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STABILITY IN KEY AREAS (SIKA) – EAST

WEEKLY PROGRAM UPDATE NO. 091 (SEPTEMBER 5-11, 2013)



Men from Saydabad's Sheekh Azam CDC pray over their recently completed well, which was funded through a SIKA-East grant.



In school, thanks in large part to the efforts of Saydabad's Women's Advocacy Team, these girls from Tangi Valley closely follow the lesson their teacher is writing on a whiteboard.

September 12, 2013

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It was prepared by AECOM.

WEEKLY HIGHLIGHT

Saydabad Women's Resolve Gets Results

Not many people in eastern Afghanistan are able to find the resolve or the resources they need to improve their lives. Women find it especially hard to believe that they can do this independently. However, six women in Saydabad District of Maydan Wardak Province are showing how a basic knowledge of advocacy and, most importantly, confidence have helped them take the lead in bringing development to their communities.

After participating in USAID/SIKA-East's Advocacy and Resource Dialogue training, the six women, members of the District Development Assembly of Saydabad, established their Women's Advocacy Team. They agreed that low levels of literacy among women are the first threshold to cross if they are to effectively promote peace and stability in their communities.

Using skills acquired in the training, their leader Fahima organized a group of women at Baratkhil Village. With SIKA-East's help, they identified a local partner and approached the Afghan Women's Education Center with a request to provide them with literacy classes. AWEC agreed. With improved literacy, mothers in Baratkhil will be able to help their children with their school work and increase their families' standing in the village. Basic numeracy will give them power in the marketplace – in shopping and selling their home-made products.

Next, the women asked the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan to organize midwifery courses to respond to another major problem for Saydabad women: high maternal and infant mortality rates.

The advocacy group's most recent success was to help reopen schools for girls in Saydabad's Tangi valley, a notorious stronghold of the Taliban, who have opposed girls education for years. The women were instrumental in bringing together community elders, parents of school-age girls, and other stakeholders in girls education. A delegation of elders then approached the Taliban and persuaded them to lift their opposition to schools for girls. At the end of August, several schools reopened.

"The [SIKA] training helped the team to 'dare' to contact people and ask for support," says Huma, a member of the Women's Advocacy Team. Fahima, Huma, and other members of their team have become community leaders, inspiring other women to raise their voices.



The Women's Advocacy Team discusses issues affecting women and sources of instability in Saydabad District, Maydan Wardak Province.



In school at last, these girls from Tangi Valley closely follow the lesson their teacher is writing on a whiteboard.

"I learned how to raise my voice in the community. I am a more effective communicator now, and I can influence other women to raise their voices with confidence."

- Ms. Huma, Saydabad Women's Advocacy Team

SIGNIFICANT PROVINCIAL ACTIVITIES

GHAZNI

- On September 5, the Ghazni Program Management Unit (PMU) disbursed the second milestone payment for two projects in Dih Yak District.
- On September 4, the Grants and Sub-contracts Unit began a joint Grants Management Implementation training for two awarded projects in Andar District and one in Dih Yak. The training, which continued this week and was attended by nine men, explained the required documents and procedures for correct project implementation.
- On September 9, the Ghazni grants team visited the Zagone karez extension project. Second milestone work has been completed, and the contracting Community Development Council (CDC) is working to complete the third milestone indicators in the near future.
- On September 10, the PMU conducted a Grant Review Committee (GRC) meeting for two projects in Andar District. The committee approved the projects and sent the documents to the Kabul office for further processing.
- On September 10, the PMU engineer paid a site visit to the Tanfer protection wall project. He found it was proceeding smoothly, and the PMU prepared second milestone documents for a progress payment.
- The Ghazni PMU sent official letters to Provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD), National Area Based Development Program (NABDP), District Development Assembly (DDA), Provincial Development Council (PDC), National Solidarity Program (NSP), and the Provincial Governor's office to request directions regarding the non-cooperative CDCs in Dih Yak District.

Andar District

- On September 4, Grant Management training was conducted for 15 men from the Andar DDA+ and CDCs.
- On September 5, men and women from the DDA+ attended sub-coordination meetings with the Departments of Health, Education, and Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs, and Disabled (MoLSAMD). The participants discussed those projects that are in the DPP but which SIKA-East cannot implement for policy reasons. The departments said they would consider the project after analyzing their resources.
- On September 8 and 9, the Dih Yak men's and women's communication committees conducted their sixteenth meetings. The women decided to meet with the Department of Women's Affairs (DoWA) to discuss their problems.



