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# STABILITY IN KEY AREAS (SIKA) - EAST

## MONTHLY REPORT MAY 2012

Contract Number: AID-306-C-12-00002

MAY 2012

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by AECOM.

# STABILITY IN KEY AREAS ( S I K A ) - EAST

## MONTHLY REPORT

**Submitted to:**

USAID Afghanistan

**Prepared by:**

AECOM International Development

**DISCLAIMER:**

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## BACKGROUND

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This report covers SIKA-East program activities during the month of May 2012. The report reflects programmatic activities accomplished over the past month and is split into four primary subject areas. Under each header, a brief summary of the key programmatic initiatives has been provided.

SIKA-East began its implementation this month with its program launch in the Logar Provincial capital of Pul-i-Alam. The meeting, held at the office of the Provincial Governor, introduced SIKA-East to provincial leadership and senior government officials. The program launch was extremely well received, with attendees thanking both the PRRD Director and SIKA-East DCOP Dr. Mojeeb Stanakzai, and offering their full support to the program.



DDA Chairperson expresses his support

The Pul-i-Alam District Development Assembly (DDA) Head Haji Shawali expressed his views on the program stating, “This is a great program. We believe such programs will bring an impact on stabilization and will be a new approach to local development efforts.” The Head of the Baraki Barak DDA Haji Moheeb stated, “I am excited knowing about the program and it looks like a new model to us on how to bring impact in a district to pave the way for long term development; this is a great approach. Our support is here to make it happen”.

Program implementation planning continued this month with SIKA-East staff working closely with USAID and MRRD. MRRD played an active role in planning and district rollout preparation, providing advice and expertise as the program moved forward with implementation in Logar and Maidan Wardak. Preparations included completing the Logar Service Provider Catalogue (SPC), training field staff, and developing an engagement plan for introducing the program at the provincial and district levels. To facilitate the project rollout the program support unit (PSU) developed a process map that outlined the implementation activities required during the next phase of the program.

Operations secured the needed infrastructure to support project activities and streamline work processes. Improvements were completed on the two Kabul guesthouses and office building. Expatriate employees moved into the permanent guesthouses and all IRs and support staff moved into their new offices. With completion of the three buildings, all Kabul operations now occur at the Wazir Akbar Khan location. SIKA-East Provincial Management Units (PMUs) for Logar, Paktia, Ghazni, and Maidan Wardak developed relationships with their Provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD) counterparts and agreed to the full integration of SIKA-East staff into existing PRRD offices.

Lastly, this month security oversaw upgrades to security infrastructure for the new office and guesthouse compounds and refined its standard operation procedures. A contract was signed with the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF). The agreement with the APPF ensures that all venue security for SIKA-East is handed over to Afghan partners.

## SIKA-EAST PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

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### HIGHLIGHTS

- Program launched on May 29<sup>th</sup> in Pul-i-Alam
- Program implementation in Saydabad prepared and ready to launch on June 4, 2012.
- SIKA College prepares district teams
- Baraki Barak District Team trained and prepared for program implementation

### PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT



Logar Governor and PRRD Director address the audience

May 29<sup>th</sup> marked the launch of the implementation phase of SIKA in Logar. The meeting, held at the office of the Provincial Governor in Pul-i-Alam, introduced SIKA to local leadership and senior government officials. The program launch was well received. Senior officials who attended were: Logar Provincial Governor Tahir Khan Sabari, Eng. Abdul-Rahmani PRRD Director, Haji Mohibullah Head of the Baraki Barak DDA, Haji Shah Wali khan Head of the Pul-i-Alam DDA, Abdul Matin Jaffar Head of the Department of Education, Basir Sabir Director of IDLG Policy, Shafiar Popal Director of the Department of Culture and Youth, Abdul Jalil Head of the Logar Peace

Council, and Haji Noorullah Saqeb, Head of Regional IRC.

Following a recitation from the Holy Quran, the PRRD Director Mr. Abdul Rahman Rahmani spoke of MRRD projects in Logar, highlighting the startup of MRRD's new program called 'SIKA'. Mr. Rahmani also touched on the lessons learned from other MRRD projects, and the importance of stability programming. The Provincial Governor Mr. Tahir Khan Sabari gave a brief speech and welcomed the participants to the session. Governor Sabari added that he is pleased that this project has come to Logar and will cooperate fully with implementation, offering assistance where necessary. SIKA Deputy Chief of Party Dr. Mojeeb Stanikzai was then asked to provide a more detailed explanation of the program. In accordance with MRRD's request, SIKA management planned the meeting to be as low-key as possible.

