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STABILITY IN KEY AREAS (SIKA) - EAST

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STABILITY IN KEY AREAS (SIKA) - EAST

MONTHLY REPORT

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USAID Afghanistan

Prepared by:

AECOM International Development

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.

ACRONYM LIST

AECOM	AECOM International Development
CBGU	Capacity Building and Gender Unit
CDC	Community Development Council
CDESU	Community Development & Engineering Support Unit
CDG	Community Development Group
CDSO	Community Development and Service Delivery
COU	Communication and Outreach Unit
CSU	Central Support Unit
DDA	District Development Assembly
DE	District Entity
DPP	District Project Portfolio
DST	District Support Team
DSU	District Support Unit
ESG	Engineering Support Group
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GSICU	Grants/Subcontract Implementation and Compliance Unit
GuC	Grants under Contract
IDLG	Independent Directorate for Local Governance
IR	Intermediate Result
ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
PE	Provincial Entities
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PMU	Provincial Management Unit
PRRD	Provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
PSU	Program Support Unit
RDU	Resource Development Unit
SAM	Stability Analysis Methodology
SIKA	Stability in Key Areas
SOI	Sources of Instability
SPC	Service Providers Catalog
SSI	Stability Success Inventory
SU	Stability Unit
TA	Technical Assistance
ToT	Training of Trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

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BACKGROUND

The SIKA-East Monthly Report provides an overview of the program activities during the month of June, 2012. Accomplished programmatic activities over the month are described under four primary subject areas. Under each heading, a brief summary of the key programmatic initiatives has been provided.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT

We welcome this opportunity to provide an update on SIKA-East activities over the past month. We believe the report will give the reader a full picture of the scope and breadth of our activities over this period. Clearly, the most important event was being granted permission to begin our roll out as a pilot program in two districts, Baraki Barak and Sayedabad. After months of preparing for a more general rollout, we welcomed the opportunity to test our extensively worked out plans against the reality of implementing SIKA on the ground. In general, we have been pleased with the response that we have received. *Hawza* meetings have been generally well attended and we believe we have made significant progress in explaining stability-based development and then developing *Hawza* Stability Plans which focus on achieving stability. At the same time, we have been careful to ensure that meeting participants understand how stability can lead to other benefits, such as longer-term development and improved governance.

Additionally, we are pleased to have developed a good working relationship with MISTI. While a number of issues remain to be worked out, we believe we have made a good cooperative start and that MISTI will help provide us with valuable information for our baseline survey and PMP.

We have faced a number of challenges as is normal with any program of this size and complexity. Baraki Barak has proved to be a more volatile region than we initially anticipated. This has created both security and logistical problems which have caused us, among other things, to move *Hawza* sessions to Pul-e Alam, the Provincial Capital, at least for the time being. Despite the security challenge, we believe we have made careful and pragmatic decisions intended to protect our staff and participants while allowing SIKA to move forward. Additionally, while we believe we are fully partnered with MRRD at the district and provincial levels, we would like to be able to deepen our ties to our partners at the national level. In this regard, we are looking forward to the signing of an implementation agreement between MRRD and USAID which will allow us to work even more closely with our colleagues there.

SIKA-EAST PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

I. HIGHLIGHTS

- On 4th June 2012, SIKA-East pilot program was launched in Maidan Wardak Provincial capital of Maidan Shahr.
- SIKA-East staff worked closely with MRRD counterparts on the ground on organizing and conducting Stability Analysis Sessions and developing Hawza Stability Plans.
- Provincial Management Units (PMUs) for Logar, Paktya, Ghazni, and Maidan Wardak fully established their offices in the Provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD) compounds and worked to ensure full integration with the government counterparts at the provincial levels.

2. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Following several months of delay due to the absence of the Implementation Letter between USAID and MRRD, SIKA-East on 4th June 2012 launched its pilot program implementation in



PRRD Director giving opening speech at the kick off meeting

Maidan Wardak with a kick-off meeting held at the office of the Provincial Governor in Maidan Shahr. Wardak Provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development Directorate (PRRD) director and SIKA-East Deputy Chief of Party introduced SIKA to provincial leadership and senior government officials and explained how the stabilization approach can complement other on-going initiatives and pave the way for long-term development.

The provincial governor officially welcomed the program to Maidan Wardak and promised full support to SIKA throughout the program implementation. He emphasized the importance of carefully selecting community leaders who are from the districts to participate in the *Hawza* Stability Analysis Sessions to ensure strong community buy in and ultimate success in the implementation.



Kick off meeting: Q&A session



DDA members and Tribal Leaders discuss local sources of instability

The provincial kick off meetings were followed by the SIKA-East launch sessions in districts of Baraki Barak in Logar and Sayedabad in Maidan Wardak. The meetings were co-organized by SIKA and District Development Assemblies (DDA) and provided a good platform to introduce the program to District Entities (DE), tribal elders and other

community stakeholders.

Also in June, the Operations Department secured the needed infrastructure to support project activities in the provincial and district capitals and assisted the field teams in setting up office space within PRRD compounds. Throughout the month, SIKA-East PMUs for Logar, *Paktya*, Ghazni, and Maidan Wardak have been working closely with their PRRD counterparts to ensure full integration between SIKA-East and PRRD during the program implementation.

KEY PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

I. IRI

On May 29, SIKA-East began the implementation of the pilot program in Logar followed by the 4th of June in Maidan Wardak Provincial capitals and continued its activities throughout the month of June. Since that time, significant progress has been made in terms of being able to present more effectively the stabilization aspects of SIKA. IR1 continues to adapt the facilitation method to ensure that SIKA-East target audiences both understand and embrace the concept of using the effect on stability as a means of allocating resources. At the same time SIKA-East field teams have gained invaluable insight into the local dynamics in the two districts which facilitates further improvements in our teaching methodology. Emerging *Hawza* Stability Plans have demonstrated increasing discernment as to what affects stability locally and the breadth of options SIKA offers to address the main drivers of instability.

During 3-day *Hawza* Stability Analysis Sessions, the IR1-led district teams, with support of Social Organizers, assisted community leaders from various parts of Baraki Barak and Sayadabad districts in identifying main challenges to stability in their respective areas and in designing solutions to address those challenges. Throughout the process, particularly in Maidan Wardak, SIKA-East counterparts from PRRD, District Development Assemblies (DDA) and Social Organizers worked very closely with SIKA-East staff and were instrumental in organizing sessions and mobilizing community elders and other influential leaders. While Social Organizers and DDA members only supported the sessions initially, they are increasingly taking a more active role in the discussion and the formulation of the Stability Plans. In the upcoming sessions and through the remainder of the project cycle, SIKA-E teams will continue working with their government counterparts with the aim of enabling them to ultimately conduct the meetings independently.

Persistent security challenges, including frequent air strikes and night raids resulting in civilian casualties in Baraki Barak, have created numerous challenges for both the SIKA-East district teams and the program participants. Due to volatile situations in both districts and the increasing presence of foreign insurgents, community elders requested that the sessions be held at the provincial capitals, where they said they felt safer and out of the view of insurgents. Despite the

challenges, the meetings drew wide participation, including from some of the most insecure and neglected areas of the districts, such as Shah Mazar in Logar and Sheniz Sofla in Maidan Shahr, as well as representatives of the local youth associations and associations of the disabled.

Because of the current security situation and its anticipated continuation throughout the summer, SIKA-East revised the curriculum to de-emphasize terms that we found to be overly sensitive, such as any discussion of militants or other key actors. Despite this, the sessions generated frank discussions and the resulting stability plans provide an increasingly holistic view of each *Hawza* and describe in detail issues that are undermining local stability, ranging from weak governance to military operations and other challenges that fall outside of scope of SIKA-East. The *Hawza* stability plans will serve as a useful tool for district entities (DEs) to understand the sources of local instability and to plan activities and strategies to address them through existing institutional mechanisms. They also identify numerous opportunities for capacity building, development, and strategic communications, many of which can be addressed through SIKA-East resources.

