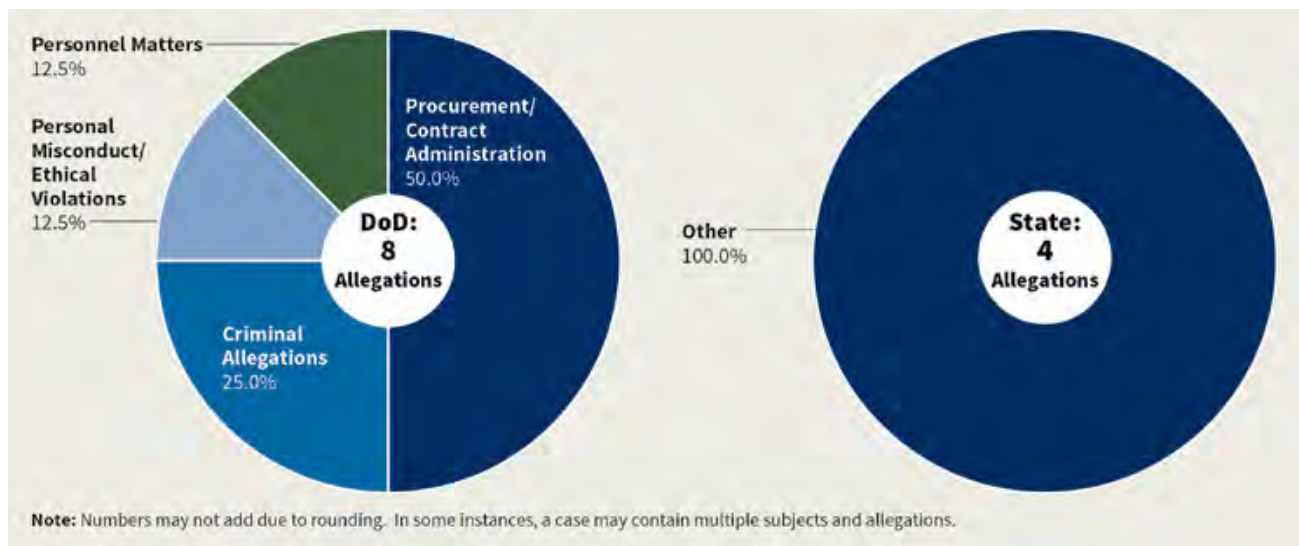
## HOTLINE ACTIVITY

Each Lead IG agency maintains its own hotline to receive complaints specific to its agency. The hotlines provide a confidential, reliable means for individuals (including contractors), NGOs, and UN agencies to report violations of law, rule, or regulation; mismanagement; gross waste of funds; or abuse of authority.

During the quarter, the DoD OIG hotline investigator received 8 allegations and referred 4 cases to Lead IG agencies and other investigative organizations. State OIG received 4 allegations and referred 2 cases and USAID OIG received 39 allegations. In some instances, a case may contain multiple allegations.

Figure 7.

### Hotline Activities, April 1–June 30, 2024



# APPENDIXES

## APPENDIX A

### **Classified Appendix to this Report**

A classified appendix to this report provides additional information on Operation Enduring Sentinel, as noted in several sections of this report. The appendix will be delivered to relevant agencies and congressional committees.

## APPENDIX B

### **About the Lead Inspector General**

The Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended (5 U.S.C. Section 419) established the Lead Inspector General (Lead IG) framework for oversight of overseas contingency operations. The Lead IG agencies are the Offices of Inspector General (OIG) of the Department of Defense (DoD), the Department of State (State), and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

Section 419 requires the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency to appoint a Lead IG from among the inspectors general of the Lead IG agencies upon the commencement or designation of a military operation that exceeds 60 days as an overseas contingency operation; or receipt of notification thereof.

Lead IG oversight of the operation “sunset” at the end of the first fiscal year after commencement or designation in which the total amount appropriated for the operation is less than \$100,000,000.

