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STABILIZATION IN KEY AREAS (SIKA) – WEST

QUARTERLY REPORT

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STABILIZATION IN KEY AREAS (SIKA) – WEST

QUARTERLY REPORT

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Disclaimer:

The authors' views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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ACRONYMS

AECOM	Architecture Engineering Construction Operation Management
CBGD	Capacity Building and Gender Department
CDC	Community Development Councils
COP	Chief of Party
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
DDA	District Development Assembly
DDP	District Development Portfolio
DE	District Entities
DOWA	Department of Women’s Affairs
DPP	District Project Portfolio
DRRD	Directorate of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
DSC	District Stabilization Committee
DSM	District Stability Mechanism
DST	District Support Team
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
IR	Intermediate Result
MISTI	Measuring Impacts of Stabilization Intervention
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
OSC	Overseas Strategic Consulting
PST	provincial Support Team
SAM	Stability Analysis Matrix
SIKA	Stabilization in Key Areas
SOI	Source of Instability
TOT	Training of Trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

BACKGROUND

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) awarded AECOM International Development the Stabilization in Key Areas (SIKA) – West program on January 29, 2012. The SIKA-West 18-month contract (with an additional 18-month option period) is intended to increase stability and pave the way to transition in the western provinces of Herat, Farah, Badghis and Ghor. This program will be led by the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) in partnership with USAID and AECOM.

The purpose of this quarterly report is to discuss progress towards indicators and intermediate results listed in the Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) and outline how the contractual objectives have been achieved during the quarter. The report will be submitted to MRRD and GIROA authorities at the provincial and district level and used for briefings for Governors and sub-national GIROA representatives.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the signing of the Implementation Letter early in the quarter, SIKA-West was able to start implementing activities towards achieving indicators listed in the PMP and contractual objectives including a number of Stabilization Programming, Communications, Capacity Building and Gender objectives, which are listed in the document below.

Working in support of the MRRD, and other GIROA line ministries, SIKA-West was able to hold three District Stabilization Committee (DSC) meetings for 156 people in Farah Province. In the DSC meetings, the team worked with the local communities to identify sources of instability (SOI) and propose mitigating activities. From these sessions three projects have been approved by USAID, and will be implemented during the next quarter. Communications activities included two outreach projects for the Farah Directorate of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (DRRD) and the Department of Women's Affairs (DOWA).

During the reporting quarter SIKA-West project staff changed processes based on lessons learned from an early roll-out in Bala Baluk district. A greater emphasis needs to be placed on mentoring district and provincial level counterparts, especially in regards to the District Stability Committee process and communications training.

STABILIZATION PROGRAMMING

Intermediate Result 1

IR1 - Provincial and District Entities increasingly address sources of instability and take measures to respond to the population's development and governance concerns.

Summary of Achievements

As part of activities to meet Intermediate Result 1, three DSC meetings reaching a total of 156 people, including DSC members, *Mullahs*, and community observers in Farah and Herat Provinces, were organized in cooperation with the District Governor's office. The meetings allowed an opportunity to provide training on the use of the Stabilization Analysis Mechanism (SAM) tool to identify SOIs and propose mitigating activities. The information gathered from community members was used to update the District Stabilization Matrix (DSM), prioritizing projects which were then passed on to the Community Development Department to be reviewed and prioritized for the District Project Portfolio (DPP).

Table I - IRI Performance Management Plan Targets¹

#	Indicator Description	Target Year 1	Actual Aug-Oct 2012	Cumulative Total
1.1	Number of Stabilization work sessions conducted for provincial authorities and/or district entities	88	4	4
1.2	Increase in percentage of SIKA-West target districts where DEs use the SAM methodology to identify and address sources of instability	100%	100% 3/3 Districts	100% 3/3 Districts
1.3	Number of activities planned against sources of instability identified through SAM stabilization work sessions in SIKA-West districts.	105	57	60
1.4	Number of people participating in SAM stabilization work sessions	1,760	156	189
1.5	Number of activities which address identified sources of instability and included in a District Project Portfolio (DPP) which is approved by the DRRD.	70	67	67
1.6	Number of target districts in which the SAM tool has been used to identify activities that mitigate SOIs.	7	3	3

Specific Milestones Achieved

Farah Province

The Bala Baluk DSC was formally established during a meeting at the Bala Baluk District Governor’s office on August 8th. The 14 attendees at the meeting included the District Governor (Chairman) and 13 other DSC members. Community members were provided with an overview of the DSC’s roles and responsibilities. In addition to the 14 DSC members, 22 local community observers attended the meeting. On August 15th, the Bala Baluk District Governor provided feedback on the inaugural DSC meeting. The District Governor said there had been great community interest in the SIKA-West program following the meeting, and many people had visited his office to find out more information and expressed their willingness to participate. He also urged the program to begin implementing activities in the near future in order to maintain momentum.