Throughout the process, SIKA District Teams continued to assist participants in understanding how stability-based programming can complement other, more traditional types of development by paving the way for them. We noticed greater understanding of the methodology throughout the course of our *Hawza* sessions. We believe the process of widening the scope of local thinking about kinds of development and their possible interactions will ease the future implementation of SIKA in later phases of the program.

Finally, the sessions in Baraki Barak and Sayadabad demonstrated that diverse and representative groups (i.e., the groups that, apart from CDC members, include other influential persons and groups) provide a constructive and open forum for discussions about stability dynamics. The mix of participants, including DDA, CDC, DCC members, tribal and other influential elders worked well, especially in Sayadabad. There, the community expressed open disappointment in their local representatives and attributed a number of challenges to stability to their performance and lack of a solid relationship with the community.

SIKA-East teams will spend time in July taking stock of the sessions, reviewing the *Hawza* stability plans and continue working together with PRRD counterparts, DEs and community elders to develop a comprehensive district project portfolio that will catalog the activities targeting specific sources of instability in each district.

2. IR2

The Service Provider Catalog (SPC) for Logar Province was sent on to USAID for COR review and comments. The IR2 team is currently cross checking central level data for Wardak SPC to be finalized by the middle of next month. In parallel with the development of the SPCs, SIKA-East

is planning to conduct information sessions to promote the Catalogs and raise general awareness of the services and providers that are available in each province.

In June, the IR2 team also developed a Provincial Department Service Profile (PDSP) template. Initially, PDSP will be practiced in the Education, Health, Agriculture, Irrigation & Livestock, Rural Rehabilitation & Development (RRD), and Justice Departments. Although not included as an original project deliverable, we believe the PDSP and compiling of data from the provincial level will help communities better utilize available resources and efforts at provincial line departments.

3. IR3

IR3 activities during the month of June included various consultations; development of a procurement request for radio spots; the expansion of Media Watch, the media analysis that captures trends and increased activities in areas of development, insurgency activities, and issues of gender equity; concept creation of a field manual for communication staff; daily reporting from field and media tracking; and hiring of new staff both in Kabul and in the field.

The IR3 team continued its various consultations within the SIKA-East team, PRRD, District Social Mobilizer, DDA, and CDC members in both Baraki Barak and Sayadabad Districts. The IR3 field team has been closely working with DDA and CDC members in Paktya, Logar, Maidan Wardak, and Ghazni on introducing the program, identifying counterparts and gaining general situational awareness. The information and analysis will assist in the development of intra- and inter-governmental communications strategies for the IR3 field staff in the district.

Finally, in June, IR3 developed a procurement memo and statement of work (SOW) for radio spots. The procurement request will be finalized in July once the final specifications are aligned with the Scope of Work.

4. IR4

In support of the rollout process, the IR4 Community Development and Engineering Support Group (ESG) staff participated in provincial and district level orientation, planning, and pre-grant activities workshops, including SAM sessions in Baraki Barak and Sayedabad.

In advance of the workshops, Community Development staff assisted with stakeholder mapping to identify respected and influential figures to include in the workshops. In addition, the staff drafted project concept and portfolio development processes to complement stability analysis sessions resulting in district stability plans and district project portfolios. In preparation for harmonizing stability planning with other local strategic development plans, the staff also collected Baraki Barak and Sayedabad DDA district development plans and CDC community development plans.

During the month, ESG developed a bill of quantities form, adapted from the MRRD/NSP templates, and submitted the form to the Grants Unit for inclusion in the grants application standard forms.

During July, IR4 will continue to participate in and closely support orientation, planning, and other pre-grant activities, and ESG will continue to assist with grants on technical issues.