Overall, the response from the officials present was extremely positive, with the fifty some participants now anticipating the full launch of the project throughout June in Baraki Barak. Some concerns were expressed over key issues of security and transparency, which will need to be managed as the program moves forward. A full report on the initial launch and the ongoing stability analysis sessions will be forthcoming in the next monthly report.

### IRI

This month IR1 designed a new training program for all SIKA-East staff, as well as the MRRD social mobilizers who will play a key role on the program's district teams. The training nicknamed 'SIKA College' is a 10-day session designed to prepare district teams for field implementation. The training includes a 3-day session on the stability analysis mechanism (SAM), and a train-the-trainer skills class.

Throughout the sessions SIKA-East's individual IRs and support units have the opportunity to present their activities to the district teams and explain the programmatic focus of their department. The aim of the sessions is to create a consistent level of program knowledge and proficiency among district staff, cement the working-level relationship with MRRD, and ensure SIKA-East's teams are prepared for implementation.

Throughout the month of May the SIKA-East team completed the first SIKA College sessions with the Baraki Barak District Team, and began the second iteration with the Wardak team. Additional training activities included conducting refresher training for stability program officers (DSOs), and training staff on new materials such as the Community Stability Plan (CSP). SIKA College will continue throughout June with training for other district teams, USAID Deputy Field Program Officers (DFPOs), and staff from SIKA-South, West, and North.

IR1, in close coordination with the PSU, drafted a program implementation schedule for Logar and Wardak, including the provincial launch, the DDA-level introductory meetings, and the initial cluster-level stability analysis sessions. IR1 worked with the DSOs in Logar and Wardak to ensure that preparations for the events were made. Preparations also included coordinating closely with Finance and Capacity Building to ensure that the venue and other logistics issues were addressed.

Daily meetings between IR4 and IR1 helped finalize the program process map, which outlines activities from the initial informational meeting with DDAs to submitting the District Project Portfolio (DPP) to USAID. Defining the process map simplifies the myriad of program activities leading to the final submission of the DPP. The process map has been shared with the other IRs and support unit for review.

This month IR1 continued working with USAID, MISTI, and other implementing partners to share experiences and best practices, and to agree on a common instrument for measuring trends in overall stability. SIKA-East contributed to the first M&E Summit, and hosted the first "M&E Community of Practice" meeting at SIKA-East Kabul offices. The summit was extremely productive and there was agreement on a common instrument with MISTI that will establish a baseline of the overall stability picture in the SIKA districts.

## **IR2**

In addition to gathering and analyzing data for the Service Provider Catalog (SPC) in Logar, Wardak, Ghazni, and Paktya, the IR2 Team designed and developed six supplementary documents in support of their SPC workshop module outline. The outline consists of: a workshop curriculum, trainers guide, participant's manual, workshop agenda, training module, and training evaluation tool. The program is designed to help participants understand and fully utilize the SPC. The IR2 team is also conducting a crosschecking and evaluation of the data collected to date.

## **IR3**

The communications team was active this month preparing for the program launch. The team focused on developing key messages for both the Pul-i-Alam and Baraki Barak events. The aim of the package is to simplify and standardize SIKA-East's messaging for the field. As well, the team produced and revised an

internal set of frequently asked questions for use by our staff. The questions were reflective of potential questions from the field and were designed to give everyone a common foundation of understanding about the program. The full package contained a briefing note, frequently asked questions, and talking points which were given to key staff and program counterparts to provide background in advance of the events.



IR3 meets with representatives  
from DOWA

The communications team also produced situational awareness briefings for Baraki Barak and Saydabad. The briefings are designed to familiarize staff with the districts where SIKA-East will be working. They also offer up to date information based on existing perception data. The briefing also relies on IR3 ground level media analysis to provide a solid atmospheric report of a district. IR3 is also working with the other IRs and support departments to create a field program manual. The draft manual is designed to simplify the understanding of SIKA-East and provide a standard programmatic description to field staff. A draft of the manual is being circulated and currently under review.

The IR3 team met with senior management to discuss revisions to SIKA-East's communications strategy. The plan is to simplify the strategy into a smaller document that outlines the key audiences and message targeted by the program. A revised draft is currently underway.