While attending the second DSC meeting on August 27th the Bala Baluk DSC members were provided with SAM training. Following the SAM training a workshop was held to utilize the SAM to identify SOI’s. Thirty-three people from the government, the community and the District Development Assembly (DDA) participated in the election of five new DSC members, expanding the membership to 23. The five new members comprised of four DDA members and the Bala Baluk Telecommunications Manager. During this meeting, the Bala Baluk DSC identified insecurity as one SOI. The DSC identified and prioritized the following root causes: (1) presence of insurgency; (2) government corruption; (3) lack of trust between government and communities on both sides; (4) foreign interference; (5) lack of government access to the communities; (6) unqualified employees in the government departments; (7) dissatisfaction of Pashtun tribes with the government; and (8) unemployment.

Following the first SAM session, the DSC identified the following mitigation activities for three of the root causes:

- 1. Presence of insurgency**
 - a) Mediation through the Ulema and tribal elders;

¹ The revised PMP is currently with USAID undergoing the review and approval process.

- b) Providing job opportunities such as schools and community center rehabilitation, and construction of small dams;
- c) Providing agricultural programs such as horticulture facilities, livestock, etc;
- d) Following the roles and laws of Islam

2. Corruption

- a) Hiring qualified and educated people for the government departments,
- b) Increasing government staff salaries;
- c) Providing salary assistance such as coupons;
- d) Improving the capacity of the government staff.

3. Lack of trust between government and communities from both sides

- a) Respect to Ulema and influential elders from the government;
- b) Conducting coordination meetings between government and communities;
- c) Implementing projects equally to all villages;
- d) Government cooperation with people for encouraging the donor agencies and maintenance of projects.

The Bala Baluk DSC in Farah Province held its third meeting at the District Governor's office on October 1st, despite an early morning security incident in the immediate vicinity of the district center. Forty-four community members attended the meeting, including 13 DSC Members, 15 *Mullahs*, and 16 community observers, which allowed DSC members to have an open discussion with the *Mullahs* about insecurity in the district. An important point that came out of this meeting was that DSC members and *Ulema* expressed strong support for the construction of the Bakhsh Abad Dam, which had been halted by the Ministry of Water and Energy due to insecurity issues. Through this discussion, a potential soft mitigation activity was identified to build the advocacy capacity of DSC members. Another project identified during the meeting was from the District Governor, who requested assistance to activate the existing local radio station in Bala Baluk District in order to respond to Taliban propaganda, and to broadcast programs to support stability in the community. As a follow-up to this DSC meeting, the Herat HQ Stabilization Programming Department conducted a mission to Farah to guide coordination efforts to support the *Ulema's* bid in persuading 50 pro-Taliban *Mullahs* to attend the next Bala Baluk DSC meeting.



During the inaugural meeting at the Pusht-e Rod District Governor's office on October 2nd, District Stabilization Committee members receive an introduction to the mechanisms used to identify sources of instability

In coordination with the District Governor's office, Provincial Support Team (PST) staff organized the inaugural Pusht-e Rod DSC meeting on October 2nd, attended by 39 people. These included 22 DSC Members (six members and 17 from government line departments). During the meeting, the new members received DSC program orientation, roles and responsibilities were outlined, and initial SAM training was conducted. The DSC members identified one SOI: District Insecurity; and the following root causes: illiteracy (lack of education); unemployment; presence of insurgent groups; GIROA corruption; poppy cultivation and trafficking; and community conflicts. The mitigation activities for all root causes will be discussed during the next DSC meeting in November.

