

SIKA-EAST WEEKLY PROGRAM UPDATE

No. 33

SIKA-East started the week in Kabul with a district team dry run of the Hawza Project Concept Development Workshop. Participants included three Provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD) members from Logar and Wardak, 18 district and provincial staff covering Baraki Barak, Logar, and Sayad Abad, Wardak and Kabul team members. USAID Deputy Field Program Officers (DFPO) for Logar and Wardak and Stabilization Officer were among the participants during the last week two days of the Workshop.

Dovetailing with the final session of the stability planning run, joint MRRD and SIKA-East district teams conducted the first three-day Project Concept Development Workshop series in Pul-e Alam (Baraki Barak *Hawza*) and Maidan Shahr (Sheikhabad *Hawza*). The workshops were designed to assist the *Hawza* leaders in developing projects that target the previously identified sources of instability and meet the technical criteria, including accountability and sustainability and accurately describe the project activities, beneficiaries and the estimated cost. Security incidents, especially in Maidan Shahr, Ramazan and the beginning of the wheat harvest season had an effect on the sessions. However, with the strong engagement of PRRD directors and District Development Assemblies (DDAs), the workshops drew wide participation and resulted in the finalization of *Hawza* Stability Plans and the development of local Project Portfolios, bringing District Entities (DEs) one step closer to the formulation of the District Project Portfolios (DPPs).

During the sessions, PRRD Social Organizers and SIKA-East team instructed the *Hawza* leaders on how to look for available project resources from both governmental agencies and non-government organizations and donors. The Concept Development Workshops in Logar and Wardak were attended by representatives of the Provincial and District Department of Health, Department of Education, Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, and Water Management. The government representation added significant value to the sessions and provided a rare forum for community leaders and government officials to jointly discuss and propose solutions to stability challenges in their areas.

To complement the planning phase for Baraki Barak program, SIKA-East Kabul team conducted a two-day *Hawza* Concept Development Workshop (Women's Perspective) for 32 women from Baraki Barak and the area. The sessions are designed to replicate the workshops taking place in the provincial capitals and seek to engage women from the district in the analysis and planning phase of the program, and ultimately, incorporate their input into the DPP. The Baraki Barak Director of Women's Affairs (DoWA) and a female council member were among the participants. Moving forward, SIKA-East will work with provincial authorities to find ways to conduct future sessions at the provincial level. Security challenges, the inability to commute on daily basis, and the lack of accommodation at the provincial level were the main reasons causing SIKA-East to hold this meeting in Kabul. The Concept Development Workshop for women from Sayedabad is planned for the upcoming week.

During the week, a final draft of the Service Providers Catalog (SPC) for Ghazni province has been prepared and will soon be shared with SIKA-East management. SIKA-East has started an initial assessment in Logar and Maidan Wardak to identify the existing coordination mechanisms among the Service Providers (SP) and between the DE and SP's at provincial levels. The results of the assessment will help SIKA-East and PRRD to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve the coordination mechanism among the SPs and between SPs and DEs. PRRDs with SIKA-East Provincial Management Unit (PMU) staff will conduct the assessment interviews with major service providers.

SIKA-East continued expanding the presence in the field offices, finalizing the hiring of staff in Nirkh and the provincial office in Wardak. A standardized fact sheet providing a broad overview of the SIKA-East program was finalized during the week. The document will be used to ensure that staff at the national, provincial and district levels, as well as their PRRD counterparts, are all using similar language when describing the program. Furthermore, SIKA-East conducted an initial communication assessment of key Community Development Council (CDC) and DDA members, focusing on what methods of communication are currently being used, what specific communication topics CDC/DDA members would like training on, and identifying existing effective and less effective communication methods.

Engineering and Support Group (ESG) continued meeting with the MRRD NSP Engineering Department regarding a wide scope of technical topics, as well as processes and procedures. The team also worked on development of the Field Engineering Task Tracker (FETT) and continued cost data collection from field engineers for development of the provincial unit cost data table.

The Grant Team finalized packaging of forms associated with various grant types including Fixed Obligation Grants (FOG), in kind, standard and simplified grants. Additionally, short fact sheets are being developed to use as a training aids for field staff, grantees and stakeholders.

An internal review conducted by SIKA-East Sub IRD Home Office concluded this week to ensure grant processes, procedures, internal controls and systems are placed in preparation of grant making. The internal auditor recommended minor changes that will be implemented.

The Program Support Unit (PSU) made contribution to SIKA-East by managing the day-to-day program activities at central and field level. Additionally, the unit worked with all Provincial Management Units (PMUs) on their monthly budget projection and advance settlements.

PSU's ICT Subunit designed new Service Provider Catalogue (SPC) report for IR2 interim database. The team, by utilizing the minimum resources finalized the interim IR4 database before the specified deadline.