Members of the team participated in the rollout preparation training and in the rollout rehearsal. The rehearsal was an opportunity to do a dry run of the rollout process. IR3 staff provided positive feedback on improvements to the overall process. As well, this month IR3 began a close look at the communication processes of the DDAs and CDCs. The aim is to understand the existing communications mechanisms used by the district entities and use this information to further shape IR3 communications capacity assessment tool. The process is still ongoing.

## **IR4 & GRANTS**

IR4 efforts focused on the following major tasks: developing of processes for engagement with DDA's, CDC's, CDC Clusters, district governors, MRRD/NSP counterparts, the development of the Project Concept Note (PCN) format, and the DPP template. The IR4 team (Engineering, Community Development and the Grants section) worked closely with IR1, IR2, IR3 and the SIKA management to develop the processes necessary to implement the Stability Analysis Tool, produce a CSP, a Project Concept Note (PCN), and the DPP. IR-4 Community Development section has also prepared and submitted its Scope of Work, work plan, and Gantt chart.

The Engineering Support Group (ESG) continued supporting Human Resources (HR) to post for engineer positions in Logar, Wardak, Ghazni and Paktya Provinces including development of job descriptions, short listing of candidates, developed job specific interview evaluation forms and supported negotiations. Also, the IR4 ESG work plan and schedule were developed and submitted. In addition to the Engineers training, IR-4 ESG conducted training for Baraki Barak and Maidan Wardak teams in Kabul. Also, IR4 developed and delivered general ESG component training presentations for new PMU/DMU teams;

developed and delivered training updates for field engineers, starting with the Provincial Engineer for Logar Province. Engineer Janat Gul completed his ‘SIKA College’ session and field engineer specific training and was dispatched to Pul-i-Alam.

During the reporting period, the IR4 Community Development section initiated a comprehensive training program to prepare the field staff to facilitate community development sessions in the field; thus, all newly recruited community development officers (Kabul and Field-based) together with Maidan Wardak and Baraki Barak teams have been trained on Community Development approaches within the frame of SIKA-East. Two newly recruited community development officers have been trained to support and mentor the DEs to plan, design and implement the forthcoming projects. As well, two community development officers were deployed to Baraki Barak to support the IR1 team in the rollout and stability analysis phase of the program.

In support of program rollout activities in Logar and Wardak, the Grants team developed presentations and completed several training sessions for internal and external audiences including district and provincial level MRRD staff. The team also completed district and provincial research on the capacity and past performance of CDCs and DDAs. This information will facilitate the pre-qualification of these entities shortening the time required to award grants. In addition, the grants team led a number of meetings to establish coordination across the program work streams.

To ensure an efficient, effective and transparent grant cycle, the team developed a ‘roles and responsibilities’ matrix, to train and communicate to staff individual roles and steps involved in the grants cycle. The team also created detailed workflows, templates and forms. These were modeled after MRRD’s NSP program and include: grant process workflow with subtasks; PCN or Basic Activity Sheet templates; a monthly training tracker; grant application, evaluation, implementation and review checklists; and relevant templates required for transparency and compliance purposes. As well, a draft Grant Operation and Procedural Manual to be used by provincial and district field offices was completed this month. The manual provides step-by-step instructions and includes annexes, forms and templates. This operations manual is designed to complement the more policy-focused Grant Manual.

Candidates were interviewed and selected this month for a number of provincial and district positions, including district grants and subcontract officers. In addition, two Kabul-based positions were filled: the grants database manager and the grants procurement manager. The grants database manager will start on June 7, 2012. The grants procurement manager began in May and is actively working with the grants department on developing training, policy and procedures for in-kind grant awards as well as working with HR to recruit grants procurement officers for the provincial level. As well, two expat’s joined the team in Kabul in May, Ms. Addah Obiero, Grants and Subcontract Compliance Specialist, and Mr. Branimir Dimitrijevic, Grants and Subcontract Implementation Specialist.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

M&E, in close coordination with procurement, finalized the documentation for the procurement of the focus groups. RSI has been identified as the selected vendor for SIKA-East’s Focus Groups. The documentation has been submitted to Home Office and forwarded to USAID for approval. As well this

month, the data for Afghan Info for USAID's effectiveness indicators were collected from Finance, HR and Procurement. M&E verified the data and submitted the information to AECOM home office for review and uploading into the database.