Herat Province

In an inaugural meeting at the district center On October 10th, the Shindand DSC was formally established. Out of the 73 people that attended the meeting 35 were put forward as DSC members, and the remaining acted as community observers. SAM training was conducted, which then led to an SOI analysis session, identifying root causes and potential mitigation activities. At the end of the meeting, the DSC members identified one SOI: District Insecurity; and the following root causes: government corruption; unemployment; presence of insurgents; presence of ISAF; and lack of trust between the *Ulema* and the government. As part of the process to identify SOI mitigating activities, the DSM was updated and forwarded to the Community Development Department to be included in the District Project Portfolio (DPP).

COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

Intermediate Result 2

Provincial and district entities understand what organizations and provincial line departments work within their geographic areas what kind of services they provide, and how the population can access those services.

Intermediate Result 3

Provincial authorities improve their ability to communicate with district entities in order to help them better understand their population’s needs and prioritize basic service delivery interventions.

Summary of Achievements

Under the guidance of the new Chief of Party in Herat, SIKA-West has re-organized the reporting structure of the program into a functional departmental focus, rather than an Intermediate Results focus. To this end, IR 2 and IR 3 fall under the Communications and Outreach Department, which will be responsible for ensuring all indicators under these Intermediate Results are reached. Indicators from the PMP are directly linked to the production of the Service Provider Catalogue (SPC) and to training implemented. SIKA-West is still working on producing the first version of the SPC and the information below covers activities towards production.

During the quarter, five separate training courses were conducted for district entity staff members and DSC counterparts. Training focused on building communications skills, developing a communications strategy and outlining the importance of communications in the daily work of the district government. Public outreach activities included supporting the Department of Women’s Affairs to design a brochure tackling violence against women, and supporting the Farah DRRD to produce an *Eid* television message.

Table 2 – IR2 Performance Management Plan Targets

IR #	Indicator Description	Target Year 1	Actual Aug-Oct 2012	Cumulative Total
2.1	Number of DEs and PAs using the Service Provider Catalog	21	0	0
2.2	Number of technical assistance activities provided to DEs by SIKA-West for the development of a project which has the potential for support from a provider listed in the SPC	36	0	0
2.3	Number of SOI mitigating activities that are implemented in collaboration with providers identified in the SPC	7	0	0
2.4	Number of people who received information provided by District Entities about services listed in the SPC via visits, radio, TV, e-mail, and letter	26,400	NTR	NTR
2.5	Number of training workshops held on Service Provider Catalog usage for District Entities.	9	0	0

Table 3 – IR3 Performance Management Plan Targets

IR #	Indicator Description	Target Year 1	Actual Aug-Oct 2012	Cumulative Total
3.1	Percent increase in the number of regular meetings held between Provincial authorities and District Entities	30%	NTR	NTR
3.2	Percent increase in the district residents reporting that District Entities listen to their grievances	15%	NTR	NTR
3.3	Number of PAs and DEs with a communications strategy or plan in place	9	0	NTR
3.4	Number of public outreach and/or public consultation activities conducted by DEs or PAs as outlined in the communications strategy or plan.	9	2	2
3.5	Number of trainings conducted for PAs and DEs in communications and outreach	42	5	7

Specific Milestones Achieved

Farah Province

To convey information contained in the SPC (an IR2 indicator) to illiterate community members, a graphic illustrator has been selected to provide sketches for the district resource. The illustrator is due to start work in November, with a draft of the Farah SPC due to be produced by January 2013. Currently, an international Short Term Technical Assistance (STTA) consultant has been contracted to push a final copy of the SPC through by December 13th. Three focus groups were conducted in late October in Farah and Herat Provinces to determine the effectiveness of draft SPC illustrations. Feedback from these focus groups was positive, and drawings will be revised during November to reflect suggested changes. The SPC has been sorted into 17 initial sections covering the gamut of government and NGO activities, from Agriculture through Women’s Services. The work is in the final stages of data verification

As part of capacity building, a training module on “*How to Develop a Communication Plan*” was developed and used to mentor provincial and district partners. In-depth communication planning by district partners is one of the keys to taking the first step in bettering district governance by improving the flow of information and making the government more visible and accountable. The Farah DRRD staff and leadership were provided with mentoring to develop a DRRD communications strategy for Farah Province. The participants identified key DRRD audiences and effective ways to reach each of those audiences. They also developed different messages that DRRD wants to convey to the public. These messages mostly focus on building trust and calling the public to maintain newly-implemented water projects in the villages. Based on the needs assessment conducted in mid-July, it was determined that Farah DRRD did not have a plan in place to communicate with its constituents. A first draft was completed and signed off by the Farah DRRD Deputy Director on August 6th. Although the strategy still needed revision it encompassed a practical approach for the best ways of communicating with people living in remote villages.

