

SIKA-EAST WEEKLY PROGRAM UPDATE**No. 49**

Continuing with the execution phase in the pilot districts, joint SIKA-East and PRRD teams conducted a five-day Grants Process and Project Design training on District Project Portfolio (DPP) Implementation for district Project Management Committees (PMCs) from Saydabad District of Wardak Province. Approximately 70 PMC members, field staff, and the PRRD social organizer of Saydabad participated in the workshop. The expected outcome of the five-day training is prioritization of approved DPP projects, grantee identification, and grant applications packages for cycle-one projects of the Saydabad DPP. Following the session, SIKA-East and PRRD will work closely with PMC to complete project designs for infrastructure grants, prepare the Bill of Quantities, and conduct environmental and other assessments necessary to design responsible grants. This workshop will bring District Entities (DEs) from Saydabad a step closer to the implementation of the first stabilization grants in their district.

SIKA-East is planning to conduct a one-day coordination meeting / conference among service providers and District Entities (DE) from Baraki Barak on December 5 in Pul-e-Alam. The purpose of this conference is to improve service delivery by strengthening coordination among the service providers. The meeting will be the first program activity conducted in Logar following the completion of the DPP. For the time being, a tenuous security situation in Baraki Barak is not allowing SIKA-East to continue with the planned engagement in the district; however, SIKA management is working closely with the PRRD Director from Logar on creating conditions to resume with the program activities. In the meantime, bids have been solicited for the printing of the Service Providers Catalog (SPC) for Logar and file folders for SIKA East.

SIKA-East conducted a one-day Training of Trainers (ToT) on Infrastructure Project Planning for Logar and Paktya provincial and district engineers in Kabul. Five provincial engineers participated in the training. Following last week's program launch in Maidan Shahr, SIKA-East conducted a Strengthening the Governance Foundation workshop for members of the Nerkh District DDA, DCC, and CDCs, as well as other influential people in the district. The aim of the workshop was to obtain information on SIKA-East stakeholders; on the structure of the DDA, DCC, and CDCs; and on various roles and responsibilities, operating systems, successes, and concerns of Nerkh citizens and organizations. During the workshop, SIKA-East was introduced to the participants, who provided their views on possible challenges during the different stages of the program and ways to manage them.

Capacity Building and Gender Unit (CBGU) finalized the post-training evaluation report on the recently held ToT on DPP Implementation.

Rahman Safi Impact Consultancy (RSI) continued to complete Focus Group (FG) implementation in Andar, Zurmat, and Zadran Districts. As of the end of this week, 84 out of 90 FGs have been completed in nine designated districts. Field work is completed in six of the nine districts. Eighty-two FG sessions have been transcribed, and 65 have been translated. Sixty of these, comprising three districts (Saydabad, Chak-e-Wardak, and Baraki Barak), were sent out for preliminary analysis this week, while three more districts will be reviewed for translation consistency and sent out next week.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Unit (MELU) reviewed the reporting outlines suggested by RSI and provided feedback on how SIKA-East would like to see the data. RSI is about to begin preliminary analysis for the three aforementioned districts and will submit their report in the standard USAID format for MELU review and comment. MELU is also working with the program unit to understand how the FG report can feed into programming design and planning.

MELU completed and populated the projected cost of all trainings implemented for FY 2012 Q3 and Q4, and is ready to upload the data into TraiNet.

MELU revised some of the operational formats to be compatible with SIKA-East reporting to TraiNet and Afghan Info. A coding system has been launched to measure the actual cost of training activities – disaggregated by gender, location, and type of cost – for better tracking of training costs.

MELU received data from MISTI for five districts out of eight. MELU started preliminary planning for data analysis and will meet with program units. In this regard, MELU has requested that SPSS software be purchased, and procurement has been initiated.

Security Unit started the process of registering USAID-supplied armored vehicles and acquiring vehicle plate numbers with Traffic Department. The unit also conducted security orientation for newly hired staff members.