- Submit to Congress on a quarterly basis a report on the contingency operation and to make that report available to the public.
- Develop a joint strategic plan to conduct comprehensive oversight of the operation.
- Ensure independent and effective oversight of programs and operations of the U.S. Government in support of the operation through either joint or individual audits, inspections, investigations, and evaluations.



## APPENDIX C

# Methodology for Preparing this Lead IG Report

This report complies with section 419 of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended (5 U.S.C. Section 419), which requires that the designated Lead IG provide a quarterly report, available to the public, on each overseas contingency operation, and is consistent with the requirement that a biannual report be published by the Lead IG on the activities of the Inspectors General with respect to that overseas contingency operation. The Chair of the Council of the Inspectors General for Integrity and Efficiency designated the DoD IG as the Lead IG for Operation Enduring Sentinel (OES). State IG is the Associate IG for the operation.

This report covers the period from April 1 through June 30, 2024. The three Lead IG agencies—DoD OIG, State OIG, and USAID OIG—and partner oversight agencies contributed the content of this report.

To fulfill the congressional mandate to report on OES, the Lead IG agencies gather data and information from Federal agencies and open sources. The sources of information contained in this report are listed in endnotes or notes to tables and figures. Except in the case of audits, inspections, investigations, and evaluations referenced in this report, the Lead IG agencies have not verified or audited the information collected through open-source research or from Federal agencies, and the information provided represents the view of the source cited in each instance.

### INFORMATION COLLECTION FROM AGENCIES AND OPEN SOURCES

Each quarter, the Lead IG agencies gather information from the DoD, State, USAID, and other Federal agencies about their programs and operations related to OES. The Lead IG agencies use the information provided by their respective agencies for quarterly reporting and oversight planning.

This report also draws on current, publicly available information from reputable sources. Sources used in this report may include the following:

- U.S. Government statements, press conferences, and reports
- Reports issued by international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and think tanks
- Media reports

The Lead IG agencies use open-source information to assess information obtained through their agency information collection process and provide additional detail about the operation.

### REPORT PRODUCTION

The DoD IG, as the Lead IG for this operation, is responsible for assembling and producing this report. The DoD, State, and USAID OIGs draft the sections related to the activities of their agencies and then participate in editing the entire report. Once assembled, each OIG coordinates a two-phase review process of the report within its own agency. During the first review, the Lead IG agencies ask relevant offices within their agencies to comment, correct inaccuracies, and provide additional documentation. The Lead IG agencies incorporate agency comments, where appropriate, and send the report back to the agencies for a second review prior to publication. The final report reflects the editorial view of the DoD, State, and USAID OIGs as independent oversight agencies.

## APPENDIX D

## State- and USAID-funded Activities During the Quarter

Table 7.

## State-funded Non-Humanitarian Assistance Activities in Afghanistan During the Quarter

<b>Women's Economic Empowerment</b> South and Central Asian Affairs/Security and Transnational Affairs (SCA/STA)	
<b>Afghan Women Economic Empowerment Through Leveraging the Private Sector</b> \$1,802,776	Advances the economic security and resilience of Afghan women in Afghanistan and in third countries. Supports the ability of the private sector, NGOs, and other civil society organizations to engage and provide assistance to Afghan women.
<b>Demining</b> Political-Military Affairs/Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA)	
<b>Support to Humanitarian Mine Action Coordination in Afghanistan</b> \$2,255,975	
<b>Third Party Monitoring and Evaluation of Mine Action Projects in Afghanistan</b> \$5,000,000	
<b>Humanitarian De-mining, Explosive Ordnance Disposal (Demobilization, Disarmament and Rehabilitation Project) Programs in Afghanistan</b> \$3,000,000	
<b>Conventional Weapons Destruction Teams</b> \$2,250,000	
<b>Weapons and Ammunition Disposal Teams</b> \$2,500,000	
<b>Mine Clearance, Survey, and Explosive Ordnance Risk Education in Kunduz and Badakhshan Provinces</b> \$3,600,000	
<b>Non-technical Survey and Land Release in 49 districts</b> \$1,500,000	
<b>Employing Former Combatants as Deminers in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan</b> \$3,455,000	
<b>Demining, Risk Education, and Re-Integration Project in Maydan Wardak Province</b> \$3,282,000	
<b>Survey and Clearance of Abandoned Improvised Munitions in Helmand</b> \$3,953,780	

