

SIKA-EAST WEEKLY PROGRAM UPDATE

No. 38

Quote of the week:

“SIKA is not distinct from PRRD, it is most definitely running under the coverage of PRRD and we fully support the team in all dimensions and aspects.” Mr. Ashequallah, deputy director of PRRD, Wardak at opening of SIKA-East resource dialogue session for Sheikhabad Hawza.

This week SIKA-East convened its first internal lessons learned workshop to take stock of program activities and draw lessons learned from the first phase of program activity, developing the *Hawza* stability plans and project portfolios before launching into the next phase of the program implementation. The focus of the workshop was to solicit input from the field teams on several key aspects of the work, including SIKA’s strategy, gender, security, and partnering with Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA). The workshop was also designed to allow staff to prepare concrete recommendations to further improve and streamline program activities. SIKA-East is working on the reports and outcomes of this workshop and will submit it to USAID during next week.

A SIKA-East team participated at the regular M&E summit in Kabul and presented the Stability Analysis Methodology (SAM) to USAID and other implementing partners. Currently, 60 percent of the necessary data to complete the provincial department service profile of Wardak has been collected. Data will be finalized and edited it has been gathered from all key departments.

Resource development led the two one-day resource dialogue sessions, one in Baraki Barak and one in Sayyidabad. The sessions, as in the previous week in Baraki Barak, focused on assisting Hawza members in identifying local resources for projected identified through the Hawza Project Portfolio, identified earlier in the summer.

After the resource dialogue sessions were completed, Communications & Outreach followed up immediately on the second day, with communications strategy sessions for Baraki Barak *Hawza* in Baraki Barak district and for the Sheikhabad *Hawza* in Sayyidabad district. The Department began preparation of the monthly media analysis for August and continued researching and developing district profiles for anticipated roll outs in Nerkh, Deh Yak and Wuza Jadran.

Community Development conducted a meeting with National Solidarity program (NSP) Engineering Director to find out about NSP high risk, middle risk and low risk districts, Facilitating Partners’ (FP) monthly and quarterly report and FPs’ coverage and trainings for Community Development Councils (CDC).

The Grant team performed an initial analysis of *Hawza* Project Portfolios (HPP) from three *Hawzas*. Grant making criteria must be applied to eliminate grant making proposals that cannot be addressed due to SIKA-East regulations.

The Engineering Support Group (ESG) revised construction project management confidence report and engineering (Level of Effort) LoE table, based on NSP standard plans and procedure.

The Program Support Unit (PSU) in addition day to day management of the field activities participated in the field staff feedback session and noted the comments and

recommendation of the field staff on the operational and logistical improvement in the field offices.

Information & Communication Technology (ICT) sub-unit completed the Entity Relationship Diagram (ERD) and database structure for grant database and made some minor changes in the Capacity Building, Communication & Outreach databases. The team presented grants database for field grant officers.

Translation sub-unit translated the District Project Portfolios (DPP) for Baraki Rajan, Chilozi and Tangi districts. The team provided interpreting support during the lessons learned workshop.

M&E reviewed data collection tools and cross-checked them with the database. Some minor issues were identified in the mentioned tools that will be adjusted accordingly. M&E has received the feedbacks on the focus group questionnaire from Rahman Safi Impact Consulting (RSI). For further discussion the team will have a meeting with RIS on September 9.

Six M&E staffs participated in an AfghanInfo training during the week. M&E will work to improved and fulfill reporting requirements for AfghanInfo as discussed in mentioned training.

Capacity Building is preparing to launch an employee skill assessment for SIKA-East personnel in Kabul and provinces.

Security conducted security training for six field staff members on September 3. Additionally, the team conducted accommodation security assessment for SIKA-East staff traveling to Logar province on September 4, however, they did not find a suitable location.

Human Resources (HR) filled three positions for AECOM, three for Overseas Strategic Consulting, Ltd. (OSC) and sixteen for International Relief and Development (IRD) during the week.

FIELD ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Ghazni

Ghazni PMU Manager conducted the weekly regular coordination meeting with PRRD acting director. The acting director appreciated SIKA-East achievements in Ghazni province and noted that finalizing the implementation letter between the concerned parties as well as the issuance of an official permission letter to Ghazni PRRD and SIKA to would strongly assist in implementing SIKA-East. On the other hand, the team completed information collection for district profile up to 50 percent.

Logar

Logar PMU manager conducted a coordination meeting with Logar PRRD head and Baraki Barak DDA representatives. As noted in the narrative, initial resource dialogue sessions including a day on resource development and a day on communication strategy were conducted for Baraki Barak Hawza members.

