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On Sunday, September 1, a meeting was held in Ghazni's Uranus Hotel (above) to launch SIKA-East in Jaghatu and Qarabagh Districts of Ghazni Province. That same morning, the program was also launched in Jalrez District of Maydan Wardak Province.

September 5, 2013

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WEEKLY HIGHLIGHT

SIKA-East Launched in Three New Districts

On Sunday, September 1, SIKA-East was launched in Jaghatu and Qarabagh Districts of Ghazni Province and in Jalrez District of Maydan Wardak. With these launches, SIKA-East is now being implemented in twenty-one districts of five provinces.

The Ghazni launch meeting was held in the conference hall of the city's Uranus Hotel. Following the recitation of some verses from the Holy Quran, SIKA-East's manager for Ghazni welcomed the participants and invited the Deputy Provincial Governor, Mohammad Ali Ahmadi, to say a few words. Mr. Ahmadi began by expressing his appreciation for the work SIKA-East is already doing in Ghazni's Andar, Dih Yak, and Khwaja Umari Districts and said he hoped to see the same results in the two new ones. He encouraged those working with Provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development, members of the new districts' District Development Assemblies and Community Development Councils, and others with an interest in the development and stability of Jaghatu and Qarabagh to cooperate fully with the implementation of SIKA-East so they can get the maximum benefit from the program.

In her speech, the head of the Department of Women's Affairs for Ghazni asked that women be involved in program discussions and decision making, and the Deputy Director of PRRD assured everyone that women have an equal role in all aspects of SIKA-East programming. He emphasized that SIKA-East is an MRRD initiative, just like National Solidarity Program. Finally, SIKA-East's manager for Ghazni briefly explained the goals of the program and its implementation process. Approximately 60 people attended the event.

At the same time, 100 kilometers north in Maydan Wardak Province, a similar meeting was being held in Jalrez District. Those attending included a representative of the Provincial Governor, the PRRD Deputy Director, the head of the Provincial Council, and other government officials, as well as members of the Jalrez DDA and CDCs and several influential women from the district. In all of their speeches, the government representatives emphasized how pleased they were that SIKA-East was coming to Jalrez, as they had already seen its effects in other Wardak districts: Chaki Wardak, Nirkh, and Saydabad. SIKA-East representatives outlined the goals of the program and its implementation plan. Over 90 people participated in the Jalrez launch meeting.



Participants at the launch meeting closely follow the explanation of SIKA-East's goals and implementation methods.



Women were welcome and well represented at the Ghazni event.



SIKA-East launch meeting in Jalrez District of Maydan Wardak Province

SIGNIFICANT PROVINCIAL ACTIVITIES

GHAZNI

- During the week the Provincial Management Unit (PMU) prepared an application for an in kind grant to produce radio plays for broadcasting in the province.

Andar District

- On September 3, the Andar District Governor and the DDA+ signed the supporting documents for the radio play in-kind grant, which will be monitored by the Andar District Support Unit (DSU). The document was sent to the Kabul office for further processing.
- On September 3, the Andar DSU obtained the approval of the District Governor, District Development Assembly (DDA), and the CDC for Abdul Rahim Village for a project to gravel the road to the village.
- The next day, the road graveling project was approved by SIKA-East's Kabul engineering support group and the Abdul Rahim CDC. The proposal will be reviewed next by the Grant Review Committee (GRC).

Dih Yak District

- On August 29, the DSU grants officer disbursed three first milestone payments to the three CDCs that are managing the Tassan Payeen, Shetam, and Eabad kariz rehabilitation projects.
- On September 3, the district engineer visited the sites of the Tanfer canal stonemasonry project and the Zargon karez extension to monitor construction progress and quality and to offer technical advice.

Jaghathu District

- On September 1, as described above, SIKA-East was launched in Jaghathu and Qarabagh Districts. Approximately 60 people attended the launch meeting.
- That same day, DSU staff met with the District Governor, the head of the DDA, and community elders to give them a more complete briefing on how SIKA-East will be rolled out in their district.

Khwaja Umari District

- On September 3, men from the Khwaja Umari DDA held their second sub-coordination meeting with the Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (DAIL), PRRD, and the Department of Water Management, and discussed the District Project Portfolio (DPP) projects for Khwaja Umari District.