*(continued on next page)*

**Demining and Victim Assistance**

Political-Military Affairs/Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA)

**Victim Assistance in Afghanistan—Emergency mobile physical rehabilitation, psychosocial support, and Explosive Ordnance Risk Education sessions across Kabul, Kandahar, and Nimroz provinces**

\$1,606,000

**Victims Assistance and Physical Rehabilitation Project in Paktika Province**

\$500,000

**Rule of Law**

Bureau of International Narcotics Law Enforcement Affairs Europe and Asia

**Supporting Access to Justice through Non-State Actors**

\$11,585,000

Assists non-state justice actors in the protection of human rights of Afghans, especially women, girls, and ethnic minorities, by supporting civil society organizations and other non-state justice service providers to sustain and expand the rule of law in Afghanistan.

**Counternarcotics**

Bureau of International Narcotics Law Enforcement Affairs Europe and Asia

**Community-Based Agriculture and Rural Development—Access to Licit Livelihoods**

\$28,427,158

Supports male and female farmers in six provinces with history of high opium poppy cultivation to transition to licit crop production and connects them with agribusinesses and exporters to facilitate market linkages.

**Afghan Opiate Trade Project**

\$3,272,548

Supports UN research and analysis initiatives to understand global trafficking trends of Afghan opiates.

**Afghanistan Opium Survey**

\$7,310,465

Supports the UN Office on Drugs and Crime’s annual Afghanistan opium cultivation survey to inform international community of opium poppy cultivation and production trends.

**Drugs Monitoring Platform**

\$4,097,041

Monitors trafficking and seizures of Afghan-origin drugs in near real-time.

**Counternarcotics Public Information**

\$4,912,499

Supports Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty-affiliated public information outlets in Afghanistan to promote counternarcotics public awareness campaigns.

**Assistance to Drug Treatment Centers**

\$11,174,568

Supports drug treatment centers in Afghanistan prioritizing treatment of women and children.

**Monitoring and Evaluation and Impact Assessment of Community-Based Agriculture and Rural Development and UN Women Service Points**

\$4,837,516

Provides in-depth third-party monitoring, evaluation, and impact assessment services for the Community-Based Agriculture and Rural Development program and third-party monitoring for INL’s work with UN Women.

Source: State, SCA, response to State OIG request for information, 7/12/2024

Table 8.

**USAID Afghanistan Programs Supporting Afghan Women and Girls**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Program Description</b>
<b>Women’s Scholarship Endowment (WSE)</b> 9/27/2018–9/26/2028 \$60,000,000	USAID/Afghanistan’s WSE activity aims to assist Afghan women in obtaining a university or graduate education either in-person or online in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) and other fields of study, better enabling them to overcome barriers to gaining employment, raise their incomes, and help them achieve leadership roles within their families and communities. The program also provides career development and leadership training to scholars to better prepare them to enter the workforce.
<b>Young Women Lead (YWL)</b> 9/2023–9/2025 \$4,935,797	Still in the start-up phase, the YWL activity aims to expand post-secondary education opportunities and increase access in fields of study where females are allowed at the post-secondary education level such as allied health, education, agriculture, and information technology. Allied health fields include anesthesia, dental prosthesis, medical technology, midwifery, nursing, and pharmacy.
<b>Supporting Student Success in Afghanistan (SSSA)</b> 12/30/2022–12/31/2024 \$27,284,620	SSSA aims to sustain access and improve retention in local, quality higher education opportunities for male and female students living in Afghanistan. SSSA meets the needs of young women living in all provinces of Afghanistan, delivering quality higher education and targeted academic programs, including college preparatory classes, wrap-around services, and extracurricular programs.
<b>Accessible and Quality Basic Education (AQBE)</b> 10/1/2023–9/30/2028 \$79,500,000	Still in the start-up phase, the purpose of the AQBE activity is to improve safe, equitable access to quality learning for primary school-aged girls and boys and secondary school-aged girls.
<b>Rural Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (Ru-WASH)</b> 6/24/2020–6/23/2025 \$35,841,332	The Ru-WASH activity addresses the following needs in Afghanistan: acute water and sanitation needs in underserved, rural and peri-urban areas of Afghanistan; unequal sanitation facilities for girls and boys in schools; lack of adequate WASH facilities in health care facilities; service delivery and operations support to sustain critical WASH structures, including community-level structures; and transmission of the COVID-19 virus in schools and their surrounding catchment communities in high-risk COVID-19 areas.
<b>Urban Health Initiative (UHI)</b> 10/14/2020–10/13/2025 \$104,000,000	The goal of UHI is to improve health outcomes for people living in urban areas, with a special focus on women, children and other vulnerable populations. In order to achieve this, UHI provides the following interventions:  Mentoring, training, and supportive supervision to health care providers, in public and private facilities, to improve the quality of basic service delivery.  Support to midwifery-led care networks to increase women’s access to services.  Strengthen COVID response and treatment.  Promote virtual care through the establishment of mobile service delivery opportunities and a telementoring platform.  Procure and supply essential medicines, equipment, and commodities for select health facilities.

