

SIKA-EAST WEEKLY PROGRAM UPDATE

NO. 51

MAJOR EVENTS

Workshop on “Stability Planning Process”:

Continuing with preparations for the program rollout in a new set of districts, the SIKA-East core team of trainers conducted a second round of comprehensive five-day “District Stability Planning Process” Trainings of Trainers (ToT), this time for the field teams from Deh Yak in Ghazni and Wuza Zadran in Paktya. The workshop was held in Kabul from December 2 to 6 and was attended by 38 participants, including PRRD social organizers.



Participants in the “Stability Planning Process” workshop join in a group discussion.

The goal of the training is to prepare SIKA-East staff and PRRD counterparts to effectively facilitate the upcoming stability planning sessions in the two districts. During the workshop, the participants learned about the overall planning process, including the identification of local sources of instability, designing of stabilization projects, identification of available resources to fund the projects, and the types of assistance SIKA-East can provide to support the implementation of the District Project Portfolios. Dovetailing on the ToT, SIKA-East and PRRD teams will start preparations for the official program launch and the District Stability Planning sessions in Dey Yak and Wuza Zadran in the upcoming weeks.

Workshops on “Governance and Stability Planning Process” for Women:

In close cooperation with PRRD and Provincial Directorates of Women’s Affairs for Wardak and Logar, SIKA-East co-facilitated two separate “Governance and Stability Planning Process” workshops for influential women from Nerkh and Mohammad Agha Districts. The five-day training sessions, which were held from December 2 to 6, were aimed at involving district-level women in the stabilization process, including identifying main causes of instability and planning projects and interventions to mitigate them.



The Mohammad Agha workshop, which was attended by 50 women, was held in the Department of Women’s Affairs conference room in Pul-e-Alam due to a shortage of space in the Mohammed Agha district compound. The Nerkh District training took place in the Department of Women’s Affairs conference hall in Maidan Shahr and was attended by 18 women.



Women from Mohammad Agha District (above) and Nerkh (below) attend the five-day trainings on “Governance and Stability Planning Process.”

The outputs of these sessions are mini Project Portfolios, which will be incorporated into the comprehensive District Project Portfolios for Nerkh and Mohammad Agha to ensure that women’s input is taken into consideration throughout the stability planning process.

Despite a tense security situation, especially in Maidan Shahr, the workshops drew large participation from influential women from all parts of the two districts. Participants expressed enthusiasm for having an opportunity to learn about stabilization and strategic planning and being included into the overall stability planning process. In the coming weeks, SIKA-East plans to follow up by providing additional trainings for women, including advocacy, fund-raising, and project management, to facilitate the integration of women into the program activities and stabilization process in general.

Other SIKA-East units – including Resource Development, Communication and Outreach, Capacity Building and Gender, and Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning – conducted various sessions and in general facilitated the workshops. Provincial and district field staff also made a major contribution to the success of the workshops.

Workshop on “Strengthening the Governance Foundation”: On December 1 and 2, Service Delivery Unit (SDU) conducted a two-day “Strengthening the Governance Foundation” workshop for members of Mohammad Agha District CDCs, DDA, and DCC, as well as other influential people from the district. The workshop was held in the district governor’s compound.

Service Providers Coordination Meeting: On December 5, RDU facilitated a one-day service providers coordination meeting at Pul-e-Alam in Logar Province. Over 100 people attended. Besides a large number of service providers, these included members of the Logar DDA and CDCs and other citizens of Baraki Barak and Mohammad Agha Districts.

Both the deputy provincial governor, who opened the meeting, and other speakers stressed the importance of such coordination meetings and their impact on service delivery. Representing SIKA-East, Eng. Abdullah Stanikzai briefly presented the Baraki Barak District Project Portfolio to the participants. The meeting ended with questions from the participants to line officials. Copies of a new Service Providers Booklet were distributed to the participants to better acquaint them with available resources. The booklet contains basic information on Service Providers in the province, especially in SIKA-East targeted districts.

Meeting on Stability Analysis Methodology: On December 5, SIKA-East management, and SAPU and MELU directors, held a substantive meeting with a Measuring Impact of Stabilization Initiatives (MISTI) team from Washington DC, including David Kilcullen, to discuss how SIKA-East is using the Stability Analysis Methodology (SAM) in its program activities. The meeting was an excellent opportunity to describe the history of SAM development, the nuances of the facilitation method, and the format of the sessions being conducted in the field. MISTI expressed a great deal of interest in understanding how the methodology works in the field and how it could contribute to the development of a manual of sorts, a “recipe book” so to speak, that could be useful for future use by Afghan authorities.