Members of the Tassan Payeen CDC receive their first milestone payment.



On September 3, the Dih Yak district engineer monitored stonemasonry work on the Tanfer canal.

Qarabagh District

- On September 1, a meeting was held in Ghazni City to launch SIKA-East in Qarabagh and Jaghatu. See page 1 for details.

KHOST

- On September 1, the Provincial Governor invited the PMU manager to attend a Provincial Development Committee (PDC) meeting. The SIKA-East representative delivered a presentation on the program and answered questions raised by the PDC members. The Provincial Governor said he was satisfied with SIKA-East’s performance in the province and asked that another meeting be held in the near future to learn more about SIKA-East’s progress.

Gurbuz District

- From September 1 to 3, a workshop on Project Design and Development was held in Gurbuz District; 53 women and one man attended. During the sessions, the participants learned about project design, the development of bills of quantities, and the roles and responsibilities of the community during the implementation of infrastructure projects.

Tani District

- On September 1 and 2, PRRD and SIKA-East trainers conducted a Stakeholder Orientation workshop for 31 women from Tani District. During the training, the women learned more about SIKA-East’s goals, objectives, and implementation process. On September 3, 37 women attended a Governance Foundation workshop.

LOGAR

- During the last few weeks, some community elders have met with the Provincial Governor and Mohammad Agha District Governor to share their concerns about SIKA-East projects in Mohammad Agha District. The Provincial Governor through an official letter established a joint committee to follow up the issue and get information about SIKA-East projects in Mohammad Agha District. During the week, this committee met with SIKA-East’s DSU manager for Mohammad Agha and obtained detailed information about the SIKA-East project selection process and Cycle 1. Afterwards, the committee met with the DDA members individually. Some of the DDA members expressed their satisfaction with SIKA-East projects. However, others complained about an unequal number of projects in different hawzas, project quality, and transparency. The committee visited four projects sites and prepared a report for the Provincial Governor and PRRD Director. According to their preliminary report, three of the projects were in good condition and they found no fault. However, they concluded that the



Gurbuz women attending a Project Design and Development workshop



Kamal Khil school boundary wall project

Kamal Khil school boundary wall project was not being implemented according to the plan. Therefore, they advised the contracting CDC to demolish and rebuild the wall. The committee is still on their mission and developing their final report to the Provincial Governor and PRRD.

- On September 1, the Logar PMU manager met with the Mohammad Agha DSU manager to discuss the status of Cycle 1 projects, including how to solve the problem of project balance throughout the hawzas.

Baraki Barak District

- On August 29, the Baraki Barak DSU conducted separate Lobbying trainings for 44 men and 17 women from the DDA+.
- DSU staff met with the Department of Economics and obtained information on service providers, which it used to update the Service Provider Catalogue (SPC) for Logar.
- During the week, DSU staff met with several governmental and non-governmental service providers to share information about upcoming sub-coordination meetings. The service providers agreed to meet with the DDA+ members and answer their questions.
- On September 4, the DSU grants officer began to conduct Grant Management Training for men from the Baraki Barak DDA+. The training will continue for three more days.

Khoshi District

- On August 29, the women's communication committee met to discuss their activity plan, required materials, and the establishment of partnerships and coalitions. The committee members agreed to share the discussion matters with the larger DDA.
- Following several meetings with the DDA and line stakeholders, the application for an in kind grant to air radio play for Khoshi district was completed and is ready for further processing.
- The DSU manager participated in a meeting called by the District Governor and provided updates on SIKA-East progress in the district. The District Governor was satisfied with the program's progress and promised to continue to support SIKA-East.