A worker wets down a recently completed portion of stonemasonry retaining wall for the Zagone karez extension in Dih Yak District.



Work on Dih Yak's Konah Deh Karez extension

Dih Yak District

- On September 9, the district engineer visited the Ramak Aklai stone-masonry canal lining project to check on progress.
- On September 8 and 9, the men's and women's communication committees held their sixteenth meetings. Among the topics discussed were the problems of women in the district, and it was decided to approach DoWA to share them.

Jaghatu District

- On September 5, the Jaghatu DSU prepared the participants lists for Stakeholder Orientation and Governance Foundation trainings.
- The DSU prepared a list of invitees to a meeting to perform a language review of the District Project Portfolio (DPP) and endorse it.
- On September 9, separate Stakeholder Orientation trainings were conducted for men and women from the DDA+ and CDCs; 62 men and 16 women participated in the sessions.
- On September 11, the same participants attended separate Governance Foundation trainings.

Khwaja Umari District

- On September 10, the Khwaja Umari DSU developed four applications for Cycle 1 projects. The projects were endorsed by official representatives of the sponsoring CDCs.
- On September 9 and 10, respectively, DSU staff conducted Fundraising Training for 52 men and 48 women from the DDA+ and CDCs.

Qarabagh District

- On September 5, the Qarabagh DSU completed a Resilience and Governance Foundation survey, during which regular meetings were held with the DDA, CDCs, and other influential people from the district in order to obtain data.

KHOST

- On September 8, the District Governor of Mando Zayi hosted a meeting, which was attended by the Khost PMU manager, tribal elders, the head of the DDA, and district community development workers. The meeting succeeded in nominating 40 elders and religious scholars to conduct a survey of influential stakeholders in the district.



A stonemason works on a retaining wall for the Aklai ditch and canal project in Dih Yak



September 9 Fundraising training for men from Khwaja Umari

Gurbuz District

- Engineering surveys for Cycle 1 projects began this week. The DSU engineering team surveyed two projects on September 5 and three more on September 9.
- On September 7, the Gurbuz women's communication committee held their second meeting. They discussed ways to promote social awareness among service providers, administrative corruption, and removing the gap between people and government. The men's communication committee conducted a separate meeting on September 10, and discussed the same agenda.
- On September 9, DSU staff conducted Project Design and Development training for Gurbuz CDC and DDA+ members. The participants learned about the general scope of projects, project management, project action plans, technical activities, and problems and solutions.
- From September 8 to 10, Grant Process and Application Development training was conducted for 57 women from the Gurbuz DDA+ and CDCs. The participants learned how to prepare a grant application, including the documents required in support. They also learned what happens to a grant application as it goes from preparation to submittal to award.
- On September 11, a five-day-Grant Process and Application Development training for men began; it will be completed next week.

Jaji Maidan District

- On September 8 and 9, Stakeholder Orientation training was conducted for 45 women from the Jaji Maidan DDA+ and CDCs.
- On September 10, a GRC meeting was held in Jaji Maydan, during which the committee members discussed their responsibilities, grant applications, the conflict of interest form, and GRC consensus.
- On September 10, DSU staff conducted Governance Foundation training for the same 45 women who attended the earlier training. During the session, they learned about the foundation of district-level government.
- On September 11, the same 45 women began Stability Planning Process training, which will continue and be completed next week.

Tani District

- From September 9 to 11, Project Design and Development training was conducted for 54 men from the Tani DDA+ and CDCs.



Second meeting of Gurbuz women's communication committee on September 7



A group session during Project Design and Development training for Gurbuz women

LOGAR

- On September 8, the PRRD Director conducted the regular coordination meeting with representatives of MRRD project implementers. The participants discussed the status of ongoing programs, challenges, and solutions. SIKA-East's Logar PMU manager updated the PRRD Director on program activities.
- On September 10, a GRC meeting was conducted for the radio plays that are planned to be aired soon through local radio stations. The participants discussed their views and suggested producing the plays within Logar Province.
- On September 10, Logar staff went through security training, where they learned how to deal with security threats.

Baraki Barak District

- The Baraki Barak DSU is considering conducting first aid training for community members and obtained the opinion of the DDA+ members on the subject – specifically, on the number and location of trainings and the number of trainees and trainers.
- From September 4 to 9, Grants Management training was conducted for 38 men from the Baraki Barak DDA+ and CDCs.