A scope of work has been developed for District M&E Officers. The positions have been posted and applications received. The M&E Team and HR are currently reviewing the CVs submitted and are in the process of scheduling interviews. Three provincial M&E officers for Logar, Wardak and Ghazni joined the SIKA-East M&E Team this month. The M&E team provided training and orientation in Kabul, on SIKA-East M&E structure, PMP background and formulation, the M&E database, and program reporting requirements. The M&E team reviewed both the data collection sheets for indicators, as well as the SIKA-East reporting requirements.

M&E and ICT have begun developing the M&E database. Specifically, this month has focused on the: flow of information, coordination, and preparing a demonstration for senior management. During discussions with senior management and the ICT team it was decided that the SIKA-East database should be PMP driven. M&E's database specialist will work closely with ICT and IR3 to develop the database.

The M&E team participated in various meetings and presentations on over all stability indicators, training for field staff, IR2's work plan presentation, and participated in the gender working group meeting. M&E representatives also took part in the training sessions for SIKA-East field staff of Logar delivering presentations on M&E activities, data collection, and flow of information. The Provincial M&E officer for Logar participated in the program launch in Pul-i-Alam. As well this month, M&E submitted their work plan to senior management for review.

## **CAPACITY BUILDING & GENDER**

The Capacity Building team continued its support to SIKA-East by reviewing documents and developing various training modules. The team collected information from various sources to update the "Training Service Provider Catalogue" which will be uploaded into the program's central database. The Capacity Building team recruited provincial capacity building officers for Ghazni and Paktya. The Paktya capacity building officer is female and will oversee all gender related activities in Paktya province.

During the reporting period, the Capacity Building team developed a mandate and a work plan that covers the team's activities through to December 2012. To introduce the SIKA program and demonstrate the importance of the SAM, capacity building facilitated two nine-day workshops with a variety of participants including: new hires, Provincial and District Support Units and representatives from PRRD and NSP social mobilizers. An individual, two-day SIKA orientation and SAM workshop was conducted for USAID personnel from the Stabilization Unit and DFPOs in SIKA-East provinces.

During the month of May 2012, the Capacity Building and Gender Department supported IR1, IR2, IR3, IR4 and M&E by facilitating the ongoing SIKA-Orientation workshops; reviewing and editing the "Service Provider Catalogue"; reviewing and editing "the essentials of communications" document; Formulating of Project Management Manual; Formulation of Principles of Quality Assurance Manual; Formulation of Project Implementation Cycle; and developing an M&E training module.

The “SIKA-East’s Women’s Circle” met this month with participation of gender focal points from all units. The meeting aimed to synchronize gender activities through the program. A draft gender mandate and work plan was developed and submitted to management for approval. The Gender department held several meetings with PMU and DSUs to identify an effective mechanism in approaching women in the provincial and district levels.

## **OPERATIONS, SUPPORT, AND FIELD ACTIVITIES**

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The Program Support Unit (PSU) was instrumental this month in preparing and assisting in the implementation of the SIKA-East launch in Pul-i-Alam. The PSU prepared the agenda, participants list, venue step-up, budget, and a host of other minor logistical issues. PMU staff was present at the launch as well and helped facilitate the event. The PSU also updated the rollout tracker and oversaw the safe transit of senior Kabul staff to the launch. The rollout activities of all IRs and departments have been incorporated into the SIKA-East rollout Gantt chart as part of the PSU implementation planning.

The PSU conducted various interviews for Community Development Officer, District Engineers, Stability Program Officers, DSU managers, and PSU staff. Interviews for a number of positions are ongoing. PSU is working with the PMU and DSU managers to ensure that all districts are fully staffed by the end of July.

The PSU ICT conducted meetings with the various IRs and support units regarding the construction of the SIKA-East database. The PSU ICT also worked with M&E to review the PMP indicators and the database structure. A working draft of the database should be complete by the end of June.

During this month SIKA-East recruited 28 new staff, and has an additional 75 positions under process. Among the 28 staff recruited were 3 females and 25 males. The recruitment broken down by partner is provided: Ti 1, OSC 2, IRD 8, and AECOM 17. The positions currently open or under process are listed as: AECOM 41, IRD 14, OSC 16, and Ti 4.

In May, the Employee Handbook was approved by AECOM home office and is currently under review by an Afghan lawyer to ensure compliance issues with local labor law. With support from AECOM home office, the LCP has been drafted and is under review. All local staff are required to have an individual tax identification number or (TIN). Currently 75% of our staff has completed the process, with the remaining 25% under process. The goal is to complete the processing of staff TINs by the end of June. As well, Procurement, during the month of May 2012, ensured the safe delivery of the connexes for PMU offices.