Mohammad Agha District

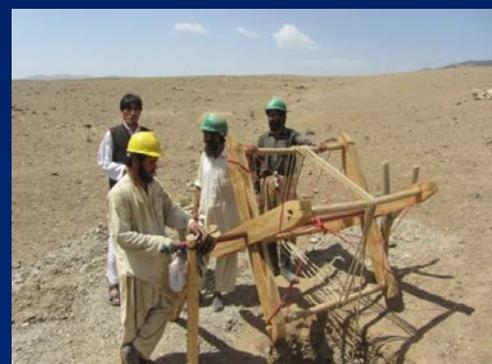
- On August 29, women from the DDA+ held a sub-coordination meeting with the provincial head of the Education Department and the manager of Literacy. The DDA+ members shared their concerns regarding education and the school situation in the district. The education officials promised to do their best to solve the problems.
- During the week, the DSU engineer visited the site of the Panama karez extension project to check on construction progress and quality.



August 29 Lobbying training for Baraki Barak women



August 29 sub-coordination meeting with Logar education officials



Panama karez extension project in Mohammad Agha District

MAYDAN WARDAK

- Due to the worsening security situation, most travel was restricted during the week, and some site visits were delayed in Chaki Wardak, Saydabad, and Nirkh Districts.

Chaki Wardak District

- On August 29, the female communication committee conducted their eleventh meeting. The participants discussed ways to develop their communication plan as well as the radio plan for in-kind grants. They also discussed gender-related issues and analyzed the importance of women in project implementation.

Jalrez District

- On September 1, SIKA-East was launched in Jalrez District of Maydan Wardak Province (see above).

Nirkh District

- From August 27 to 31, Grant Management Award training was conducted for 34 men from eight CDCs of Chaki Wardak District and two CDCs of Nirkh.

Saydabad District

- On August 29, SIKA-East representatives, along with members of the DDA+, met with the Department of Natural Disaster Management (DoNDM) and Red Crescent. The purpose of this meeting was fundraising for those projects that have been identified by SIKA-East but which cannot be implemented through the program due to policy restrictions. After discussing the projects, the DoNDM and Red Crescent representatives promised to analyze their resources and consider executing the projects if possible.
- On August 29, the DSU engineering and M&E team conducted site visits to various grants projects to determine construction progress and quality.

PAKTYA

- On September 3, the Paktya PMU gender officer, along with the Ahmad Abad team leader, met with the manager of Afghan Women's Education Center (AWEC), who is also the head of the female DDA for Ahmad Abad. The participants discussed the involvement of Ahmad Abad women in SIKA-East. The AWEC director promised to prepare a list of possible women stakeholders in the program, obtain the approval of the District Governor and PRRD, and share the list with SIKA-East.
- Ten members of the PMU staff attended a Training of Trainers on Stakeholder Engagement and Governance Foundation in Kabul.



SIKA-East's grants officer (right) hands over a grants record file to the officers of one of the CDCs who attended the Grant Management Award training for CDCs from Chaki Wardak and Nirkh Districts.



August 29 sub-coordination meeting in Saydabad



At the Srakala Markazi – Arab Khil irrigation canal in Saydabad District, cast-concrete slab covers stand ready for installation.

Laja Ahmad Khail

- During the week, the PMU gender officer communicated regularly with the head of the Laja Ahmad Khail DDA, DSU staff, and others to prepare a list of female stakeholders, which, when completed, will be shared with the Kabul office.

Laja Mangal District

- Following the August 18 gender meeting in Gardiz, DDA members were asked to identify and introduce prominent and active women of Laja Mangal and Laja Ahmad Khail Districts. A list of 36 women from Laja Mangal was drawn up by the DDAs and shared with SIKA-East. These women will be potential female stakeholders of SIKA-East for any future events and decision making issues.
- On September 1, the Laja Mangal DSU manager met with the Deputy District Governor and discussed ways to help Laja Mangal residents get national ID cards. The Deputy Governor promised to share the issue with the Governor and hoped to solve it soon.
- On September 1, the Laja Mangal DDA held a sub-coordination meeting with the director of the Department of Natural Disaster Management to discuss the rehabilitation of areas that were affected by the recent floods. The department head said he would establish a committee and evaluate the situation so they can support the people.
- On September 2, the Laja Mangal DDA+ met with the Department of Public Works to talk about the bad condition of the roads in the district. The representative of the department said they have already planned to fix the roads and a survey to that end was under way.