*(continued on next page)*



Program	Program Description
<p><b>Assistance for Families and Indigent Afghans to Thrive (AFIAT)</b></p> <p>7/10/2020–7/9/2025</p> <p>\$117,000,000</p>	<p>The goal of AFIAT is to improve the health outcomes of the Afghan people, particularly women of childbearing age and preschool children, in rural and peri-urban parts of Afghanistan. In order to achieve this, AFIAT provides the following interventions:</p> <p>Mentoring, training, and supportive supervision to health care providers, in public facilities, to improve the quality of basic service delivery.</p> <p>Build core competency of midwives to deliver maternal and child health services.</p> <p>Co-lead the NGO Pharmaceutical Supply Chain Management Group to help meet the needs of health facilities for essential medicines and supplies.</p> <p>Strengthen the national health management information system (HMIS) to ensure accurate tracking of health service update and outcomes.</p> <p>Strengthen COVID response and treatment.</p> <p>Provide oversight for the development and implementation of the 2023 Afghanistan National Health Survey, a household-level survey that looks at health outcomes-especially for women and children.</p>
<p><b>Local Health System Sustainability (LHSS)</b></p> <p>10/1/2022–7/30/2024</p> <p>\$8,000,000</p>	<p>LHSS represents USAID’s highly successful, long-term engagement in health private sector social marketing (formerly SHOPS-Plus). The goal of LHSS is to increase the use of priority health services through strategic expansion of private sector approaches within the health system.</p> <p>Through a partnership with the Afghanistan Social Marketing Organization (ASMO), LHSS promotes affordable, socially marketed health products focused on women and children. Their current basket of products includes micronutrients, iron folate, postnatal care products, antidiarrheal treatment, water treatment, and family planning products.</p> <p>It is estimated that 22 percent of Afghan women who use modern contraceptives rely on LHSS-supported products. Additionally, LHSS contributes 16 percent of total household water treatment use, 11 percent of oral rehydration salts use, and 5 percent of micronutrient use nationally.</p>
<p><b>National Disease Surveillance Response (NDSR)</b></p> <p>7/1/2014–9/30/2031</p> <p>Annual buy-in (amount changes, \$3,000,000 in FY 2023)</p>	<p>The NDSR is Afghanistan’s only comprehensive indicator and event-based surveillance system. It tracks and reports on 17 priority infectious diseases and pregnancy-related deaths from 613 sentinel sites. This real time data provides critical information on outbreaks (many of which disproportionately affect women and children), allowing for rapid and targeted response.</p>
<p><b>Global Health Supply Chain Management (GHSC-PSM)</b></p> <p>4/20/2015–11/28/2024</p> <p>\$11,113,786</p>	<p>GHSC-PSM serves as the central procurement mechanism for USAID missions worldwide to purchase high quality contraceptives and other essential public health supplies. This mechanism is used by the Afghanistan Mission to procure contraceptive commodities for the USAID-supported social marketing program (LHSS).</p>
<p><b>Information, Dialogue, and Rights in Afghanistan (IDR)</b></p> <p>9/23/2022–6/30/2026</p> <p>\$14,079,528</p>	<p>This activity supports women’s empowerment through a variety of interventions that protect access to independent sources of information, create platforms for rights-based discourse, and promote policy dialogue on the conditions for all Afghans to live in dignity and rights. Specifically, IDR activities support reporting on rights and governance issues of public interest; developing a strong cadre of female journalists and producers; helping journalists to operate safely and effectively; enabling Afghan civic activists to advocate; and facilitating dialogue on inclusive governance.</p>

