

SIKA-EAST WEEKLY PROGRAM UPDATE

NO. 74

SIGNIFICANT PROVINCIAL ACTIVITIES

GHAZNI

- On May 15, the Provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD) Director for Ghazni held his weekly coordination meeting, which was attended by the manager of SIKA-East's Provincial Management Unit (PMU) and other stakeholders. The PMU manager discussed the issue of problematic Community Development Councils (CDCs) in the meeting. The representative of Care International suggested that SIKA-East contact their central office in Kabul to discuss the issue. If instructed, their provincial office will update the forms for the problematic CDCs, which the Care International representative maintained would solve the problem.

Andar

- The men's and women's communication committees for Andar conducted their third meetings on May 13 and 14, respectively. The objective of these meetings was to follow up on the previous meetings and make sure that the completed worksheets have been shared with and agreed upon by the larger District Development Assembly (DDA+). Worksheets on message and communication channels were completed.

Dih Yak

- The Dih Yak District Support Unit (DSU) updated the district profile and submitted it to the Kabul office.
- To follow up the issue of problematic CDCs and DDAs, the DSU manager met with the Dih Yak District Governor (DG) on May 12. The DG continued to conduct meetings with CDCs and the DDA to solve their problems and re-elect key members if they are no longer present or are unwilling to continue their job in those organizations.

Jaghatau and Qarabagh

- The Ghazni PMU shortlisted candidates for the Jaghatu and Qarabagh DSUs. Interviews have been scheduled with the candidates.

Khwaja Umari

- From May 12 to 14, training in Stakeholder Orientation and Governance Foundation was conducted for an average of 36 women from the Khwaja Umari DDA and other influential women in the district. The same three-day training was held for men starting on May 14 and was attended by an average of 54 members of the DDA and other important men from the district.



Stakeholder Orientation and Governance Foundation training for women from Khwaja Umari

KHOST

- On May 12, the PRRD Director held a coordination meeting that was attended by the Khost PMU manager and representatives of other organizations implementing MRRD projects. The meeting

emphasized the importance of helping and supporting each other to implement all the projects successfully. The representatives of National Solidarity Program (NSP) and National Area Based Development Program (NABDP) agreed to share information about CDCs and DDAs.

- On May 14, the Provincial Governor hosted a coordination meeting, at which SIKA-East's PMU manager for Khost discussed SIKA-East progress in the province. The Governor asked the PMU manager to participate in the Provincial Development Council (PDC) meetings that are held twice a month on a regular basis.
- The recruitment of staff continued during the week, and three new employees were hired.

LOGAR

- On May 13, the Deputy Provincial Governor met with the PMU manager to receive an update on SIKA-East activities in those districts of Logar where the program is under way. The Deputy Governor promised to cooperate fully in program implementation.
- On May 13, the recently hired PRRD Director received SIKA-East's PMU manager to be introduced and receive a briefing on SIKA-East goals, objectives, and achievements in Logar Province. He expressed his appreciation for the program and promised to support and cooperate in its implementation.
- On May 15, the Deputy Provincial Governor met with the District Governor of Baraki Barak and SIKA-East's PMU manager and DSU manager for Baraki Barak to discuss the existing challenges in that district. It was decided to hold another meeting with the DDA+.

Baraki Barak

- Following consultation with community members regarding implementation of the District Project Portfolio (DPP) for Baraki Barak, sub-coordination meetings were arranged with certain service providers to discuss various projects. On May 13 and 14, community members met with the Directors of the Departments of Irrigation and Water Supply, Education, Public Health, and PRRD at their individual offices. Female community members of Baraki Barak were also able to meet with officials of the Department of Women's Affairs. These meetings will be conducted frequently with each service provider to coordinate everyone's efforts and thus meet the demands of both the community and the service providers.



Community members meet with the Director of the Department of Irrigation and Water Supply

Khoshi

- Following the launch of SIKA-East in Khoshi on May 9, the first trainings got under way this week. On May 12 and 13, Stakeholder Engagement Training was facilitated for an average of 38 women from the Khoshi DDA and CDCs. On May 15, the same training was conducted for male members of the DDA and CDCs; an average of 59 men participated.