Khoshi District

- On September 8 and 9, DSU staff met with DDA and CDC members to gather their opinion on first aid training and to develop a concept note on the subject.
- On September 10, the Khoshi men's communication committee held their fifth meeting. The District Governor also participated in the meeting, during which the committee discussed their implementation plan.
- On September 11, Negotiation training was conducted for 47 women from the Khoshi DDA+ and CDCs.

Mohammad Agha District

- On September 5, the Mohammad Agha DSU prepared documentation for the third milestone payment for the Wazeeri CDC karez extension.
- During the week, the Mohammad Agha DSU contacted key members of the Nazeer Qala and Dagg Qala CDCs to disburse second and third milestone payments.
- On September 5, the Mohammad Agha DDA, facilitated by SIKA-East's communication team, conducted Coalition Building training for 43 men. The participants included DDA/DCC members, religious elders, media representative, and active women of the district. During



September 8 coordination meeting with the Logar PRRD Director



September 5 training in Coalition Building in Mohammad Agha District

the training, the participants established a coalition and named it “Mohammad Agha District Stability.”

- On September 10, the Mohammad Agha men’s and women’s communication committees held separate meetings, at which they discussed the next steps involved with the coalition building initiative.

MAYDAN WARDAK

- Security continued to worsen in the province during the week. A suicide bombing in Maydan Shahr, insurgent checkpoints along the Nirkh and Jalrez roads, and random rocket launches were the incidents noted.
- On September 5, all Maidan Wardak staff attended security training and were briefed on security threats and given general directions about security and communication approaches.

Chaki Wardak District

- On September 4, the Chaki Wardak DSU facilitated sub-coordination meetings for women with representatives of Afghan Women’s Education Center (AWEC) and Solidarity for Afghanistan Belgium (SAB) in the PRRD meeting hall. The CDC and DDA members were given information about AWEC and SAB services and activities in Maydan Wardak. They also discussed certain SIKA-East projects that are most relevant to AWEC’s and SAB’s fields of services. They sought funding agencies for some of the projects that may not be covered by SIKA-East.

Nirkh District

- On September 9 and 10, the Nirkh DSU made site visits to the Joy Asiab retaining wall, Abdul Khail kariz rehabilitation, and Karimdad road construction projects. The projects were proceeding according to plan.

Saydabad District

- The Saydabad engineering team conducted final site visits to the Sheekh Azam and Zarsanga well projects. Two wells have been recently dug and are ready for use.
- On September 5, the Saydabad M&E team made a site visit to the Ishaq Khail karez extension and rehabilitations project to measure work progress for the second milestone. They found that the project is making good progress in accordance with the plan.
- The Saydabad DSU filled out questionnaires for non-infrastructure projects, including literacy courses, university exam preparation courses, and capacity building.
- During the week, the Saydabad DSU conducted coordination meetings with different service providers and other district entities to update



September 4 sub-coordination meeting of Chaki Wardak women



Work proceeds on the Karimdad retaining wall project in Nirkh.



Men from Saydabad’s Sheekh Azam CDC pray over their recently completed well.

them on the upcoming Service Providers Fair (SPF) in Maydan Wardak Province.

PAKTYA

- On September 5, the first GRC meeting was conducted in Paktya Province to review three projects. The committee endorsed all three and prepared them for further processing.

Ahmad Abad District

- On September 8, the PMU team met with DDA members, community elders, provincial council members, the district police commander, the acting District Governor, and social workers. The purpose was to obtain a list of people to conduct a survey of potential district stakeholders. The attendees provided a list of community elders and thanked SIKA-East for coming to their district.

Laja Mangal District

- On September 2, the DMU communication officer conducted the first meeting of the Laja Mangal men's communication committee.
- On September 8, DSU staff conducted Grant Process and Application Development training for 44 men from the Laja Mangal DDA+ and CDCs.

Zurmat District

- On September 5, the Zurmat DSU met with key elders to discuss engineering surveys for Cycle 1 projects. The DSU manager explained the projects and asked the participant for their advice on starting the surveys. The participants proposed surveys for two projects: the Batoor High School boundary wall and the construction and cleaning of the Matwarkh canal. They also promised to cooperate with SIKA-East staff during the surveys.
- On September 9, Zurmat DSU staff surveyed the boundary wall of Batoor School in close coordination with the local authorities and community members.