Program	Program Description
<p><b>Enabling Essential Services for Afghan Women and Girls</b></p> <p>5/30/2022–5/29/2025</p> <p>\$30,000,000</p>	<p>This activity supports the re-establishment of comprehensive support services for women and girls and contributes to an enabling environment for women’s rights and women’s participation. The activity’s three broad objectives are to: 1) provide access to essential services that prevent and respond to VAWG according to international norms and standards; 2) support the livelihoods of vulnerable women through training, entrepreneurship support, and job placements; 3) support women-led civil society organizations and networks to advance women’s rights in Afghanistan.</p>
<p><b>Afghanistan Support Program (ASP)</b></p> <p>9/1/2022–9/1/2025</p> <p>\$25,884,633</p>	<p>ASP provides technical assistance to women and girls</p>
<p><b>Supporting Transformation for Afghanistan’s Recovery (STAR)</b></p> <p>2/18/2021–12/31/2024</p> <p>\$28,338,901</p>	<p>STAR activities aim to build the resilience of Afghan communities in some of the poorest and most conflict-affected districts across the country. It strengthens the food and livelihood security of families who have struggled throughout the country’s long war, providing cash assistance, resilience-focused agricultural and livestock support, and market skills and linkages. In addition, targeted communities will be supported to rehabilitate or construct critical WASH infrastructure for improved access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene. The program also mainstreams protection, with a focus on women, girls, and other vulnerable groups.</p>
<p><b>Afghanistan Competitiveness for Export-Oriented Businesses Activity (ACEBA)</b></p> <p>1/28/2020–1/27/2025</p> <p>\$105,722,822</p>	<p>Subsequent to the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, ACEBA resumed work with the private sector prioritizing livelihoods support. The activity retains its market focus and where possible maintains existing efforts in its key value chains of carpets, cashmere, and saffron, while also adding a new value chain for humanitarian goods and services. All value chains are recognized for their potential to deliver demonstrable results from downstream value-add, sales, exports, and job creation, particularly in providing livelihood opportunities for women.</p>
<p><b>Exports, Jobs, and Market Linkages for Carpet and Jewelry Value Chains</b></p> <p>1/31/2019–4/30/2025</p> <p>\$14,941,606</p>	<p>The Exports, Jobs, and Market Linkages in the Carpet and Jewelry Value Chains activity supports the Afghan carpet and jewelry sectors as major drivers of broad-based economic growth and sustainable employment in Afghanistan, primarily for women.</p> <p>The goal of the program is to create jobs and exports within the carpet and jewelry sectors, driving \$20 million in direct-to-market sales of finished Afghan carpet and jewelry products (\$19 million in sales of carpets and \$1 million in sales of jewelry) thus supporting new jobs, particularly for women. The carpet and jewelry value chains were selected for their exceptional potential of creating jobs for women, unlike many other economic sectors.</p> <p>With a recent approved program extension (two years 2023-2025), it is expected that 23,940 jobs will be added to the 19,000 jobs already achieved by the program, for women.</p>
<p><b>Strengthening Rural Livelihoods and Food Security Program</b></p> <p>7/31/2022–7/31/2026</p> <p>\$80,000,000</p>	<p>The purpose of this activity is to improve the food security of crisis and emergency level affected population groups in rural areas of Afghanistan; to help minimize the impacts of economic disruption and instability, drought, and other recent shocks on vulnerable, and at-risk agriculture-based communities and livelihoods; and help to minimize negative effects on productive agricultural assets in targeted provinces and districts of Afghanistan. This assistance also aims to enhance food security and improve nutrition and near-term resilience of vulnerable smallholder farmers and herders including landless and women-headed households. The activity emphasizes support to women; see next cell).</p>

