

Federal Programs Supporting U.S. Companies Doing Business and Investing in Afghanistan

An updated edition of the [Export Programs Guide](#) was issued by the U.S. Department of Commerce in November 2009. This detailed guide gives exporters a wealth of information on more than 100 federal programs that offer counseling and assistance to current exporters and businesses looking to expand overseas. The list below supplements the *Export Programs Guide* by identifying programs and services supporting U.S. businesses interested in doing business with and investing in Afghanistan.

U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC)

DOC's Afghanistan Investment and Reconstruction Task Force (AIRTF) works to develop the private sector through the improvement of a market conducive to trade, investment and private sector growth. Specific to Afghanistan, the AIRTF supports U.S. businesses through organizing business delegations, reverse trade missions, business events and providing information on doing business in Afghanistan. AIRTF actively works with the interagency in support of economic development and capacity building programs for Afghanistan.

The U.S. & Foreign Commercial Service (CS) is the trade promotion arm of the DOC. CS's network of trade professionals in over 100 U.S. cities and 150 countries helps U.S. companies get started in exporting or increase sales to new global markets. CS Kabul supports U.S. businesses through leveraging the U.S. private sector's participation and investment in helping to develop Afghanistan's private sector.

www.trade.gov/afghanistan • AfghanINFO@mail.doc.gov • (202) 482-1812

U.S. Department of Agriculture – Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS)

FAS is responsible for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating information about global supply and demand, trade trends, and market opportunities. FAS seeks improved market access for U.S. products; administers export financing and market development programs; provides export services; carries out food aid and market-related technical assistance programs; collects and analyzes production and market information data; and provides linkages to world resources and international organizations. Specific to Afghanistan, FAS supports U.S. businesses by assisting the Afghan government in developing a science based regulatory regime that is conducive to U.S. agricultural trade and investment through capacity building at all levels of the Afghan government (national- to district-level).

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/icd/drd/afghanistan.asp> • lula.lakeou@fas.usda.gov • (202) 720-0006

U.S. Department of State (DOS)

The Economic Section of the U.S. Embassy in Kabul is a component of the State Department's presence in Afghanistan. Its responsibility is to manage, monitor, and report on the full range of economic issues between the United States and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The Economic Section interacts with the Afghan government on bilateral and international economic policy issues and on questions about the regulations involving business, including infrastructure development (telecommunications, civil aviation, energy, and national resource management), agricultural policy and related issues (together with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Attaché, based in Islamabad), finance issues (together with the U.S. Department of the Treasury Attaché), and commercial relations.

While U.S. businesses with specific, individual inquiries should contact the Commercial Attaché (see Department of Commerce info above), U.S. businesses and U.S. business associations with questions or concerns on Afghan economic and commercial policies or regulations are welcome to contact the Economic Section.

http://kabul.usembassy.gov/econ_section.html • kabulcommercialinquiries@state.gov • +93 (0)700-108-001

Federal Programs Supporting U.S. Companies Doing Business and Investing in Afghanistan

Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC)

OPIC is an independent U.S. government agency whose mission is to mobilize and facilitate the participation of U. S. private capital and skills in the economic and social development of less developed countries and areas, and countries in transition from nonmarket to market economies.

OPIC assists U.S. companies by providing financing (from large structured finance to small business loans), political risk insurance, and investment funds. OPIC complements the private sector in managing risks associated with foreign direct investment and supports U.S. foreign policy. To date, OPIC has committed over \$200 million in support of 30 private investments in Afghanistan.

<http://www.opic.gov/> • info@opic.gov • (202) 336-8799

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

In order to improve Afghanistan's economic policy and the business environment, USAID/Afghanistan's Economic Growth program aims to continue to promote macroeconomic reform, revenue collection, and privatization of state-owned enterprises. To continue to assist in the improvement of private sector competitiveness, USAID will continue to develop industrial business parks, assist Afghan firms to compete in the global market, and support small and medium enterprises (SMEs). USAID Afghanistan supports U.S. businesses through programs that develop Afghanistan's business environment, reform efforts and mining sector.