More than 100 service providers, government officials, and other interested parties attended the coordination meeting. This was the first program activity conducted in Logar Province following the completion of the DPP.

PRINCIPAL UNIT ACTIVITIES

SAPU and SDU: Besides conducting the workshops described above, Stability Analysis and Planning Unit and Service Delivery Unit drafted and budgeted a standardized set of implementation activities from district entry through project execution. Aligning activities with the Program Implementation Cycle, the list defines SIKA-East's major district/province trainings and events as well as related training of trainer sessions.

The SDU and GSU management team reviewed the Project Design and Development / Grants Process training and follow-up field activities to identify strengths, gaps, and remedial measures. The group mapped steps and responsibilities to turn DPP project ideas into well-designed projects and complete, compliant grant applications submitted by Project Management Committees. The first set of five draft applications were reviewed to support the above process and to target SDU and GSU technical assistance to the DDA/DCC+ and Project Management Committees.

Provincial engineers for Ghazni and Wardak and the district engineer for Saydabad received additional, personalized training on Engineering's roles and responsibilities in the Project Development and Design (PDD) process.

RDU: Besides facilitating the above-mentioned service providers coordination meeting in Logar, RDU conducted a session on Resource Dialogue as part of the "Stability Planning and Analysis" ToT for Paktya and Ghazni field staff. This was intended to help field staff deliver the Resourcing Dialogue effectively and efficiently in their respective districts in upcoming stability planning sessions.

COU: Communication and Outreach Unit staff in Kabul and in the field played a supporting role, conducting communication and advocacy sections, in the above-mentioned workshops. COU began compiling information for four provincial profiles on Logar, Maidan Wardak, Paktya, and Ghazni. The communication strategy was reviewed and sent to SIKA-East management for final review.

GSU: GSU reviewed and provided initial feedback to SDU and ESG on the first five grant applications from Saydabad District in Wardak Province. It is expected that all missing information will be collected by next week and final completed applications will be submitted to GSU. Upon review and acceptance, the applications will go to the Grant Review Committee for further processing and approval. The areas for further capacity development of the communities and grant development team have been identified, and GSU will work with SDU and ESG on a joint training in order to increase their capacity.

GSU conducted Grant Review Committee (GRC) training in Kabul for Wardak Province GRC members. The purpose of this one-day training was to introduce the GRC members to their roles and responsibilities, operational procedures, and grant evaluation criteria and to prepare the GRC for review and evaluation of grant applications. A PRRD representative was also present at this training and will sit on the GRC.

GSU drafted a process to roll out training grants to new districts, beginning with Paktya's Zurmat and Waza Zadran Districts. The idea is to introduce these grants earlier in the rollout phase in order to build relationships, establish and demonstrate commitment between stakeholders, and provide initial training to DDA, PRRD, and IDLG, using one or two small grants per district. The key to the success of training grants is the ability to identify grant activities that can be completed quickly and at the same time have visible impact within the community.

MELU: Rahman Safi Impact Consultancy (RSI) has completed the implementation of 90 focus groups in all nine districts. Working with MISTI, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Unit has received the data for seven districts, excluding Mohammad Agha and Zadran. Data on the

seven districts is being analyzed, and the translation for all the focus groups will be completed by the end of the week. Kate Head, an OSC consultant, has been provided with the necessary information on the process and has started drafting the focus group data analysis methodology.

MELU is following up carefully with MISTI to ensure that data for Zadran and Mohammad Agha districts are ready in a timely fashion for analysis. A bidder to supply the SPSS software for data analysis has been selected and awarded a contract, and the SPSS software will be available next week.

The SIKa-East coding system has been launched, and MELU provided SIKa-East senior managers with training on how it works. The purpose of the code is to provide detailed financial information on SIKa-East activities in particular trainings. Training activities receive a unique code that is designed to correspond to the SIKa-East work plan and finance system so that information can be disaggregated by gender, instruction costs, participants costs, and trainee travel costs.