(continued on next page)

Program	Program Description
<p><b>Afghan Value Chains-Program (AVCP)</b> 6/9/2018-6/8/2025 \$75,672,170</p>	<p>AVCP is a market-driven, private sector-focused program that aims to sustainably strengthen livestock and crops value chains, resulting in increased incomes, employment, commercial viability, resiliency, and productivity. AVCP is aiming to increase food security and supports women in agriculture, identifying channels for women to continue and increase participation in Afghanistan’s economy.</p> <p>The project facilitates the integration of women into livestock and crops value chains and seeks to upgrade the roles of women already participating in the agriculture sector.</p>

Source: USAID/Afghanistan, response to USAID OIG request for information, 6/28/2024.



## APPENDIX E

# Ongoing Oversight Projects

Tables 9 and 10 list the titles and objectives for Lead IG and partner agencies' ongoing oversight projects related to OES.

Table 9.

### Ongoing Oversight Projects Related to OES by Lead IG Agencies, as of June 30, 2024

#### DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

##### ***Review of the Department of State Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Program***

To assess the number of SIV applications received and processed and their processing times; the status and resolution of recommendations made by State OIG in its reports “Quarterly Reporting on Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Program Needs Improvement” (AUD-MERO-20-34, June 2020) and “Review of the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa Program” (AUD-MERO-20-35, June 2020); the status of SIV recipients; adjustments made to processing SIV applications between 2018 and 2021; the status of SIV and refugee screening since August 2021; and the whole of State OIG reporting on the SIV Program in a capping report.

##### ***Audit of the Disposition of Defensive Equipment and Armored Vehicles in Advance of Evacuations of U.S. Embassies Kabul and Kyiv***

To determine whether U.S. Embassies Kabul, Afghanistan, and Kyiv, Ukraine managed, safeguarded, and disposed of sensitive security assets in advance of the evacuation and suspension of operations at each post in accordance with State guidance.

##### ***National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2024, Section 5275 Final Joint Report***

Joint report with the DHS OIG to provide a consolidated accounting of U.S. Government completed, ongoing, and planned oversight work on the vetting, processing, and resettlement of Afghan evacuees and the Afghan SIV program while responding to requirements in section 5275 of the FY 2023 NDAA.

##### ***Accounting of Individuals Evacuated from Afghanistan in 2021 and SIV Screening and Vetting***

To assess 1) State's systems, staffing, policies, and programs used to vet Afghan evacuees and Afghan SIV holders and 2) State's systems, policies, and programs used to determine the number of individuals evacuated from Afghanistan.

##### ***Management Assistance Report: Applying Lessons Learned from Previous Evacuations***

To determine the extent to which State has aggregated lessons learned from past evacuations and included such lessons learned in formal guidance and instructions to aid in safeguarding, managing, or disposing of defensive equipment and armored vehicles at overseas posts.

#### U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

##### ***Audit of USAID's Efforts to Safeguard Implementers and Activities in Afghanistan***

To determine USAID's oversight of implementer efforts in Afghanistan to mitigate 1) security and safety risks in activities and 2) Taliban interference in activities.



Table 10.

**Ongoing Oversight Projects Related to OES by Lead IG Partner Agencies, as of June 30, 2024****DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL*****National Snapshot of Recent Trends in the Refugee Resettlement Program***

To 1) summarize nationwide data on the ORR Refugee Resettlement Program; 2) identify recent trends in participation and outcomes; and 3) identify any challenges encountered by states, replacement designees, and domestic resettlement agencies and other non-profit organizations in administering ORR-funded benefits and services.