<http://afghanistan.usaid.gov/en/index.aspx> • kabulusaidinformation@usaid.gov • (202) 216-6288

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

For more than 75 years in more than 100 countries, USGS has successfully completed capacity- or institution-building projects. In 2006-07, USAID provided \$5 million to the USGS to conduct extensive resource surveys. In cooperation with the Afghanistan Geological Survey (AGS) of the Afghanistan Ministry of Mines, the USGS assessed non-fuel mineral resources, generating over 100 terabytes of digital data using a number of very specific techniques. A second phase (Phase II) of assistance through the USGS will begin in FY 2011, lasting three years, and will focus on: Training and Capacity-Building; Mineral Resources Assessment; and Data Infrastructure Development. Through the increased technical capacity at the Afghanistan Ministry of Mines provided through this assistance, U.S. and other international businesses can potentially access better facilitation and support of investment and operations in Afghanistan.

<http://afghanistan.cr.usgs.gov/> • jmedlin@usgs.gov • (703) 648-6446

U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA)

USTDA advances economic development and U.S. commercial interests in developing and middle-income countries. The agency funds various forms of technical assistance, feasibility studies, training, reverse trade missions and business workshops that support the development of a modern infrastructure and a fair and open trading environment. USTDA's strategic use of foreign assistance supports sound investment policy and decision-making in host countries and creates an enabling environment for trade, investment and economic development. In carrying out its mission, USTDA gives emphasis to economic sectors that may benefit from U.S. exports of goods and services. Since 2002, USTDA has committed more than \$9 million, which has resulted in nearly \$46 million in U.S. exports to date. USTDA assistance has contributed to new cellular licenses, a government network linking provincial capitals, construction of an international standard hotel, the establishment of the American University of Afghanistan, and the ongoing construction of a fiber optic backbone ring.

<http://www.ustda.gov/> • sgreenip@ustda.gov • (703) 875-4357

Federal Programs Supporting U.S. Companies Doing Business and Investing in Afghanistan

Office of United States Trade Representative (USTR)

USTR helps U.S. firms facing trade barriers and other business climate issues, including through the mechanism of the United States' Trade and Investment Framework Agreement with Afghanistan and in the World Trade Organization context.

<http://www.ustr.gov/> • (202) 395-4720

Defense Business Board (DBB)

Defense Business Board (DBB) provides the Secretary of Defense, through the Deputy Secretary of Defense, independent advice and recommendations on effective strategies for the implementation of best business practices of interest to the Department of Defense. The ultimate objective of this advice is to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of organizational support to the nation's warfighters. Specific to Afghanistan, the DBB was tasked to review the Department of Defense's non-kinetic efforts in Afghanistan and provide recommendations on how these efforts might better support the goals of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS). Using the DBB's business oriented perspective, provide insights to jump-start economic activity to promote development through a private sector-led market economy. Also consider how the Department's choices regarding "ways and means" to support the multi-national military effort might be better informed by their potential impacts on the ANDS goals.

<http://dbb.defense.gov/contact.html> • defensebusinessboard2@osd.mil • Debora.duffy@osd.mil
(703) 697-2168

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) – Technical Assistance Program

To enhance the competitiveness of United States firms competing for or awarded contracts for the planning, design or construction of a project outside the United States, the USACE makes available the specialized engineering, technical and scientific expertise of the USACE on a non-exclusive basis to qualified U.S. firms. The firm must fully reimburse the United States for USACE support services, certify that the assistance requested is not reasonably and expeditiously available through other sources, and agree to hold and save the United States free from damages associated with USACE support activities (For more information on USACE's technical assistance program for private firms please visit <http://www.usace.army.mil/CEMP/iis/Pages/TechnicalAssistanceProgram.aspx>). Specific to Afghanistan, the USACE supports U.S. businesses by hosting a biannual Industry Day at their Transatlantic Division located in Winchester, VA (www.tad.usace.army.mil), and participating in business outreach events throughout the United States and Afghanistan.

<http://www.usace.army.mil/Pages/default.aspx> • hq-publicaffairs@usace.army.mil • (202) 761-0011