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Department received the version 19 of Measuring Impact of Stabilization Initiative (MISTI) survey during the week, which is under review. The department finalized policy and procedure for data collection, which will be incorporated in the training manual for M&E officers.

Security Team conducted Security briefing/training for 37 newly hired staff on July 25th. They got the last None Commissioned Officer (NCO) from Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF) which made SIKA-East in full manning position to what is agreed in the contract with APPF.

Human Resource (HR) Department filled 3 positions during the week.

FIELD ACTIVITIES

WARDAK

Wardak PMU conducted a coordination meeting with PRRD staff in order to start preparation for the *Hawza* Project Concept Development Sessions. The PRRD Director and Sayedabad DDA head worked together with PMU to make all the necessary preparations for the sessions for Sayedabad district.

Furthermore, Wardak PMU conducted a meeting with Sayedabad DDA. The purpose of the meeting was to encourage CDCs and community elders to actively participate in the upcoming

Project Concept Development Sessions. DDA committed that they will work closely with SIKA district staff and PRRD district social mobilizers to invite and encourage the CDCs and traditional elders to participate in sessions.

GHAZNI

Ghazni provincial staff completed Ghazni SPC and shared it with IR2 Department for final review and comments.

PAKTYA

In an effort to collect required information for Paktia SPC, PMU provincial staff visited 15 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) and Governmental Departments within the province. The Paktia SCP has been drafted and submitted to IR2 for review and comments.

Paktia PMU head conducted a meeting with CARE International, NSP Facilitating Partners (FP) for implementing National Solidarity program (NSP). During the meeting he received progress report of NSP which may help in rolling out of SIKA project in target districts.

Despite security problem between Gardez and Waza Zadran districts, Paktia Team successfully established Waza Zadran sub-office.

LOGAR

Logar PMU conducted a meeting with PRRD Director and DDA Chair Person to prepare for the *Hawza* Project Concept Development Sessions for Baraki Barak. As per PRRD, DDA and SIKA-East PMU plan, the workshop started for 33 participants on July 28th and ended on August 1st. Participants from Pad Khawbe Roghani have been invited for same Workshop, which will be conducted next week.

PROGRAM NEXT WEEK KEY ACTIVITIES PROJECTION

In the coming week, IR1 will continue working as a part of the MRRD- SIKA-East District Team facilitating *Hawza* Stability Analysis Sessions – Concept Development for Pad Khawb (Baraki Barak) and Sayedabad (Sayedabad) *Hawzas*. In addition, the team plans to conduct the Concept Development (Women's Perspective) session for women from Sayedabad, which is scheduled for August 8th to 9th.

IR2 will draft coordination mechanism to better maintain effective coordination among SP and between SPs and DEs. The team will review *Hawza* Stability Plans and identify sources of instability that can be addressed with the help of existing SPs.

IR3 is going to finalize the standardized district profile for Baraki Barak district. The profile will then become a template for future district profiles.

IR4 will continue internal discussions on harmonizing and sequencing project cycle activities. The Community Development (CD) Team will also begin examining SIKA-East's stakeholder engagement process, as IR4 shepherds this activity during the program's roll out across new provinces and districts. With the aim to shape an approach that can work in SIKA's complex operating environment, the IR4 Team will explore ways and means to identify a broad variety of influential individuals and interest groups and to cultivate areas of practical cooperation.

An introduction to grants will be provided to newly hired non-grant staff. In addition, more intensive grant and procurement training will be provided to newly hired grant and procurement staff.

The PSU will work on a document based on which the roles and responsibilities of PMUs towards IRs will be clarified. PSU's ICT Subunit will hold several meetings regarding IR4 database requirements and will present the database accordingly. The team will also analyze a new database structure for IR4.

In upcoming week Capacity Building Department will facilitate and coordinate the fourth session of SIKa College to provide a comprehensive introduction to SIKa to the newly recruited staff and prepare new district teams for the facilitation of stability analysis and concept development sessions.

Security Department is planning to conduct Security Risk Assessment (SRA) for Andar and Deh Yak districts of Ghazni province. They will produce a database for incident report tacking in coordination with PSU/ICT Department.

HR Department will continue recruitment of 55 staff. The details are below:

- Vacancies under process with AECOM 23
- Vacancies under process with Overseas Strategic Consulting, Ltd.(OSC) 14
- Vacancies under process with International Relief and Development (IRD) 18

FIELD ACTIVITIES

WARDAK

- Support the concept development sessions in Sayedabad district.
- Follow up with HR & different IR's PMU staff recruitment issues
- Install VSAT in Sayedabad and Nurkh districts.

GHAZNI

- Prepare for SIKa-E rollout in Ghazni
- Start- up DehYak DSU office

PAKTYA

- Attend SIKa College in Kabul.

LOGAR

- Conduct Concept Development Session for Pad Khawbe Roghani participants from August 4th to 6th.