- On May 14, women from the Khoshi DDA and CDCs participated in Governance Foundation Training facilitated by the program’s capacity building officer for Logar; 50 women attended. On May 16, the same training was conducted for 59 male members of the DDA and CDCs.

Mohammad Agha

- On May 12, a Grant Review Committee meeting was conducted in Mohammad Agha’s DSU office. Ten applications were reviewed, and all received concurrence for further approval process.
- On May 15 and 16, SIKA-East conducted sessions in Grant Management Training – Award for USAID-approved applications. To ensure and increase the quality of the training and dedicate sufficient time for applicants to understand Grant Agreement terms conditions and reporting requirements, training was conducted with smaller groups of four to five CDCs at a time. The training was coordinated with the District Governor on May 14.

PAKTYA

- On May 9, Paktya PMU and Deputy Managers attended a coordination meeting with the PRRD Director to share information on the planned Service Provider Fair in Gardez. In this fair, people from the districts of Zurmat, Laja Mangal, Laja Ahmad Khail, and Zadran will be invited to learn about existing service providers and the types of services they normally provide.
- With the same purpose, the PMU Manager met the Provincial Governor on May 13. The Provincial Governor expressed his support for the planned fair . He also endorsed a letter giving the Governors of the four targeted districts responsibility for officially introducing 100 key community members from their district to SIKA-East so they can be invited to attend the fair.
- On May 13, the Paktya gender officer participated in a meeting in the Department of Women’s Affairs (DoWA). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss ways to decrease violence against women. This meeting was arranged by the Afghan Civil Society Forum Organization and included participants from several different organizations.



Zadran DSU meeting with DDA chairman

Zadran

- On May 13, the manager of SIKA-East’s Zadran office met with the DDA chairman and asked him to have his members meet to endorse the Zadran DPP so that it can be forwarded to the District Governor for his endorsement. Both endorsements were obtained the following day.



SIKA-East’s PMU Manager in a meeting with the PRRD Director and newly hired District Governor along with 25 community members

Zurmat

- On May 14, the Zurmat District Governor, along with SIKA-East’s PMU manager and 25 community representatives from Gardez and Zurmat, met to welcome the recently appointed PRRD Director.

During the meeting, the PMU manager introduced SIKA-East and briefed the PRRD Director on program implementation. He also informed everyone about the upcoming Service Providers Fair.

MAYDAN WARDAK

- On May 12, the PRRD Director held his regular coordination meeting with MRRD project implementers. During the meeting, SIKA-East's PMU manager advised the participants that Jalrez District had recently been approved by USAID for program implementation. The PRRD Director promised his full support for SIKA-East in the new district.
- On May 14, the Maydan Wardak PRRD Director continued to endorse alternate CDC officials, including 21 from Nirkh and two from Saydabad.

Chaki Wardak

- On May 12, the Chaki Wardak women's communication committee conducted their third meeting. The main objective of the meeting was to make sure that the completed worksheets had been shared with the larger DDA+ and received their concurrence. At the end of the meeting, the worksheets on message and communication channels were completed.
- The DSU grant team prepared support letters for eight CDCs. They also received approved support letters from community members, which were signed by the District Governor. They now need to be signed by the PRRD Director.

Nirkh

- During the week, SIKA-East conducted a Grant Review Committee (GRC) meeting for 11 applications received from Nirkh. Eight applications received GRC concurrence to advance for further approval, while three applications were kept on hold. The three relate to road reconstruction and require additional feasibility review before submission to USAID due to serious concerns about the technical complexity, duration, and resources required.
- On May 14, the women's communication committee for Nirkh held its seventh meeting. The main purpose of the meeting was to update the participants on the previous meetings' completed worksheets and to discuss the next steps. SIKA-East provided technical advice to the communication committee members on how to prepare a six-to-twelve-month district communication implementation plan.