Two Training of Trainers (ToT) sessions were conducted in September for PST staff. A trickle-down approach is being taken to capacity building, with international leads conducting initial training of Herat HQ staff, who then train PST staff and provincial level counterparts, who in turn will be responsible for training DST staff and district level counterparts. The Capacity Building and Gender Department (CBGD) is involved at all levels of this process, and are maintaining a record of all trainings provided to SIKA-West staff and counterparts.

Public outreach activities during the month of August included providing support to the Farah DRRD to produce a short video clip in recognition of the *Eid al-Fitr* period. The message was produced in Pashtu and Dari and broadcast through Farah Radio Television Afghanistan (RTA) from August 17th – 20th. As part of gender-related communications capacity building and outreach activities, the Farah DOWA was provided with support and guidance to produce a brochure entitled “*Creating Lives Free of Violence*,” which will be used to educate local women on what services are available to those that suffer violence at home. The brochure is scheduled to be released on November 25th International Day for Combating Violence Against Women.



Draft copy of the DOWA “*Creating Lives Free of Violence*” brochure, of which 2,500 copies will be produced for dissemination on International Combating Violence Against Women Day on November 25th.

As part of ongoing mentoring in Bala Baluk, on August 29th, three counterparts from the DSC and one person from the Farah DRRD were identified to receive additional informal communications skills-building training. This training continued through September and October, with the plans to continue working with DSC counterparts to draft and implement a DSC communications plan including a range of outreach activities such as radio interviews, public consultations or *shuras*, and sector-specific meetings. The plan will also contain specific communication interventions addressing identified sources of instability.

During the month of September, two possible soft communications interventions arose through the DSM process: working with Bala Baluk *Mullahs* to disseminate messages of peace and stability; and publicizing upcoming vocational training to promote public participation and the district government’s engagement. Following a needs assessment and discussions with the community, a number of activities were identified by the Communications Department that could improve the Bala Baluk district government’s ability to communicate with community members, including revamping the Bala Baluk Radio in a Box (RIB). The Communications Department is researching sustainable ways to reactivate the radio, including the use of solar panels to generate electricity. In the past, the radio broadcasted music and ISAF related news to villages up to eight kilometers away. The current plan is to identify 10 young people in the district who can be trained on radio journalism by NAI/Internews in Herat and then undergo internships with radio stations in Herat. Four will be selected to run the radio station, and the remainder will be tasked with producing regular stories. The radio station should be operational by April or May. Staff have also been tasked to coordinate activities with the Farah radio station – *Radio Faryad*. The PST Communications Officer has been tasked with exploring ways to work with the radio station to improve the dissemination of information on government activities in Farah Province.

During the quarter, the communications team experienced a set-back in Farah province, following the resignation of the DRRD Communications counterpart, who had received mentoring and capacity building support. This issue highlights the importance of expanding trainings to include a number of different GIRoA officials, and in Farah two staff are now receiving training. Also in September one proposed training trip to Farah Provincial Center was postponed by two weeks following a bomb explosion near the Provincial Governor’s Compound on September 9th, which was reported to have killed one person and injured 12. The trip and trainings were conducted without incident two weeks later.

Herat Province

As part of activities toward achieving the communications capacity building objective, two full-day training sessions on building communications skills were conducted for 41 senior managers and staff at the Shindand District Government Offices. On October 21st, 20 high ranking managers attended the

training, including the district mayor, members of the Shindand DDA, and the Radio Tanin manager. On October 21st, 21 lower level-level officials participated in the training session, which covered the main elements of communications, messaging, and why communications matters in the daily work of district government. During these training sessions the Communications Department also took the opportunity to conduct a needs assessment to determine existing communications protocols, the quantity and quality of communications efforts, and gaps in the existing communications system at the district level. This information will be used to provide future capacity building training sessions to district entities.



