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STABILITY IN KEY AREAS (SIKA) – EAST

WEEKLY PROGRAM UPDATE NO. 087 (AUGUST 9-15, 2013)



Karimdad retaining wall project in Nirkh District of Maydan Wardak Province

August 15, 2013

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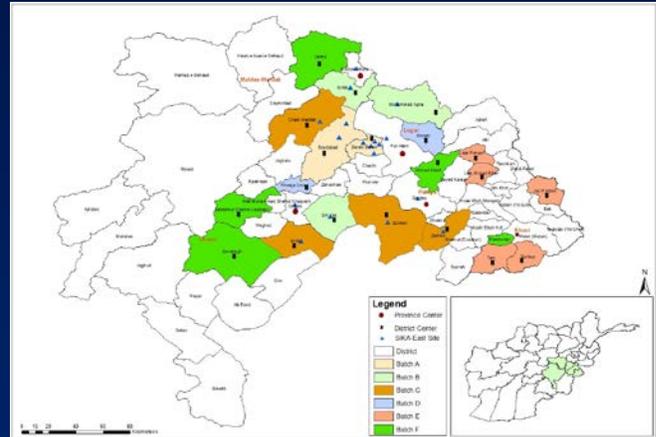
STABILITY IN KEY AREAS (SIKA) - EAST

SIKA-East is a USAID-funded initiative, led by the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development in partnership with the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, that is designed to promote good governance and service delivery in targeted districts in eastern Afghanistan.

The focus of SIKA-East is on training, mentoring, and building the capacity of district civil servants to help them better understand and execute their roles and responsibilities and make them more effective public administrators.

SIKA-East also assists district-level government, through coordination at the provincial level, in responding to the population's needs and concerns so as to better instill confidence in the government and promote stability in the region.

The SIKA-East program works with community and district councils and other district entities, as well as local citizens, to identify sources of instability in their area and to address those issues through specific community-driven initiatives designed to improve services and people's quality of life.



WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

- The Ghazni PMU disbursed the first milestone payments to Ramak CDC, which is extending the Zargone karez in Dih Yak District.
- On August 14, the Dih Yak women's communication committee met in the Ghazni PRRD compound to discuss implementation of their strategic communication plan.
- On August 14 and 15, PRRD and SIKA-East staff conducted training in Infrastructure Project Planning for 45 men from the District Development Assembly (DDA) and Community Development Councils (CDC) in Gurbuz District of Khost Province.
- The second part of Stability Planning Process training for Tani District in Khost Province ended on August 14.
- On August 13, Fundraising training was conducted for 46 men from the Khoshi DDA and CDCs; the next day, the same training was given to 41 women from the district.
- During the Eid holiday, burglars broke into the Logar office and stole seven laptops and one digital camera. An investigation has been initiated. Also, in Saydabad District of Maydan Wardak Province, a threat letter from insurgents was recently posted stating that if communities continue receiving projects and money from the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) and National Solidarity Program (NSP), they will be dealt with according to Taliban rules.



Workers break ground on the Akli canal project in Ghazni's Dih Yak District

SIGNIFICANT PROVINCIAL ACTIVITIES

HAZNI

- On August 13, the Provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD) social and development manager met with the Ghazni Program Management Unit (PMU) manager to discuss recruiting for Community Led Development Department (CLDD) staff. It was decided to share the issue with Kabul staff and get their advice.
- During the week, the Ghazni PMU disbursed the first milestone payments to Ramak CDC, which is extending the Zargone karez in Dih Yak District. The unit also prepared the documents for the Tenfer protection wall and Kohna Deh karez rehabilitation projects and sent them to Kabul for further processing.
- The Ghazni PMU prepared documents for three Cycle 1 projects for Andar District for a Grant Review Committee (GRC) meeting.

Andar District

- During the week, a GRC was held to review the three above-mentioned grant applications, which have a combined value of \$222,339. All three were approved.
- The Andar men's communication committee met during the week to work on their strategic communication plan.