Zadran District

- On September 2, the Zadran DSU facilitated the fourth meeting of the men's communication committee. The participants discussed activities and required materials and the establishment of partnerships and coalitions. They decided to share their future plans with the District Governor and DDA+.
- On September 2, the Zadran DSU met with the DDA+ and discussed grants for capacity building for young people. The DDA+ promised to prepare a list of youths and submit it to the DSU for further processing.
- On September 2, the Zadran DDA+ had a sub-coordination meeting with the head of the Department of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs, and Disabled (DoLSAMD) and discussed the situation of the disabled. The director promised they would issue salary cards for the disabled and try to provide more job opportunities for Zadran residents. The team also met with the head of the Economics Department and requested him to share their district-related issues with the Provincial Governor. He promised to raise the issues at the next PDC meeting.



September 3 meeting with the head of AWEC and the Ahmad Abad women's DDA



September 2 meeting of Zadran DDA members to discuss capacity building initiatives for youth



September 2 sub-coordination meeting with the Director of Education

Zurmat District

- On August 29, ten community members from Zurmat held a sub-coordination meeting with the director of the Paktya Education Department to address some of their problems, such as the lack of books, stationery, trained teachers, and school buildings. After a long discussion, the Director of Education assured the community members that he would send textbooks and conduct short-term capacity building trainings for teachers in Zurmat schools. He also said he would try to find funds for the rehabilitation and construction of school buildings.

SIGNIFICANT KABUL-BASED ACTIVITIES

Institutional Strengthening and Stabilization Unit

- The District Social Worker (DSW) Induction training outlines and agenda were prepared and finalized after approval by the Chief of Party and Deputy Chief of Party. They will be shared with MRRD for review. The training module will be prepared by next week.
- The Jaji Maidan DPP and list of Cycle 1 projects has been reviewed and finalized, and will now be sent for translation. The Tani Cycle 1 project list is being reviewed. The English version of the Gurbuz DPP has been translated, and the English translation is being cross-checked against the Pashto. The DPPs for Laja Mangal and Laja Ahmad Khail have been reviewed, finalized, and sent for translation.
- As part of the continuing support that SIKA-East provides to the DDA+ and District Governors, the program will be working with communication committees to provide print media focusing on stability-based issues for the members to distribute. SIKA-East will design templates of message-based flyers that track with the stability-based themes from the radio plays.

Trainings and Workshops Conducted This Week

Date	Title	Location	Type	Men	Women
August 29	Lobbying -- Men	Baraki Barak	Training	44	
August 29	Lobbying – Women	Baraki Barak	Training		17
September 1-3	Project Design and Development	Gurbuz	Training	1	53
September 1-2	Stakeholder Orientation	Tani	Training		31
September 3	Governance Foundation	Tani	Training		37

Grants and Project Management Unit

- Two fixed obligation grant agreements were awarded this week to the Payenda CDC of Andar District and the Tagab Payan CDC of Baraki Barak.
- Two non-infrastructure in kind grant approval applications – for tailoring training / tailoring machine supply and vocational training – for the Baraki Barak DDA were processed and forwarded to USAID for approval; their combined value is \$43,806.
- In total, 95 approval applications have been submitted to USAID; 89, with a value of \$3,750,472, have been approved; and 66 grants, valued at \$2,639,623, have been awarded. Two vetting approvals, with a value of \$252,496, were approved this week.
- First, second, and third milestone payments, with a value of \$103,680, were disbursed this week. Payments made to date amount to \$956,887.

- On September 4, a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the provisions of embroidery training and tailoring training in Nirkh District was issued.
- The grants manual was resubmitted to USAID for approval after being amended to address several comments.

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	0	24	647,703	0	11	21	22	21	575,716	20	559,361
Mohammad Agha	20	23	1,110,264	1	24	22	22	22	1,025,875	22	1,025,875
Nirkh	15	17	992,108	2	18	14	13	13	773,364	11	590,078
Dih Yak	10	11	495,880	4	8	11	11	9	360,269	8	278,731
Chaki Wardak	10	12	591,199	6	3	12	11	11	517,761	5	185,579
Andar	19	4	236,000	1	4	3	3	3	222,400	0	0
Baraki Barak	18	17	935,588	6	8	15	13	10	275,088	0	0
Total	92	108	5,008,742	20	76	98	95	89	3,750,473	66	2,639,624

Engineering Support Group

- SIKA-East field and Kabul-based engineers continued design and development work on projects slated for the nine districts of Saydabad, Nirkh, Chaki Wardak, Mohammad Agha, Baraki Barak, Dih Yak, Andar, Zadran, and Gurbuz Districts. By the end of the week, SIKA-East had completed designs for 117 projects in all of the above-mentioned districts except for Gurbuz. The following table outlines progress.
- The group continues to work with the grants team to compare project site visit reports and achievements with the given milestones for payment purposes.