As part of SIKA training, IR4 developed and presented training to new provincial and district team staff members from Logar, Paktya, Ghazni, Wardak, and USAID DFPO representatives. Topics included key community development concepts, as well as project roles and responsibilities.

In addition to preparing and submitting the team's SOW, ESG also collaborated with Human Resources to complete the recruitment of the majority of engineering positions in the four target provinces. This included hiring the three provincial and six district engineers who were rapidly trained and deployed in order to provide cross-over support to the SIKA-East launch efforts.

ESG also developed a SIKA-East-specific Design Engineers' pre-qualification test that was administered to 13 candidates for the Kabul-based design engineer position. As a result of extensive recruitment, the testing group included three women engineers. ESG will continue to coordinate with HR in the upcoming recruitment of Chuck and Waza Zadran District engineers.

Community Development is collaborating with Human Resources to complete team staffing and expects to recruit four community development officers in July, one position in Wardak (Chuck District), one in Ghazni (Ander District), and two in Paktya (Waza Zadran and Zurmat Districts).

5. GRANTS UNIT

The Grants Unit conducted a series of training workshops for newly-hired team members, providing grants orientation to the initial provinces and districts, and to Kabul staff in relation to grants procedure requirements and criteria. Using this opportunity to learn from the DFPOs about potential obstacles that projects can face in the field and possible solutions that can improve the process, an orientation was provided to USAID DFPOs regarding SIKA-East grants procedures.

Kabul-based grants managers, together with provincial and district grants team members, participated in stability workshops in the Wardak and Logar Provinces. At these workshops, the managers and team members used the opportunity to explain the SIKA-East grants criteria and requirements to CDC and DDA members, answering their questions about project types, payment methods, developing of grants applications, etc.

Three fraud awareness trainings were coordinated for SIKA-East staff, and provincial and district officers and managers. The Office of Inspector General provided trainings that included a briefing on current trends discovered during investigations in fraud and corruption cases in Afghanistan and Pakistan, reporting requirements and expectations, discussion on possible consequences to employees found to be involved in fraud or mismanagement, and internal controls and reporting processes. These trainings were constructive and informative, and each lasted approximately 45 minutes.

A draft grants operation and procedural manual, and catalog of annex, forms and templates that provides step-by-step instructions along with the accompanying documents that will be used in the grant process has been completed and is under review.

6. MONITORING & EVALUATION

Monitoring & Evaluation completed the data collection templates for each indicator based on the SIKA-East Performance Management Plan (PMP). The data collection sheets were reviewed carefully and revised several times by the M&E teams for SIKA-East and SIKA-West. The collection sheets have been finalized in close coordination with the ICT unit for the M&E database. ICT has put together an interim database in ACCESS based on the collection sheets, and is ready for data entry and testing.

The annual work plan is drafted and outlines the major unit activities for the year in line with the PMP and SIKA-East work plans. The M&E Work Plan consists of a document detailing policy and procedures for data collections, baseline studies, monitoring and evaluation training guidelines, annual Gantt chart and site visits tools, etc., with annexes as attachments to the actual document. This document is under review of SIKA-East management.

SIKA-East and SIKA-West conducted joint meetings with MISTI on the baseline process to discuss the review of the instrument and sharing with SIKA for review and comments.

M&E is also developing policy and procedures for data collection of PMP indicators for each IR. The policy and procedures guideline highlights the roles and responsibilities of M&E staff at the district, provincial, and central levels on coordination and management of data for each indicator with the relevant IR. Soon after completion of the whole package, it will be shared with each IR component for review and comment.

Eight district M&E officer positions for four provinces under implementation have been shortlisted with available local candidates and interviews conducted in Ghazni (Andar and Deh Yak districts) and Wardak (Saydabad, Chak-e-Wardak, and Nirkh districts) at each province independently. Two district M&E officers for Zurmat and Wuza Zadran and one provincial M&E officer for Paktya PMU are in process.