May 14 meeting of the Nirkh women's communication committee

Saydabad

- On May 15 and 16, SIKA-East conducted sessions in Grant Management Training – Award for USAID-approved applications. In order to maximize the quality of the training and to dedicate enough time for the applicants to understand the Grant Agreement terms, conditions, and reporting requirements, training was conducted with smaller groups of four to five CDCs at a time.

- On May 8, the men’s communication committee for Saydabad conducted its eighth meeting. The participants discussed ways to develop their communication plan, find their audience, and share their communication plan with other CDC members. The following day, the female communication committee conducted its eighth meeting with the same agenda.



Saydabad men’s communication committee meeting

SIGNIFICANT KABUL-BASED ACTIVITIES

- After language review of the DPP from Zadrán and Andar Districts, the DPPs were sent back to the field for further processing. This is the first step for the members of the DDA and influential people from the community to endorse the DPPs, after which the SIKA-East team will assist the DDAs to submit the DPPs to the District Governor, PRRD, and line departments.
- The first draft of the standardized list of sources of instability (SoIs) and root causes has been completed. The standardization of the SoIs and root causes will simplify development of DPPs from SIKA-East’s new districts.
- In the Saydabad DPP, there are several projects that have been proposed by member of the DDA, CDCs, and influential people of the community for implementation in the Tangi hawza. However, due to certain security issues and lack of community support, SIKA-East has not been able to check the feasibility of the projects in Tangi. During the week, SIKA-East managed to bring the stakeholders of the Tangi hawza together to discuss ways forward. Another meeting will be held next week in hopes of getting more community buy-in and coming up with better solutions.
- On May 11 and 12, the first radio dramas were aired in Logar, Ghazni, and Maydan Wardak Provinces. The first two radio plays – on education and conflicts about water distribution – were well received. Several of the listeners who were asked for feedback commented that the drama on water conflicts was very topical and reflected the situation in their own villages.
- On May 15, SIKA-East launched its web-base database, which has been under development for several months. This effort started with the development of an interim database for each unit, which was accessible only to the related unit staff. The new database now serves as a management tool for tracking SIKA-East activities both in Kabul and field offices. The new system is fast and user friendly and can accommodate a wide number of users at the same time. It also has a high capacity for document storage. The system contains a predefined module for each department, which includes data entry, user rights, a basic reporting system, and other useful features. The system is now available to all SIKA-East staff with access to the Internet and approved user privileges.
- The current status of the SIKA-East grants pipeline is as follows:



Web-based database launch in SIKA-East’s Kabul office

District	Applications Under Development		Application Packages Submitted to SIKA-East		Appls. in USAID Vetting Process	Appls. with Vetting Approval	Appls. Approved by GRC	Appls. Sent to USAID for Approval	Applications with USAID Approval	
	M	F	No.	Value \$	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	Value \$
Saydabad	7	0	17	\$525,026	0	2	17	12	12	\$214,187
Nirkh	15	5	12	\$667,991	6	7	9	0	0	
Mohammad Agha	19	2	23	\$ 1,110,264	11	9	13	13	12	\$490,052
Dih Yak	18	3	0							
Chak	4	1	0							
Baraki Barak	26	6	0							
Andar	23	0	0							
TOTAL	112	17	52	\$2,303,281	17	18	49	25	24	\$741,253

- On May 12 and 13, SIKA-East conducted SIKA Induction training for newly hired staff. The purpose of this training was to educate the new staff about the policies, approaches, and specifically the roles and responsibilities of all the program units of SIKA-East. This will enhance their ability to interact and work closely with PRRD social organizers and other government line departments.
- The following trainings were held during the week:

Date	Title	Location	Type	Men	Women
May 12-13	SIKA Induction	Kabul	Workshop	22	1
May 12-13	Stakeholder Orientation – Female	Khoshi /Logar	Training		38
May 12-13	Stakeholder Orientation – Female	Khwaja Umari/Ghazni	Training		36
May 14	Governance Foundation – Female	Khoshi /Logar	Training		50
May 14	Governance Foundation – Female	Khwaja Umari/Ghazni	Training		36
May 14-15	Stakeholder Orientation – Male	Khwaja Umari/Ghazni	Training	54	
May 14-15	Stakeholder Orientation – Male	Khoshi /Logar	Training	59	
May 15-16	Grants Management Training Award	Mohammad Agha/ Logar	Training	40	
May 15-16	Grants Management Training Award	Saydabad/ Wardak	Training	32	
May 16	Governance Foundation – Male	Khwaja Umari/Ghazni	Training	54	
May 16	Governance Foundation – Male	Khoshi /Logar	Training	59	