Staff from the Shindand District Governor's offices receive communications training on October 21st. A compound attack on the evening of October 20th did not deter training from going ahead the next day. (Photo: SIKA-West M&E Department)

Work on six district profiles is ongoing. The Shindand district profile has been submitted to USAID. The district profiles of Bala Baluk and Kusk-e Rabat-e Sangi are drafted and currently being edited by Overseas Strategic Consulting (OSC) headquarters. All six profiles should be submitted to USAID by early December. The recently added profile of Pashtun Zarghon will be submitted in mid-January.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Intermediate Result 4

Provincial Authorities are able to improve basic service delivery by using GIRoA, CDCs, DDAs and ASOP DCCs, which gain capacity to plan, design, implement and monitor projects, with a focus on labor-intensive projects or productive infrastructure.

Summary of Achievements

By the end of the quarter, 14 potential projects in Bala Baluk District, Farah Province, had been identified, of which three have been approved by USAID, and six were listed as being in the pre-feasibility stage. Projects listed in the DPP included literacy training, vocational training, and repairs to several important community buildings.

Table 4 – IR4 Performance Management Plan Targets

IR #	IR Description	Target Year 1	Actual Aug-Oct 2012	Cumulative Total
4.1	Number of grants activities implemented against SOIs.	72	0	0
4.2	Percentage of population in targeted districts reporting increased satisfaction with GIRoA basic services.	15%	NTR	NTR
4.3	Percent increase of district residents reporting basic services in target districts are delivered in a fair and transparent manner.	25%	NTR	NTR
4.4	Number of person days of employment created through SIKA-West interventions.	9,000	0	0
4.5a	Number of grants activities with community contribution.	72	0	0

4.5b	Dollar value of community contribution.	\$216,000	0	0
4.6	Number of trainings implemented through grants.	7	0	0
4.7	Number of person-days of trainings implemented through grants	280	0	0

As grant-related activities are the final tools in SIKA-West’s toolbox of SOI mitigating activities, until the Implementation Letter was signed, the community Development staff were limited to recruiting, training and compiling templates and guidance materials.

Part of capacity building for District Entities, included the preparation of power point presentations and training materials on the Principles of Surveying; Safety and Health Training; Basics of Survey and Construction Materials; Maintenance, Sustainability, and Stabilization including Annex A: Maintenance and Community Organization, and Annex B: Establishment Of Funding Mechanism For Maintenance. On September 18th, the identified DSC and DRRD counterparts went through capacity building training on maintenance, sustainability, and stabilization practices.



Exterior view of Kanisk Village community center, one of the refurbishment projects recommended by the Bala Baluk DSC that is listed on the DPP.

Working with local communities and utilizing the Stability Analysis Mechanism, 14 projects in Bala Baluk District, Farah Province, have been identified, of which three have been approved by USAID, and six were listed as being in the pre-feasibility stage. The remaining five are still being internally reviewed and going through the District Stabilization Matrix process prior to being sent to USAID and counterparts for approval. Projects listed in the DPP included literacy training, vocational training, repairs to several important community buildings, and a number of water dividers. In other target districts, information is still being collected for the DPP in DSC meetings, specifically in Pusht-e Rod and Shindand Districts. All projects sent to USAID for approval had already been reviewed by the DRRD Directors in order to gain local government buy-in and support. A summary of the Bala Baluk DPP is attached below.

At the end of the quarter, four Requests for Proposals (RFPs) were under preparation at the SIKA-West HQ level as part of a search for qualified organizations and trainers to conduct the vocational training. Training activities in Community Development focused on building the capacity of PST Farah and DST Bala Baluk staff on pre-feasibility studies of intakes, checklists, stabilization practices, and maintenance. In preparation for district entity capacity building, technical training materials on a number of grant-related topics were developed.

Table 5 – District Project Portfolios - Bala Baluk District/Farah Province

SOI	Root Cause	Mitigating Activity	Project	Location	Status
Insecurity	Presence of AGE	Engage with Ulema Council to mediate between GIRoA & communities to address	Refurbishment of Aqa Del Community Center	Shiwan Village	Approved
			Refurbishment of Mohammad	Kanisk Village	Approved