7. CAPACITY BUILDING AND GENDER

The Capacity Building Department continued its support of SIKA-East IRs and other departments by reviewing each IR- related outlined documents and developing training modules. The Capacity Building team is also collecting information from various sources to update the training Service Provider Catalog that will be uploaded into a central database. SIKA-East will use this catalog as a tool for identifying training expertise in relevant areas and locations to allow a quick engagement as different training needs arise. . During June, the Department recruited provincial capacity building officers for Ghazni and Paktya. A female officer will oversee all gender-related activities in the Paktya province.

During the reporting period, the Capacity Building Department developed a mandate and work plan to cover activities through December 2012. To introduce the SIKA-East program and demonstrate the importance of the Stability Analysis Methodology (SAM), Capacity Building facilitated two nine-day workshops with participants who included new hires, Provincial and District Support Units staff, and representatives from PRRD and NSP social organizers. An individual two-day SIKA orientation and SAM workshop was conducted for USAID Stabilization Unit personnel and deputy field program officers in SIKA-East provinces.

The second internal working group, SIKA Gender Circle, took place to coordinate gender activities through SIKA-East. The purpose of the group is to ensure that all SIKA IRs and departments are aware of gender mainstreaming and incorporate it into their activities in a coherent way. The Gender Department held several meetings with PMUs and DSUs to identify an effective mechanism for approaching women at the provincial and district levels. Pending approval to engage with counterparts from IDLG, MRRD and Ministry of Women Affairs, the Gender Department will work on developing SIKA-East strategy for engagement of women, which will build on the existing GIRoA documents in this field.

8. PROGRAM SUPPORT UNIT

During the month of June, the Program Support Unit (PSU) provided daily support to SIKA-East IRs and other departments and continued coordinating field operations through PMU and DSU offices. PSU staff participated in the kick off meetings in Logar and Maidan Wardak and facilitated the logistical preparation for the meetings and the subsequent *Hawza* Stability Analysis Sessions.

The Information and Communications Technology (ICT) section conducted weekly meetings with individual IRs to determine their database needs and worked on the development of interim databases for IR2, Capacity Building and M&E. The priority task of the ICT in the coming period will be the design and development of the grants database in time for the beginning of the SIKA-East grants cycle.

9. OPERATIONS, SUPPORT, AND FIELD ACTIVITIES

In June, the Operations Department supported program implementation by finalizing the logistical set up of SIKA-East provincial and district offices. During the reporting period, Provincial Management Unit (PMU) offices became fully operational with prefabricated connexes installed in the PRRD compounds in Pul-I Alam, Maidan Shah, Gardez and Ghazni to ensure full SIKA-East – PRRD integration. All the furniture and the equipment have been procured and transported to the new offices, while the installation of the VSAT and internet bandwidth has been awarded and will be installed in July.

10. HUMAN RESOURCES

The Human Resources (HR) Department recruited 32 new staff members in June, with 61 positions in process. The Employee Handbook is still under revision with an Afghan lawyer to review compliance with Afghan labor legislation.

FIELD ACTIVITIES

1. LOGAR PROVINCE

Logar Provincial Management Department (PMU) and Baraki Barak District Support Unit (DSU) staff worked throughout June on preparing and conducting the *Hawza* Stability Analysis Sessions for five *Hawzas* of Baraki Barak. The team worked closely with PRRD, Social Organizer and DDA members to mobilize CDC members and other influential tribal leaders from each area and generate productive discussions to inform *Hawza* Stability Plans.

The team also identified influential women from Baraki Barak and received their commitment to participate in the *Hawza* Stability Session (Women's Perspective), which is planned for July in Kabul. IR1 sees this session as a structured, yet informal discussion with 40 women from Baraki Barak and Sayedabad that will result in them identifying main challenges to stability in their areas, as seen from their unique perspective. This process will allow us to develop district-wide stability plans that will reflect the views of a wide group of participants.