- SIKA-East finalized its Gender Mainstreaming Strategy and shared it with staff and USAID. The Pashto version is being translated, after which it will be sent to the provinces.
- Project survey, design, and development are ongoing in several districts of Wardak, Logar, and Ghazni Provinces, with regular consultations and technical assistance between project management committees and Kabul-based engineering staff. The status of engineering design packages is as follows:

Districts			Designs		Projects Completion Status	
Province	Batch	District	Total Design in Progress	Designs Completed	In Progress \$	Complete \$
Wardak	A	Saydabad	6	25	87,344	634,063
	B	Nirkh	2	14	180,691	760,310
	C	Chaki Wardak	1	0	44,067	-
Logar	B	Mohammad Agha	3	23	126,358	1,261,461
	A	Baraki Barak	1	0	87,549	-
Ghazni	B	Dih Yak	2	6	85,146	266,958
	C	Andar	0	0	-	-
Subtotals			15	68	611,155	2,922,791
Grand Totals			83		3,533,947	

- SIKA East armored vehicle licensing is still being delayed by the head of Kabul Traffic Department. This process requires that a USAID representative approach the Parliamentary Affairs Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) to indicate that the vehicles are U.S. Embassy property and not AECOM's.
- Human Resource Department filled 22 positions during the week: fourteen positions for AECOM, six for IRD and two for OSC.

PROJECTED FIELD ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT WEEK

GHAZNI

- Conduct regular coordination meetings with PRRD;
- Conduct Stability Planning Process trainings for Khwaja Umari; and
- Prepare for Service Providers Fair.

KHOST

- Conduct regular coordination meetings with PRRD Director; and
- Participate in Stakeholder Engagement and Governance Foundation Workshop.

LOGAR

- Participate in the regular PRRD coordination meeting;
- Start collecting and copying forms provided by NSP; and
- Conduct Stability Planning Process trainings in Khoshi.

PAKTYA

- Conduct Stability Planning Process training for Zurmat;
- Hold regular coordination meetings with PRRD and other involved organizations; and
- Prepare for Service Providers Fair.

MAYDAN WARDAK

- Conduct regular coordination meetings with PRRD, DRRD, District Governors, and program stakeholders;

- Fill out grant applications in accordance with Grants and Sub-contracts Unit plans;
- Conduct project surveys coordinating with Engineering Group;
- Conducting Grant Management Training for Saydabad District; and
- Conduct communication committee meetings for Saydabad DDA and CDC members.

PROJECTED KABUL-BASED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT WEEK

- Continue quality assurance and standardization of training modules;
- Start designing the Skills ToT package with the contractor that is expected to be selected for this training;
- Adjust the language of the Grant Agreement on withholding taxes from CDCs in accordance with final instructions from the Ministry of Finance;
- Start with signing procedure and grant implementation for 24 USAID-approved grants in Mohammad Agha and Saydabad Districts;
- Work on preparations for the Grant Management Training – Implementation session for the awarded grantees;
- Continue with preparation of Grant Approval Requests for USAID for GRC-approved grant applications;
- Develop Mohammad Agha District communication plan;
- Continue working on district profiles review;
- Finalize post-evaluation of Logar Service Providers Fair;
- Start preparations for resource coordination meeting in Maydan Wardak;
- Review the SIKA-East travel policy and implement changes as to transportation of documents and sensitive equipment;
- Follow up with Traffic Police Department regarding the issuing of green plates;
- Follow up on office establishment in newly approved districts;
- Follow up on shipments of equipment to newly approved districts; and
- Continue recruiting to fill 108 positions:
 - 53 vacancies in process with AECOM;
 - 45 vacancies in process with IRD; and
 - 9 vacancies in process with OSC.