Dih Yak District

- On August 14, the Dih Yak women's communication committee met in the Ghazni PRRD compound to discuss implementation of their strategic communication plan.
- The DSU assisted several CDCs to identify and hire skilled and unskilled labor for five small infrastructure projects in Dih Yak: Zagone karez extension, Tenfer canal lining, Tasan Bala karez extension, Kohnadeh karez extension, and Akli canal repair.
- During the week, three Fixed Obligation Grants (FOG), valued at \$104,184, were awarded in Dih Yak. In addition, a first milestone payment was made.
- On August 14, a grants training officer travelling to Kohna Deh village for first milestone payment verification documents was halted by a Taliban checkpoint. He reacted in time and was able to leave the area and safely return to the district center office.

Qarabagh District

- On August 12, the Qarabagh DSU was introduced to the District Governor, who promised his full support for SIKA-East.



Meeting of the Andar men's communication committee



Workers break ground on the Akli canal project.



August 14 meeting of the Dih Yak women's communication committee

- During the week, the unit began stakeholder mapping and collected information for the Qarabagh district profile.

Khwaja Umari District

- Due to security concerns and the kidnapping of Mohammad Ayaz Nemati, SIKA-East community development officer for Khwaja Umari, all activities have been postponed in the district. They will resume on August 18 with a training in Grant Process and Application Development for men from the Khwaja Umari DDA+ and CDCs.

KHOST

- On August 13, the PRRD Director met with the PMU manager to discuss the agenda for the upcoming resource coordination meeting for the four districts in Khost Province where SIKA-East is being implemented. The PMU manager met with the Provincial Governor's chief of staff to obtain approval for the agenda and invite him to the meeting. The chief of staff approved the agenda and agreed to attend.

Gurbuz District

- On August 14 and 15, PRRD and SIKA-East staff conducted training in Infrastructure Project Planning for 45 men from the Gurbuz DDA and CDCs. Among other things, the participants learned about project feasibility and environmental compliance, field measurements, plans and specifications, estimates and bills of quantities, and project action plans.

Mando Zayi District

- Quotations have been received for renovation of the DSU office.

Tani Districts

- On August 14, the Stability Planning Process training that started on August 4 was concluded. During this session, the DDA+ learned about the various functional areas of SIKA-East, such as grants, resource development, communication, and engineering. They also selected Cycle 1 projects.

LOGAR

- During the Eid holiday, burglars broke into the PMU office and stole seven laptops and one digital camera, which caused delays in program activities. The unit reported the theft to the PRRD and National Directorate of Security (NDS), who have initiated an investigation.

Baraki Barak District

- The Baraki Barak DSU prepared the grant applications for proposed projects that will be reviewed by a GRC to be held next week.



August 13 Fundraising training for Khoshi men

Khoshi District

- On August 13, Fundraising training was conducted for 41 men from the Khoshi DDA+ and CDCs.
- On August 14, ten men from the Khoshi DDA+ attended a sub-coordination meeting with representatives of the Departments of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (DAIL) and Water Management. The DDA+ members discussed the challenges they face with the two organizations and in return received promises of support in the future.

Mohammad Agha

- The Mohammad Agha DSU contacted the representatives of four CDCs to disburse their second milestone payments. One payment, of \$80,760, was made.
- DSU engineering staff visited several project sites to monitor progress and provide technical advice to construction supervisors and crews.

MAYDAN WARDAK

- Security deteriorated in the province this week. The government's banning of motorbikes in villages caused resentment among insurgents, who started to capture or arrest anyone working with the government.
- Due to security restrictions, no travel was allowed during the week. As a result, the stakeholders survey in Jalriz and project implementation in Saydabad and Nirkh Districts were delayed.

Chaki Wardak District

- The Chaki Wardak grants team completed the grant application for a water flow control project for Shahbaz Khan Village.
- DSU engineers completed design and technical documents for the construction of a super-passage for Ala Mohammad Khail and Bidak projects.

Jalriz District

- The renovation of the Jalriz DSU office is complete, and equipment and furniture have been shipped to Jalriz for the office.
- The Jalriz community development officer and his team started conducting a stakeholders engagement survey but had to suspend it for security reasons.

Nirkh District

- On August 13, the Nirkh DSU conducted a Grants Management and Implementation workshop for 10 members of three Nirkh CDCs.
- During the week, the Nirkh DSU engineers visited the sites of the Jaw Qul, Qul Akhwand Zada, and Karimdad road construction projects to determine the quality of work and provide necessary guidance.



Qul Akhwand Zada road construction project in Nirkh District



Karimdad road retaining wall project in Nirkh

- One FOG agreement, with a value of \$88,471, was awarded in Nirkh this week. Also, two second milestone payments were disbursed.