SOI	Root Cause	Mitigating Activity	Project	Location	Status
		insurgent activity	Haroon Community Center		
			Refurbishment of Aqa Del Community Center	Dehzak Village	Approved
		Provide community employment opportunities through vocational training	Vocational Trainings – Motorbike Repair & Tailoring	Dehzak Village	RFP under preparation
			Vocational Trainings – Motorbike Repair	Shiwan Village	RFP under preparation
			Vocational Trainings – Mobile Phone Repair & Embroidery	Kanisk Village	RFP under preparation
		Construct Water Dividers	Water divider/distributor construction	Tapa Sadat Village	Pre-feasibility Study
				Ganjabad Village	Pre-feasibility Study
				Garani Village	Pre-feasibility Study
				Sia Jangle Village	Pre-feasibility Study
				Farahrod Village	Pre-feasibility Study
				Khoja Khedr Village	Pre-feasibility Study

CAPACITY BUILDING & GENDER

Summary of Achievements

The bulk of the quarter’s activities were focused on Farah Province and Herat HQ; however, a number of capacity building and gender mainstreaming activities also took place in Badghis and Herat PST offices in preparation for project roll-out into target districts. Capacity building and gender are cross-cutting across all program activities; however, to avoid double reporting, this section will only focus on activities that were not included in previous parts of the report.

During the quarter, in response to the difficulties recruiting female DSC members, 13 women in Bala Baluk District, were recruited to provide gender-related information, guiding the decision making process. Five literacy teachers were recruited to teach 125 illiterate women in Bala Baluk District over a six month period, and efforts are being made to locate the original female District Development Assembly members to be part

of the DSCs in Bala Baluk and Pusht-e Rod Districts. In Shindand District, Herat Province, the female DDA members have already been identified and are being actively recruited to join the DSC.

Table 6 – Gender PMP Program Objectives

IR#	IR Description	Target Year 1	Actual May-July 2012	Cumulative Total
#6	Proportion of female participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources and basic services. (assets, credit, income or employment).	10%	0	0
#7	Proportion of females who report increased self-efficacy at the conclusion of USG supported training/programming	75%	0	0
#8	Number of interventions that increased participation of women in district entities activities	27	3	3

Capacity Building Component

During the quarter the Capacity Building and Gender Department (CBGD) stepped up to provide greater program coordination than in previous months. This increase in driver activity by the CBGD also reflects the program objective of assisting GIRoA officials at the district and provincial levels to respond to the population’s development and governance concerns. It will be by building the capacity of government officials that will eventually lead to the improved functioning of government and the provision of priority GIRoA led basic services. SIKA-West will be utilizing a trickledown effect, whereby international staff train and guide national staff in Herat, who in turn train and guide provincial SIKA staff, who in turn support provincial authorities and district entities, and train SIKA staff at the district level.

In regards to gender indicators this quarter², staff prepared capacity building training modules, prepared gender mainstreaming materials, translated training materials and reports for all department, and conducted training needs assessments at the provincial and district level in Farah Province.

To date a total of 59 training modules covering all capacity building aspects of the program have been completed, translated into Dari and Pashto, and shared with the SIKA West program, to be used at the provincial and district level. The modules focus on internal and external trainings, and will be modified on a monthly basis.

Gender Component

During the quarter the Gender Department worked to expand on the mitigating activities proposed by the DSCs, and focused on identifying areas in which District Entities and Provincial Authorities could be supported to implement projects with a gender focus, and to increase women’s participation in district entities activities. There have been challenges in identifying and recruiting women DSC members through

² Gender targets are predominantly linked to IR4 grants activity, therefore progress will not be made on these indicators until community grants are issued.

existing DDA membership rosters, particularly in Farah Province. In response, Gender Working Groups have been set up at provincial centers to tackle gender issues and bring together staff from a number of non-governmental organizations and gender counterparts within the GIRoA line ministries to plan gender focused activities at the district level. During the quarter staff from DOWA, the DRRD, SIKA-West PST, the Department of Education (DoE), the Department of Public Health (DPH), and a local Non-Government Organization (NGO) – Wadan Afghanistan attended the weekly meetings.



Farah Gender Workshop discussing district gender issues on September 12th – 17th at the Farah DRRD offices.

