

USAID: BLAME THE AFGHANS, NOT US

QUICK STATS

- ✘ **CONFERENCE:** Spending
- ✘ **TEAM:** Agency for International Development
- **FUMBLE:** \$7.7 million for an industrial park
- **HOW TO RECOVER THE BALL:** Require federal agencies to monitor spending projects to ensure they have the desired effect

In July 2008 USAID completed the Gorimor Industrial Park at a cost of \$7.7 million and turned it over to the Afghanistan Investment Support Agency (AISA). The industrial park in Balkh Province, Afghanistan, was built to create more than 900 local jobs, but six years later only two business and 22 individuals work at the site. In 2014 the SIGAR inspected the site to determine why the Gorimar Industrial Park was not utilized.

The underutilization was initially blamed on the lack of electricity and water. But when SIGAR requested contract files to assess whether the contractor met contract requirements to provide electricity and water, USAID was unable to produce them—despite a federal requirement that agencies keep contracts greater than \$2,000 for six years and three months after final payment. Absent other evidence from USAID, it would seem they failed to properly document and retain contracts. By the time the inspection ended, USAID blamed AISA for its inability to manage the park.¹⁴⁸



Photo: SIGAR

RECOVERY

It is reasonable for hard-working American taxpayers to expect their government to properly spend money. Congress must do better to exercise its oversight responsibilities to ensure that USAID and all federal agencies utilize tax dollars responsibly. Congress should require USAID to put in place reasonable guideposts to measure the success of all spending projects. This would include monitoring support and economic development grants to ensure that the funds have had the desired effect.

For more information, please visit:

[SIGAR: Gorimar Industrial Park: Lack of Electricity and Water Have Left This \\$7.7 Million U.S.-funded Industrial Park Underutilized by Afghan Businesses](#)

[Foreign Policy: Afghan Watchdog Finds That If You Build It, They Won't Necessarily Come](#)