Saydabad District

- On August 6, the Saydabad DSU conducted site visits to the Sisy and Khar karez extension projects to determine second milestone status and construction quality. This week, they made a second milestone payment.
- On August 12, the Saydabad grants team conducted a Grants Management and implementation workshop for 26 members of a Saydabad CDC.

PAKTYA

- On August 13, the gender officer held a coordination meeting with the deputy PMU manager and the team leaders of Laja Mangal and Laja Ahmad Khail Districts to explain the meeting to be held in Gardiz on August 18 to discuss gender involvement in SIKA-East. Invitees to the meeting include District Governors, DDA+ members, community elders, provincial council members, and DoWA representatives.
- On August 13, the PRRD Director held his regular coordination meeting, which was attended by SIKA-East's PMU manager and representatives of other project implementers. The PRRD Director observed that SIKA-East should share the list of Cycle 1 projects officially with other service providers to avoid duplication. The PMU manager agreed to do so. The participants also discussed ways to help flood-stricken people in Paktya Province and decided to further discuss the issue with their management and come to a decision.

Ahmad Abad District

- Renovation of the Ahmad Abad DSU office has begun.

Laja Mangal District

- The Resource Dialogue and Advocacy Training for Laja Mangal was supposed to be conducted on August 14 and 15. However, due to heavy rains and flooding, it was delayed until August 18 and 19.

SIGNIFICANT KABUL-BASED ACTIVITIES

Institutional Strengthening and Stabilization Unit

- SIKA-East is preparing for a series of Trainings of Trainers (ToT) to be held in Kabul next week. The trainings will cover Stability Planning Process, Stakeholder/Governance, Project Design and Development, Advocacy, Coalition Building, and Negotiation Strategy. The purpose of these trainings is to prepare field staff to conduct the trainings at the district level.



Sisy karez extension and reservoir construction project in Saydabad



August 13 meeting to discuss the upcoming gender meeting in Gardiz

- SIKA-East prepared the curriculum for the Coalition Building ToT. Coalition Building is a one-day session that uses a simulation to work the participants through the three key stages of coalition: building, growing, and maintaining. It also has a specific focus on messaging and communicating as a group to ensure all parties develop strategies for sticking to a common message when working towards a specific goal.
- SIKA-East is working with MRRD to prepare for induction training of district social workers. After receiving MRRD, NSP, and National Area Based Development Program (NABDP) modules, SIKA-East started reviewing them. Following the review, SIKA-East, with support from MRRD, will combine both SIKA-East training modules with NSP and NABDP modules.

Trainings and Workshops Conducted This Week

Date	Title	Location	Type	Men	Women
August 12-14	Grants Management and Implementation	Saydabad	Training	10	
August 12-14	Grants Management and Implementation	Nirakh	Training	24	
August 13	Fundraising	Khoshi	Training	46	
August 14	Fundraising	Khoshi	Training		41
August 14-15	Infrastructure Project Planning	Gurbuz	Training	45	

- SIKA-East is working on logistical arrangements for Service Provider Fairs (SPF) for Logar and Paktya Provinces.
- Saydabad and Baraki Barak district profiles were updated during the week.
- A scope of work and concept note were prepared for an In Kind Grant for Tani, Zurmat, Andar, Baraki Barak, and Saydabad Districts to air radio plays. The radio plays will be used to foster a district dialogue on sources of instability and resources available to combat the identified sources. The objectives of the radio plays are threefold:
 - Inform local residents on ways in which they, individually and collectively, can participate in programs that directly address instability in their area;
 - Identify existing resources that can be used to implement programs and educate people about the process for participating in the SIKA-East small grants program; and
 - Specifically target women leaders and women-focused NGOs to participate in developing projects that address the sources of instability.
- SIKA-East completed the initial draft of the Qarabagh and Jaghatu district profiles and also updated the Saydabad district profile. They are all currently under review.
- SIKA-East analyzed the Dih Yak and Andar District Project Portfolios (DPP) to ensure that they applied all the criteria established for prioritization of projects, surveys, and grant awards.