From these meetings a number of concerns or project ideas were raised including

- Coordination efforts with UN Habitat on expanding literacy courses within Bala Baluk District Center
- Support to the Department of Education to assist illiterate students
- Support the DRRD to assist Wadan in their current efforts to combat drug addiction amongst women
- Support for the Humanitarian Organization for Local Development (HOLD) English and Computer programming in Farah Provincial
- Support for WADAN Clinic drug treatment center, specifically how to connect female/child drug addicts in Bala Baluk to this clinic
- Production of an outreach brochure tackling violence against women

In addition to the Gender Working Groups 13 women volunteered to work in their communities in Bala Baluk District to identify gender-related concerns in order to provide input and guidance into the DSC decision making process. This quarter the following concerns were identified, along with potential mitigating activities:

- Lack of clinics and female doctors
- Lack of schools and education for girls
- Lack of security
- Lack of water pumps within villages
- Lack of vocational skills training for women
- Lack of midwifery services

In preparation for future gender-related activities, 639 names of illiterate female residents from Bala Baluk District, Farah Province were gathered in preparation for the Pashto Literacy Training Program, set to start next quarter. As part of this activity, five people were selected for the Literacy Teacher position in Bala Baluk District, and negotiations were started to use the District Governor's compound as a training location. The following vocational training programs for women in Bala Baluk District were identified: Tailoring for 15 women in Dehzak; Embroidery for 15 women in Kaneshk; Literacy for 100 women in Ganjabad; Literacy for 100 women in Shewan; Literacy for 100 women in Gerani; Tailoring for 10 women in Gerani; Tailoring for 10 women in Ganjabad; Tailoring for 10 women in Shiwan; and Tailoring for 10 women in Dehzak.

Working with the Farah Immigration Department - (Ministry of Refugees & Repatriation), data was gathered on 300 Internally Displaced Person (IDP) family units currently located in the Farah Provincial Center. Data will be used to identify members of these families who may benefit from literacy training and other forms of support.

Seven gender-related Request for Proposals (RFPs) were issued during the quarter, and the Gender Department is currently waiting on responses to the Gender Literacy Training, Gender Health & Nutrition Training, and Gender Vocational Training Request for Proposals (RFP) s for the Bala Baluk District.

CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNED

As part of SIKA-West’s strategy to learn from roll-out activities in pilot districts, on September 15th, a Stabilization Program Office conducted a preparation training session for the Badghis PST staff on DSC formation, sharing lessons learned from the Bala Baluk roll-out process. The Badghis PST staff were better prepared for their own roll-out into Muqur and Qadis Districts. On September 17th, similar preparation training was held for the Herat PST staff, preparing them for roll-out into Shindand and Kusk-e Rabat-e-Sangi Districts. The recently arrived Deputy Chief of Party (DCoP) has been tasked with coordinating all future roll-out efforts.

SIKA-West staff discovered that it needs more than monthly DSC sessions at the start of the stabilization process, in order to move quickly ahead with identifying sources of instability. To get around this issue SIKA-West staff coordinated with independent DSC members to receive feedback on proposed projects and provide them with individual mentoring.

Counterparts at the District and Provincial level need to be more involved in the development of needs assessments, district profiles, and the development of communications strategies and other interventions, through a mentoring process. Following a MRRD request the Communications and Outreach Department will develop a strategy to improve engagement and mentorship of counterparts.

For the Stabilization DSC Programming we will need to focus more on the presence of tribal disputes within the DSC and couple this analysis with identification of district government services that can mitigate tribal disputes (as of now there has not been adequate focus within this area). As part of this process, there will be an individual focus on influential tribal elders as part of the overall DSC engagement.

We are still working with DRRD to ensure a more robust engagement with the DSC process. Security conditions on the ground have caused reluctance on the part of provincial government actors to attend DSC meetings. To address this, we are working closely with DRRD to share the results of our meetings, issues discussed, and to encourage greater participation in addressing mitigation activities.

There is a need for greater engagement with the District Government Line Department personnel both in terms of Capacity Building efforts and engagement in SOI mitigation activities. To address this, capacity building training is being rolled out to the District Government staff within Bala Baluk and Pusht-e Rod to ensure greater engagement.

DELIVERABLES

As per SIKA-West contractual deliverables, the following documents were submitted to USAID:

- May 1 – July 31, 2012 Quarterly Report
- August, September, October 2012 Monthly Reports
- Weekly Reports
- District Project Portfolio for Bala Baluk

- Grants Manual – revised and resubmitted to USAID on October 24, 2012. Revised Performance
- Monitoring Plan – revised and resubmitted to USAID on October 5, 2012 and on October 23, 2012.
- Revised Work Plan – revised and resubmitted to USAID on October 11, 2012 and October 23, 2012.