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	Nirkh	1	18	79,792	1,033,472
	C	Chaki Wardak	3	12	171,196	660,363
Logar	B	Mohammad Agha	6	25	374,111	1,406,845
	A	Baraki Barak	10	15	361,575	941,822
Ghazni	B	Dih Yak	1	12	0	602,434
	C	Andar	4	4	204,006	331,285
	C	Zadran	3	1	450,400	85,592
Khost	E	Gurbuz	0	0	0	0
Sub-totals			32	117	1,730,780	5,888,754
Grand Totals			149		7,619,534	

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting Unit

- Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting Unit completed ten site visit reports: four for Mohammad Agha, four for Saydabad, and two for Dih Yak.

Human Resources and Recruiting Unit

- The Human Resources and Recruiting Unit filled four positions during the week: three for AECOM and one for IRD.

Security and Risk Management Unit

- Security Department shortlisted the field services officer CVs for the districts of Mohammad Agha and Khoshi in Logar Province; HR is arranging for interviews.
- Security conducted first aid training for the APPF personnel assigned to SIKA-East.
- Security continued to investigate the loss of seven laptop computers from the Logar PMU office during Eid. The theft is also being investigated by the Logar Province CID and the Kabul Security Department.

PROJECTED FIELD ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT WEEK

GHAZNI

- Participate in regular coordination meetings with the PRRD Director and District Governors;
- Disburse second milestone payments for three projects in Dih Yak District; and
- Conduct Grants Management Training for Andar and Dih Yak Districts.

KHOST

- Participate in regular coordination meetings with the PRRD Director and District Governors;
- Conduct Project Design and Development training for Gurbuz men;
- Conduct Grant Process and Application Development training for men and women from Gurbuz;
- Conduct men's and women's communication committee meetings in Gurbuz;
- Conduct Project Design and Development training for Tani;
- Conduct men's and women's communication committee meetings in Tani; and
- Conduct Stakeholder Orientation and Governance Foundation training for Jaji Maidan women.

LOGAR

- Participate in regular coordination meetings with the PRRD Director and District Governors;
- Conduct communication committee meetings; and
- Conduct Negotiation workshop for men and women.

MAYDAN WARDAK

- Participate in regular coordination meetings with the PRRD Director and District Governors;
- Monitor ongoing SIKA-East projects in Chaki Wardak, Nirkh, and Saydabad Districts;
- Fill out grant applications according to the Grants unit's plan;
- Visit project sites; and
- Conduct communication committee meetings.

PAKTYA

- Participate in regular coordination meetings with the PRRD Director and District Governors;
- Conduct Grant Process and Application Development training in Laja Ahmad Khail and Laja Mangal;
- Conduct a communication committee meeting in Laja Mangal;
- Conduct Stability Planning Process training for Garda Serai sub-district; and
- Conduct a sub-coordination meeting in Zurmat.

PROJECTED KABUL-BASED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT WEEK

- Prepare DSW training module;
- Finalize print media templates for DDA+ and District Governors;
- Complete the initial draft of the Jaghatu district profile;
- Disburse first and second milestone payments valued at \$103,680;
- Review project implementation reports to provide confirmation to Grants in order to compare completed activities with milestones;
- Follow up on equipment shipments and office establishment in the newly approved districts of Jaghatu and Mando Zayi;
- Continue to track and coordinate all field activities that are scheduled to take place next week;
- Continue recruiting to fill 138 positions:
 - 112 vacancies in process for AECOM;
 - 3 vacancies in process for OSC; and
 - 23 vacancies in process for IRD.