Grants and Project Management Unit

- Zarko Draganic, STTA Grants Officer, is experiencing visa renewal issues and must leave Afghanistan on Saturday, August 17, and return to Bosnia for approximately two weeks for visa processing. This effectively leaves the Grants and Sub-contracts Unit manager alone with no expat support. For the next couple of weeks, therefore, the primary focus of the GSU will be: 1) milestone payments, 2) grant awards, and 3) vetting of grants. GSU support to other SIKA East units will be available when Branimir Dimitrijevic returns around August 25. Dr. Javed will spearhead non-infrastructure coordination.

- Fifty-seven awarded and approved applications, as well as their supporting documents, have been entered into the web-based MIS database. Next week, GSU staff will meet with the MIS team to improve the database. A new reporting template has been developed, and a faster and higher-capacity server is being procured to handle the amount of information that will be available on the database.
- To date, 88 grant applications have been submitted to USAID for approval, and USAID has approved 85 of them, with a combined value of \$3,505,971. SIKA-East has awarded 63 grants, totaling \$2,552,140. The current status of the grants pipeline is shown below.

Grants Pipeline

District	Under Development	Apps. Received	Apps. Received	Vetting Pending with USAID	Vetting Approved by USAID	GRC Approved	USAID Approval Requested	USAID Approval Received		Grants Awarded	
	No.	No.	\$ Value	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	\$ Value	No.	\$ Value
Saydabad	4	25	718,833	0	11	20	20	20	553,615	19	538,512
Mohammad Agha	20	23	1,110,264	1	23	22	22	22	1,025,875	22	1,025,875
Nirakh	15	17	992,108	2	17	14	13	13	773,363	11	590,078
Dih Yak	10	11	445,669	8	5	11	11	9	360,269	8	278,731
Chaki Wardak	11	11	517,761	7	2	11	11	11	517,761	3	118,944
Andar	19	4	127,320	0	4	3	0	0	0	0	0
Baraki Barak	26	17	772,677	6	4	15	11	10	275,088	0	0
Total	105	108	4,684,633	24	66	96	88	85	3,505,972	63	2,552,140

- SIKA-East field and Kabul-based engineers continued design and development work on projects slated for Saydabad, Nirakh, Chaki Wardak, Mohammad Agha, Baraki Barak, Dih Yak, Zadran, and Andar Districts. By the end of the week, SIKA-East had completed designs for 108 projects in all of the above-mentioned districts except for Zadran. The table on the following page outlines project progress.
- The review of design documents for several projects continued during the week. The final review was completed for three projects for Dih Yak District of Ghazni Province.

Engineering Design Pipeline

Districts			Designs		Projects Completion Status	
Province	Batch	District	Total Design in Progress	Designs Completed	In Progress \$	Complete \$
Maydan Wardak	A	Saydabad	4	30	89,700	826,941
	B	Nirakh	2	17	194,539	963,067
	C	Chaki Wardak	1	11	85,899	575,302
Logar	B	Mohammad Agha	6	25	374,111	1,406,845
	A	Baraki Barak	10	10	438,786	666,182
Ghazni	B	Dih Yak	1	12	0	602,434
	C	Andar	5	3	204,006	247,311
	C	Zadran	4	0	519,235	0
		Sub-totals	33	108	1,906,276	5,288,081
		Grand Totals	141		7,194,358	

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting Unit

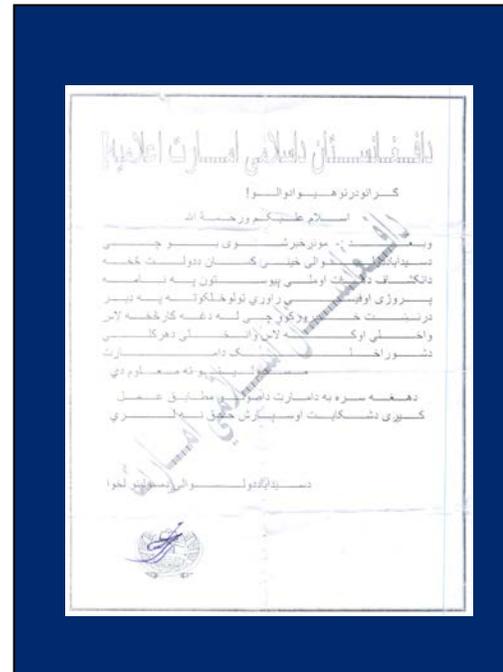
- This week, SIKA-East drafted the agenda, invitation letter, and topics for discussion for the quarterly Community of Practice meeting for all SIKAs and invited the participants. The main focus of this meeting will be the standardization of program implementation, the involvement and leadership of GIROA, and the implementation and effectiveness of the non-grant projects process. It is scheduled to be held August 22.