**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL*****Review of Asylum Application Adjudication Processing in Response to Ahmed vs. DHS***

To determine whether missed aliases or incomplete resolution of potential matches to derogatory records have increased following the Ahmed vs. DHS settlement agreement.

***Evaluation of DHS' Monitoring of the End of Immigration Parole***

To assess whether the DHS has processes, procedures, and resources to monitor the end of immigration parole to ensure parolees are lawfully present in the United States and determine what enforcement consequences exist for parolees who stay in the United States after parole expiration or revocation.

**DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL*****Federal Bureau of Investigation's Participation in Operation Allies Refuge and Operation Allies Welcome***

To assess the effectiveness of the FBI's coordination with its federal partners to support Operation Allies Refuge and Operation Allies Welcome.

**SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION*****Audit of U.S. Agencies' Oversight of Funds Provided to Public International Organizations for Activities in Afghanistan***

To assess the extent to which U.S. agencies and Public International Organizations conduct oversight of U.S. funds provided for assistance to Afghanistan.

***State Implementing Partner Agreements with the Taliban***

To determine the extent to which: 1) State's implementing partners have entered into agreements with the Taliban to facilitate program implementation; 2) those agreements were completed and reviewed in accordance with applicable requirements; and 3) agreements with the Taliban have affected program implementation.

***Audit of USAID's Water Supply, Sanitation, and Hygiene Projects***

To determine the extent to which USAID has conducted oversight of Water Supply, Sanitation, and Hygiene projects; whether these projects have met their goals and objectives; and identify the challenges faced by USAID and Afghanistan in sustaining the progress made by the Water Supply, Sanitation, and Hygiene program going forward.

***Follow on Performance Audit of State's Demining Activities in Afghanistan***

To determine the extent to which State performed all required oversight activities including annual reviews of award risk assessment and monitoring plans, quarterly reviews of performance progress and financial reports, and final review memoranda; State developed measurable award agreement targets and objectives and connected them to higher level goals; funds provided to demining activities have directly benefited the Taliban regime or prohibited entities and individuals

***Personnel: U.S. Government Efforts to Deploy the Right People, in the Right Numbers, for the Right Amount of Time in Order to Accomplish Reconstruction Objectives in Afghanistan***

To identify the challenges the U.S. Government faced in deploying the right people, in the right numbers, for the right amount of time in order to achieve reconstruction objectives in Afghanistan; identify the ways in which the U.S. Government attempted to overcome those challenges, and whether those measures were effective; and distill lessons learned from efforts to rectify personnel problems within the Afghanistan context.

***Audit of State and USAID Efforts to Reduce Gender-Based Violence in Afghanistan***

To determine the extent to which USAID, State, and international partners have coordinated their efforts to address gender-based violence in Afghanistan to prevent duplication of efforts, and whether USAID and State have processes in place to ensure that they are meeting gender-based violence related goals and objectives.

## APPENDIX F

# Planned Oversight Projects

Table 11 lists the titles and objectives for Lead IG and partner agencies' planned oversight projects related to OES.

Table 11.

### Planned Oversight Projects Related to OES by Lead IG Partner Agencies, as of June 30, 2024

#### SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION

##### ***Status of Equipment, Weapons, and Trained Personnel***

To determine 1) the current use and disposition of military equipment and weaponry funded by the DoD that it left in Afghanistan, and 2) the efficacy of any U.S. efforts to track or capture military equipment and weaponry provided to the ANDSF that the DoD left behind.

##### ***U.S. Counternarcotics Efforts in Afghanistan Since 2021***

To assess the extent to which INL: 1) planned and implemented U.S.-funded counternarcotics programs in accordance with U.S. and State strategies and goals; 2) U.S.-funded counternarcotics programs achieved intended outcomes; and 3) Taliban governance has affected program implementation.