CBGU: Capacity Building and Gender Unit field officers supported the workshops described above. CBGU staff finalized the post-training evaluation report on the Stability Analysis and Planning ToT and shared it with management.

HR: During the week, HR filled a position and had an offer accepted, both with AECOM.

Security: Security held interviews for security officers for Chak and Saydabad Districts of Wardak, conducted a security assessment of the Wardak PMU office, and renewed the passes for SIKa-East's registered armored vehicles of SIKa-East so they can enter Kabul International Airport.

Security also conducted a security brief / orientation for new hires and for the security and operations officer for Paktya's Zurmat District.

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 grants procurement officer collected data on national and international vendors and met with the line directors of several agencies to be able to add additional vendors to the SPC.

Logar:

- Staff from SIKa-East's provincial and district offices facilitated two workshops that were held for citizens of Mohammad Agha District during the week. One was a two-day workshop on "Strengthening the Governance Foundation," which was held in the district governor's compound. The other, a five-day workshop on "Governance and Stability Planning Process" for women, was held in Pul-e-Alam. See "Major Events" above for more complete information on the workshops.
- On December 5, as was reported above, a service providers coordination meeting was held in the Pul-e-Alam municipal hall. Provincial staff helped facilitate the event.

Paktya:

- During the week, the Paktya PMU procurement officer met with IRC procurement personnel to obtain information on vendors and suppliers working at the sub-district level in the province.

- The deputy PMU manager also met with the head of Refugees and Returnees Department to get updated information for the Paktya Service Providers Catalogue.

Wardak:

- Provincial and district staff facilitated the five-day “Governance and Stability Planning Process” workshop organized by SAPU that was conducted for Nerkh District women’s entities and held in the Department of Women’s Affairs conference hall in Maidan Shahr.
- Having completed a damage assessment of the SIKA-East facilities in Maidan Shahr, the Wardak provincial engineer continued efforts on a damage assessment for the other areas of damage from the November 23 bombing.
- The Saydabad district engineer, with support from the hawzas, completed site investigations of the first five, Cycle One, proposed project locations. He also prepared site sketches and preliminary design modifications as addenda to the NSP standard drawings.

KEY ACTIVITIES PROJECTION FOR NEXT WEEK

- Conduct district “Stability Planning Process” workshop for Nerkh DDA, CDC, DCC leaders and other influential elders;
- Conduct “Women’s Advocacy” training for women of Nerkh and Mohammad Agha Districts;
- Conduct “Resource Information Sharing” session as part of Women’s Advocacy;
- Finalize the Monthly Media report and distribute it to interested parties;
- Design “Stakeholder Engagement” ToT curriculum, and prepare Kabul core team to train Wuza Zadran and Deh Yak district teams and government partners;
- Continue to survey local commercial markets, and contact possible and reliable sources, to determine the availability of goods and services at district and sub-district levels;
- Find out about locally available media – including newspapers, radio, and TV – that can be used to advertise solicitation documents for upcoming procurements under grants;
- Draft the justification letter for RSI for the mid-term review of SIKA-East program;
- Review reporting timelines and structures for SIKA-East;
- Process the three USAID-supplied armored vehicles through Traffic Department;
- Continue training for the APPF guards operating in SIKA-East;
- HR Department will continue recruitment of 56 staff:
 - Thirty-four vacancies in process with AECOM;
 - Six vacancies in process with OSC;
 - Fifteen vacancies in process with IRD; and
 - One vacancy with Ti.

PROJECTED FIELD ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT WEEK

Ghazni:

- Prepare the list of invitees and participants for the program rollout in Deh Yak; and
- Conduct regular coordination meeting with Ghazni PRRD director.

Logar:

- Hold one-day Women’s Advocacy training for Mohammad Agha District in district governor’s office compound; and
- Participate in PRRD coordination meeting.

Paktya:

- Participate in coordination meeting with PRRD and involved stakeholders;
- Interview security and operations officer candidate for Waza Zadran District; and
- Meet with different services providers based in Paktya to update the province's third-round SPC.

Wardak:

- Conduct "Women's Advocacy" training for Nerkh women, and "Stability Analysis Methodology" (SAM) and "Resource Dialogue Communication" for Nerkh men;
- Conduct PMU coordination meeting with PRRD;
- Complete applications for projects, working with CDC representative on the required documents; and
- Conduct engineering surveys for projects in Saydabad.