Maidan Wardak

Wardak PMU deputy manager, grants officer and communication & outreach officer participated in PRRD coordination meeting on September 2. The participants discussed

Service Provider Catalogue (SPC). Additionally, PRRD in-charge acquainted SIKA-East staff of presence of Taliban on Jalrez Road and advised them to be cautious.

Nerkh District Support Unit (DSU) manager collected information from Maidan Wardak Agriculture Directorate, Education Directorate, Justice Court and Attorney Court in order to complete SPC. As noted in the narrative, initial resource dialogue sessions including a day on resource development and a day on communication strategy were conducted for Baraki Barak Hawza members. The session was opened by the assistant director for the PRRD, a quote from his comments is noted at the beginning of this report.

Paktya

The Paktya Provincial Management Unit (PMU) conducted meetings with Department of Agriculture, Irrigation & Livestock (DAIL), National Disaster Management, Department of Counter Narcotics (DoCN), CARE International, UNHCR and Health Net . The purpose of these meetings was to identify current and planned projects by the mentioned organizations and enrich Paktya SPC.

NEXT WEEK KEY ACTIVITIES PROJECTION

Following the signing of the implementation letter between USAID, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation & Development (MRRD) and Independent Directorate for Local Governance (IDLG), SIKA-East is planning operations and program activities for a quick program roll out in the three priority districts, Nerkh in Wardak, Deh Yak in Ghazni and Wuza Jadran in Paktya. Based on the lessons learned during the implementation of the program in two pilot districts of Baraki Barak and Sayyidabad, as well as the comprehensive lessons learned session, SIKA-East will work with its partners, MRRD and IDLG, to further improve the sessions and include all key stakeholders into the process.

Resource Development will follow up on SPF coordination with GIROA entities in Kabul and provinces. The team will collect more data for provincial department service profile.

Communications & Outreach will continue training at the field level and complete monthly media analysis for distribution to interested parties.

Community Development will discuss *Hawza* project concept process and emerging project portfolios with *Hawza* leaders. The team will design a training session on owning a stake in stability and identify how to incorporate into the overall training schedule.

PSU is working with Operation and Logistics to move forward on the establishment of district offices in Andar, Deh Yak and Wuza Jadran districts.

The ICT sub-unit started designing various modules for the grants database and incorporating the changes in the new structure. Translation sub-unit will translate the remaining DPPs for Shah Mazar, Sheniz Olia and Sheniz Sofla

Grants will develop training material for grantees which will include basic grant management modules, and prepare materials for field staff training planned for September. The team will also revise grantee procurement procedures, adapting best practice which are in compliance with USAID regulations and standardization of this practice in all grant documents.

ESG plans to complete the revisions to the provincial construction unit cost data base for Logar, Wardak, Ghazni and Paktya. They will conduct a meeting with the NSP Engineering department to discuss capacity development program of NSP, environmental assessment, and community development program.

M&E will continue working on M&E training manual. The team will conduct a meeting with RSI on September 9 to discuss focus group questionnaire.

Security team will follow up with Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF) on SIKA-East issues regarding armed movements of APPF escorts and issues on pending equipment to be issued to SIKA-East APPF personnel. The team will conduct security training for staffs traveling to district offices.

HR Department will continue recruitment of 43 staff. The details are below:

- Twenty vacancies under process with AECOM;
- One vacancy under process with Technologists, Inc;
- Six vacancies under process with OSC; and
- Sixteen vacancies under process with IRD.

NEXT WEEK PROJECTED FIELD ACTIVITIES

Ghazni

- Prepare for SIKA-East rollout in Ghazni;
- Prepare for SIKA-East rollout in Deh Yak district; and
- Finalize participants list for upcoming stability sessions.

Logar

- Move to PRRD compound and settle the office; and
- Conduct resource dialogue sessions for Baraki Rajan, Chilozi and Shah Mazar; *Hawzas*.

Maidan Wardak

- Conduct coordination meeting with PRRD;
- Resource dialogue sessions for Sayyidabad, Onkhay, Tangi and Sheniz Sofla *Hawzas*.
- Prepare lists of participants for Nerkh roll out; and
- Interview and select communication and community development officers.

Paktya

- Conduct meetings with different government departments to find out the number and type of their ongoing and planned projects at province level particularly in Zurmat and Wuza Jadran; and
- Attend preparation meeting in Kabul for roll out.