Human Resources and Recruiting Unit

- The Human Resource Unit filled four positions during this period: three for AECOM, and one for OCS.

Security and Risk Management Unit

- On August 14, a grants training officer in Ghazni’s Dih Yak District was travelling to Kohna Deh village for first milestone payment verification documents and was halted by a Taliban checkpoint, where vehicles and persons were being searched. Before his turn came, he hailed a rickshaw and was able to leave the area and return to the district center office. In similar circumstances in future, he was told he should destroy the documents he is carrying, as they can be reproduced at a later date. In the provinces of Ghazni and Maydan Wardak, the Taliban have issued warnings and have set up roadside checkpoints. This is having an adverse effect on the ability of the GSU field staff, engineers, and M&E staff to perform site visits.
- A written threat (see text box at right) was posted on a wall of a SIKA-East grant project warning that individuals involved in the project – PRRD and the CDC – should not be or they would be dealt with according to Amerat (Taliban) rules and regulations with no right to recourse.
- Security Department conducted First Aid Training for SIKA-East’s Afghan Public Protection Force personnel.
- Security Department conducted individual interviews with staff members from the Logar PMU as part of their investigation into the lost assets from that office.



PROJECTED FIELD ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT WEEK

GHAZNI

- Participate in regular coordination meetings with the PRRD Director and District Governors;
- Award four projects in Dih Yak District;
- Conduct Grants Process and Application Development training for men from the Khwaja Umari DDA+ and CDCs;
- Disburse first milestone payments to the Akli and Tunfer CDCs in Dih Yak District;
- Hold a GRC meeting for the Konsaf, Mash, and Payandi projects; and
- Prepare for the Qarabagh and Jaghatu Districts’ launch meetings.

KHOST

- Participate in regular coordination meetings with the PRRD Director and District Governors;
- Facilitate a communication committee meeting for Gurbuz men;

- Design a research-based, message-driven brochure for staff in Gurbuz, Tani, and Jaji Maidan Districts; and
- Conduct Resource Dialogue and Advocacy Training for men from the Jaji Maidan and Tani DDA+s.

LOGAR

- Participate in regular coordination meetings with the PRRD Director and District Governors;
- Conduct a sub-coordination meeting;
- Facilitate a communication committee meeting; and
- Conduct a GRC meeting for Baraki Barak projects.

MAYDAN WARDAK

- Participate in regular coordination meetings with the PRRD Director and District Governors;
- Monitor ongoing SIKA-East projects in Nirkh and Saydabad Districts;
- Conduct project surveys according to the engineering group's plan;
- Conduct Infrastructure Project Implementation training for Saydabad district entities;
- Prepare for the second SPF;
- Collect data to update the SPC; and
- Conduct communication committee meetings.

PAKTYA

- Participate in regular coordination meetings with the PRRD Director and District Governors;
- Conduct Infrastructure Project Planning training for Laja Ahmad Khail District; and
- Conduct Resource Dialogue and Advocacy training for Laja Mangal District.

PROJECTED KABUL-BASED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT WEEK

- Continue surveys and designs for Saydabad, Nirkh, Chaki Wardak, Mohammad Agha, Baraki Barak, Dih Yak, and Zadran, based on DPP Cycle 1 projects;
- Provide confirmation to grants in order to compare the completed activities with the milestones;
- Collect required information and continue development of grant applications;
- Continue working on vetting documents and the cost price analysis for projects;
- Finalize the Khwaja Umari and Qarabagh district profiles;
- Conduct Stability Planning Process ToT training;
- Conduct Stakeholder Orientation and Governance Foundation ToT training;
- Conduct Project Design and Development ToT training;
- Conduct Coalition building, Lobbying, and Negotiation Strategy ToT trainings;
- Conduct security risk assessment for Jaghatu DSU office;
- Participate in SIKA Community of Practice, MISTI M&E summit, and MISTI SIKA Summit; and
- Continue recruiting to fill 142 positions:
 - 109 vacancies in process for AECOM;
 - 2 vacancies in process for OSC; and
 - 31 vacancies in process for IRD.