2. MAIDAN WARDAK PROVINCE

Maidan Wardak Provincial Management Department (PMU) and Sayadabad District Support Unit (DSU) staff worked throughout June on preparing and conducting the *Hawza* Stability Analysis Sessions for six *Hawzas* of Sayadabad District. The team worked closely with PRRD, Social Organizer and DDA members to mobilize CDC members and other influential tribal leaders from each area and generate productive discussions to inform *Hawza* Stability Plans.

During the last week of June, the SIKA-East team – together with colleagues from PRRD - participated in several meetings with the provincial Swedish Committee, an implementing

partner for NSP in Maidan Wardak. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the challenges of working in the target districts and learn more about the capacity of individual CDCs and the ongoing projects.

3. PAKTYA PROVINCE

Provincial Management Unit (PMU) for Paktya completed the operational set up of the provincial office in Gardez and completed the collocation with PRRD. Also during the reporting period, the Paktya team participated in a nine-day SIKA orientation training in Kabul, during which the newly recruited field staff was introduced to the program and received comprehensive training on the Stability Analysis Methodology (SAM) and the grants process. In addition, the Paktya Stability Program Officer and Grants Officer joined their colleagues from Logar and Wardak to assist in the facilitation of two series of *Hawza* Stability Analysis Sessions in Pul-I Alam and Maidan Shah. This was an excellent opportunity for the Paktya staff to learn first-hand about the analysis process, experience direct discussions with the community and assist in the formulation of the *Hawza* Stability Plans.

In the anticipation of a quick roll out in Paktya, the provincial and district teams worked to identify counterparts and key stakeholders in Zurmat and Wuza Zadran districts. In the absence of functional CDCs, SIKA-East plans to work closely with informal tribal structures in the two districts, including religious leaders and influential elders. The team is working closely with their PRRD counterparts to find creative ways of engaging and starting the program roll out in these challenging areas.

4. GHAZNI PROVINCE

During the reporting period, the PMU completed the operational set up of the provincial office in Ghazni and completed the collocation with PRRD. The team continued working in anticipation of a quick rollout in the two target districts of Andar and Deh Yak. The PMU manager and other staff accompanied the PRRD Director to numerous meetings with different non-governmental organizations in Ghazni to introduce the upcoming program activities and discuss future cooperation. The team worked on the collection of the data needed for the Service Provider Catalog and expects to complete the process by mid-July.

The Ghazni team also participated in a nine-day SIKA orientation training in Kabul and received comprehensive training on the Stability Analysis Methodology (SAM) and the grants process. Like their colleagues from Paktya, the Stability Program Officer and Grants Officer joined the Logar and Wardak teams to assist in the facilitation of two series of *Hawza* Stability Analysis Sessions in Pul-I Alam and Maidan Shah.

FINANCE AND SECURITY

I. FINANCE ACTIVITIES

For June the program had achieved activity of (\$ 1,473,627). Please see the figures below for more details:

Month	Total Obligated Amount	Amount Billed	Remaining Amount of Obligated Funds
JUNE	\$25,000,000	June: \$ 1,473,627 Cumulative: \$6,346,743	\$18,653,257

2. SECURITY ACTIVITIES

In the month of June 2012, the SIKA East Security Department had the opportunity to test emergency procedures during various incidents in the Logar and Wardak provinces. While the incidents did not impact the program directly the team was able to identify areas of improvement in order to further refine its procedures and protocols to mitigate against incidents in the areas that SIKA-East operates. Due to the volume of incidents in certain areas, the SIKA-East security department has identified the need to modify its staffing plan to include further manpower to facilitate improved advance site surveys for new roll-out districts, more regular training of field staff on incident management and communication and improved tracking of field staff travel and safety. The SIKA East security department was also commended by the AAG and APPF for its active and consistent engagement with the APPF which has brought about significant results compared to other projects and implementing partners.