HR Unit filled one position for AECOM and two positions for International Relief and Development (IRD) during the week.

FIELD ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Ghazni:

- The Ghazni Provincial Management Unit (PMU) Manager held his regular weekly coordination meeting with the PRRD Director, updating him on SIKA-East achievements and plans and coordinating the expected program rollout in Deh Yak District.
- The Capacity Building Officer conducted meetings with different NGOs and completed the Ghazni Training Providers Catalogue (TPC) and Gender Service Providers Catalogue (GSPC). These documents were submitted to CBGU in Kabul for review and comments.
- The Ghazni team collected data and information for profiles on Deh Yak and Andar DDAs/CDCs and entered them into the online database.

Logar:

- The Logar PMU Manager met with the Provincial Governor and PRRD Director and discussed a coordination meeting / conference among service providers and District Entities (DEs). As a result, they decided on the venue and date of the event. The manager also shared the approved Baraki Barak DPP with the PRRD Director.
- The Logar PMU Manager met with the PRRD Director and coordinated the Mohammad Agha district launch. It was decided to conduct the event in Mohammad Agha municipality hall.

Paktya:

- In order to update the SPC, the Paktya team conducted a meeting with the Education Quality Improvement Program (EQUIP) Program Officer on November 19.

Wardak:

- The Chak DSU met with elders of Gardan Masjid hawza and introduced them to the program. The meeting participants discussed ways to implement the program.
- The Wardak team conducted a Nerkh rollout meeting on November 18. The rollout was officially launched in the presence of the Provincial Governor, the Nerkh District Governor, DCC/ CDC members, and other influential people in the community. The Nerkh District team met beforehand with DRRD Social Organizers to coordinate the event.

KEY ACTIVITIES PROJECTION FOR NEXT WEEK

- Continue further arrangements for the Service Providers Conference in Logar.
- Conduct TOT for Resourcing Dialog sessions for new district employees.
- Conduct a two-day Strengthening the Governance Foundation workshop for CDCs, DDA, DCC, and other influential people in Mohammad Agha District.
- Conduct a five-day Stability Analysis and Planning ToT for Mohammad Agha, Nerkh, Chak, Deh Yak, Zurmat, and Zadran staff.
- Conduct a five-day Governance and Stability Analysis and Planning workshop for Nerkh District women.
- Coordinate training for Grant Review Committee (GRC) members of Wardak Province to present grant evaluation criteria and acquaint them with their roles and responsibilities in the grant application evaluation process.
- Finalize Mohammad Agha and Zurmat District profiles and share them with SIKA-East management for submittal to USAID.
- Continue AV registration process with Traffic Department.
- Upload training data into TraiNet.
- Complete the remaining transcripts and field work of RSI for FGs.
- Finalize the justification letter for RSI for the mid-term review of the SIKA-East program.
- Finalize the Quality Control (QC) report of RSI.
- Collaborate with MISTI concerning the SIKA-East M&E Community of Practice arrangements to be held in the last week of November.
- Finalize the post-training evaluation of the ToT on Grant Process / Plan and Design.
- Work on field measurement training outline.
- Follow up on Gender Strategy with SIKA-East units.
- HR Department will continue recruitment of 58 staff:
 - Thirty-eight vacancies in process with AECOM;
 - Six vacancies in process with OSC; and
 - Fourteen vacancies in process with IRD.

PROJECTED FIELD ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT WEEK

Ghazni:

- Prepare for program rollouts in Ghazni Center and Deh Yak District.
- Conduct regular weekly meeting with PRRD Director.

Logar:

- Conduct Mohammad Agha District rollout meeting.
- Conduct coordination meeting with PRRD Director regarding coordination meeting / conference among service providers.
- Update Service Providers Catalogue (SPC).

Paktya:

- Participate in PRRD coordination meeting.

Wardak:

- Participate in regular coordination meetings with District Sub-governor, DRRD Manager, and other government officials.
- Conduct Governance training for Nerkh District DDA elders and district women.