##### ***USAID's Livelihood Programming in Afghanistan***

To determine the extent to which USAID's non-agriculture livelihood programs are 1) achieving intended outcomes; 2) USAID and its partners took steps to ensure that the program results are sustainable; 3) implementing and adjusting current programs based on the lessons from previous livelihood programs to improve the likelihood of success; and 4) the extent to which USAID has conducted required oversight.

##### ***USAID's Strengthening Rural Livelihoods and Food Security***

To determine the extent to which USAID: 1) has performed the required oversight of Strengthening Rural Livelihoods and Food Security, 2) Strengthening Rural Livelihoods and Food Security has achieved, or is achieving, its intended outcomes; and 3) Taliban governance has affected program implementation.

##### ***Follow-up to Capital Assets Report***

To update SIGAR's February 2021 report to determine the status of select capital assets and whether the reemergence of the Taliban as the de facto authority resulted in additional wasted infrastructure investments.

##### ***Audit of State and USAID's Internally Displaced Persons Camps Within Afghanistan***

To determine the extent to which State and USAID funded activities with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and United Nations International Organization for Migration for Internally Displaced Persons are meeting their intended goals and objectives; and State and USAID are performing oversight of their funding to these organizations.

##### ***Audit of USAID's Third-Party Monitoring and Evaluation Efforts***

To determine the extent to which USAID measured Afghanistan Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Activity's (AMELA) progress in meeting its goal of providing meaningful external evaluations of project performance; measured third-party monitoring of development and humanitarian programming; reliable data collection and analysis, and aligning interventions with the mission's strategic goals; determined whether the program is meeting its performance targets outlined in the contract; and demonstrated the extent that AMELA is sustainable despite changing conditions in Afghanistan.

##### ***Evaluation of Interagency and International Coordination of Continuing Assistance***

To determine the extent to which U.S. agencies providing continuing assistance to Afghanistan coordinate their ongoing activities with other agencies within the U.S. Government; and coordinate their on-going activities with international donors and organizations.

##### ***Evaluation of the Condition of the Afghanistan Financial Sector's Impact on U.S. Programming***

To determine the extent to which the current state of the Afghan financial system has impacted the planning and execution of U.S. activities to assist the people of Afghanistan; previous U.S. assistance and projects to improve Afghanistan's financial sector have been sustained; and U.S. activities to assist the people of Afghanistan conduct oversight of their efforts and ensure U.S. funds are received by the desired party.

## ACRONYMS

Acronym	
AAF	(Former) Afghan Air Force
AAU	Afghanistan Affairs Unit
ACEBA	Afghanistan Competitiveness of Export-Oriented Business Activity
AQIS	al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent
BHA	USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
CARE	State Office of the Coordinator for Afghan Relocation Efforts
CBP	U.S. Customs and Border Protection
DAB	Da Afghanistan Bank
DCIS	Defense Criminal Investigative Service
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DoD	Department of Defense
DoJ	Department of Justice
EWAE	Enduring Welcome Administrative Expenses
FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organization
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FY	fiscal year
ICE	U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
IDP	internally displaced persons
INL	State Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISIS-K	ISIS-Khorasan
ISR	intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance
Lead IG	Lead Inspector General
Lead IG agencies	DoD, State, and USAID OIGs
LOGCAP	DoD Logistics Civil Augmentation Program
NGO	nongovernmental organization
OAW	Operation Allies Welcome

Acronym	
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OES	Operation Enduring Sentinel
OFS	Operation Freedom's Sentinel
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OUSD(C)	Office of the Undersecretary of Defense-Comptroller
OUSD(P)	Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy
PM	State's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs
PRC	People's Republic of China
PRM	State Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SIGAR	Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction
SIV	Special Immigrant Visa
State	Department of State
TJP	Tehrik-e Jihad Pakistan
Treasury	Department of the Treasury
TTP	Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNMAS	UN Mine Action Service
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
U.S.	United States
USAGM	U.S. Agency for Global Media
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USCENTCOM	U.S. Central Command
USCIS	U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
VEO	violent extremist organization
WASH	water, sanitation and hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	UN World Health Organization





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