The procurement team developed the contract for the Stability Success Inventory (SSI) with Qara Consulting Firm, and the Purchase Order (PO) for the generators for DSUs and PMUs have been drafted. Procurement also submitted the necessary documentation to AECOM home office to award the Focus Groups; the documentation is currently under review.

During the reporting period, the Logistics Department, for the purpose of supporting the program, inspected and initiated bar-coding of relevant assets and items and most importantly: 1) Prepared and shipped office equipment and furniture to provincial offices; and created Bulk Property Records in the

OneSource Property Book for newly purchased items.

The Quality Control and Audit (QCA) Department reviewed the procurement provision records and files this month as part of the audit and compliance process to ensure that Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are being followed. Additionally, an inventory audit of newly purchased assets, and all assets taken from ASOP was completed. Lastly, the spot/regular audit and compliance of SIKA-East's cash management system (petty cash, bank, cash count, records and registration) was completed and the relevant banking procedures (opening accounts, transfers, and reconciliations) were reviewed.

## **FIELD ACTIVITIES**

### **Logar Province**

During the reporting period the Logar PMU Manager met with the PRRD Director to gather information regarding the structure and membership of the Baraki Barak DDA and district Community Development Councils (CDCs). Discussions also centered on the types of projects being implemented by the DDA and the CDCs in the selected district and gauging the ability of the district entities to implement projects of varying size. The PMU Office also arranged a Letter of Agreement between SIKA-East and the Baraki Barak District Governor for office space.

### **Maidan Wardak Province**

In May the PMU Manager held several coordination meetings with various government line ministries provincial departments including PRRD, MAIL, and MoE. The PMU along with the IR1 team held a meeting with selected ministry line departments' officials (PRRD, MAIL, and MoE) to provide a brief overview of SIKA-East's program objectives. The meeting was positive with the ministry representatives expressing interest in the Service Providers Catalogue (SPC) and offering to help support SIKA-East field implementation.

### **Paktya Province**

The Paktya PMU Office secured space this month for SIKA-East's district offices in both Zurmat and Waza Zadran. In Zurmat, the office space is located in the newly built District Government Center. In Waza Zadran, two rooms were secured as office space in the district government center, however these will require some renovation. The PMU offices in Gardez also arrived this month. The two connexes are located alongside the PRRD building. The PMU staff also assisted IR2 in collecting additional information gathered for its SPC.

The PMU team worked with IR1 and IR3 to collect information on the Zurmat and Waza Zadran DDAs and CDCs. The information is part of the preparatory process in advance of implementation. In addition, the PMU team gathered information on influential community and tribal leaders.

The PMU Office held interviews this month for several positions both at the provincial and district levels in Paktya. The new team members include: the District Stabilization Unit Heads for Zurmat and Waza Zadran, the PMU Capacity Building Officer, and the IR3 PMU Officer. Interviews for the remaining

positions will continue throughout June.

### Ghazni Province

Ghazni PMU Office conducted multiple meetings with different government and non-governmental organizations. The aims of the meetings were two-fold: 1. to coordinate program activities, and 2. to collect data and information required for the SPC. The PMU staff met with Ander DDA head, Deh Yak District Community Council head, and representatives from NABDP, NSP, PRRD to collect information about prequalification, past performance, and the capacity of the DDA and CDCs in Ghazni province. The PMU staff also met with the management of Radio Kalid, who agreed to keep the team updates on the changing security environment in Ghazni.



Ghazni PMU Head during a meeting with Eng. Dad Mohammad Ghazni NSP Head.

## FINANCE AND SECURITY

### FINANCE ACTIVITIES

For May the program had achieved activity of (\$ 1,445,059). Please see the figures below for more details:

Month	Total Obligated Amount	Amount Billed	Remaining Amount of Obligated Funds
MAY	\$25,000,000	May: \$1,445,059 Cumulative: \$4,873,116	\$20,126,884

### SECURITY ACTIVITIES

In the first half of May 2012, the SIKA East Security Department had the opportunity to test emergency procedures during the spectacular attack in Wazir Akbar Khan. While the incident did not impact the program directly the team was able to further refine its procedures and protocols to mitigate against future incidents in the area. SIKA-East hired two additional personnel within the security department to assist as liaisons with local authorities (1 x Security Liaison Officer) and to facilitate security needs for field staff in the first four districts of our rollout plan (Security Officer).