SIGNIFICANT KABUL-BASED ACTIVITIES

Institutional Strengthening and Stabilization Unit

- A Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued this week for an in kind grant to produce a series of radio programs to run twice a week for 13 weeks in all five provinces. The overall goal of this initiative is to raise the profile and awareness of the PRRD and IDLG and the work they do for local communities among Afghan listeners. A secondary objective is to foster a district dialogue on sources of instability and resources available to target them. The dramas focus on services currently available to citizens and provide guidance on how they can interact with their



Grants Review Committee meeting on September 5



September 2 meeting of the Laja Mangal men's communication committee



Group session during September 8 training in Grant Process and Application Development in Laja Mangal

government at the district and provincial level. Each program will include a lively panel discussion on a given topic – such as education, governmental accountability, and dispute resolution – and allow listeners to phone in questions and directly engage with program guests. The radio plays have been recorded and are ready to air in Maydan Wardak, Logar, Ghazni, and Paktya Provinces. For Khost, the vendor will be provided with scripts and required to record with local actors. Existing recordings can be provided as a frame of reference. According to the current schedule, the radio plays will begin broadcasting in September and continue through mid-October.

- During the week, SIKA-East completed the design of six trifold leaflets that can be used as templates by DDA+ members to produce similar communication and outreach materials for district information centers. The topics also track the radio plays so that the printed material can serve a complementary role when the plays are re-aired later this month. SIKA-East has completed the internal review of the brochure templates. They will now be shared with District Governors, PRRD staff, members of DDAs, and other influential people from the community for comments and feedback. The final versions will be shared with MRRD, IDLG, and USAID.
- SIKA-East's technical team worked on preparing a distribution list for service provider booklets in Logar and Paktya Provinces.
- SIKA-East is working on the narrative that will accompany the Khwaja Umari DPP when it is submitted to USAID for approval.

Trainings and Workshops Conducted This Week

Date	Title	Location	Type	Men	Women
September 4-9	Grants Management	Dih Yak	Training	9	
September 4-9	Grants Management	Andar	Training	15	
September 4-9	Grants Management	Baraki Barak	Training	38	
September 8	Grant Process and Application Development	Laja Mangal	Training	44	
September 8-9	Stakeholder Orientation	Jaji Maydan	Training		45
September 8-10	Grant Process and Application Development	Gurbuz	Training		54
September 9	Fundraising	Khwaja Umari	Training	52	
September 9	Project Design and Development	Gurbuz	Training	35	
September 9	Stakeholder Orientation	Jaghatu	Training	62	
September 9	Stakeholder Orientation	Jaghatu	Training		16
September 9-11	Project Design and Development	Tani	Training	59	
September 10	Fundraising	Khwaja Umari	Training		48
September 10	Governance Foundation	Jaji Maydan	Training		45
September 11	Coalition Building	Mohammad Agha	Training	43	
September 11	Negotiation Strategy	Khoshi	Training		47
September 11	Grant Process and Application Development	Gurbuz	Training	NA	
September 11	Governance Foundation	Jaghatu	Training	62	
September 11	Governance Foundation	Jaghatu	Training		16

Grants and Project Management Unit

- This week, two non-infrastructure grant applications, worth \$37,400, were processed and forwarded to USAID for approval. Eight grants remain with USAID pending approval from previous submissions.
- In total, 97 approval applications have been submitted to USAID; 89, with a value of \$4,046,505 have been approved; 75 grants, valued at \$3,187,704, have been awarded.
- No vetting approvals were received this week. GSU sent five requests, with a value of \$204,256, to the Vetting Approval office for approvals.
- First, second, and third milestone payments, with a value of \$78,875, were disbursed on September 5. Payments made to date amount to \$1,046,123.
- A total of 84 awarded and approved grant applications, along with their supporting documents, have been entered into the web-based MIS database.

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	1	28	907,640	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	17	19	1,026,015	1	19	14	13	13	773,364	12	666,999
Dih Yak	10	12	536,692	4	8	11	11	9	360,269	9	352,487
Chaki Wardak	10	12	591,199	10	3	12	11	11	517,761	5	185,579
Andar	18	5	311,577	2	4	4	3	3	222,400	2	127,806
Baraki Barak	19	16	881,091	5	10	16	15	10	571,121	5	269,597
Zurmat	19	1	40,812	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Zadran	10	2	10,000	1	0	0	0	0	0		0
Total	124	118	5,415,290	24	79	100	97	89	4,046,506	75	3,187,704

Engineering Support Group

- SIKA-East field and Kabul-based engineers continued design and development work on projects slated for 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 121 projects in all of the above-mentioned districts except for Zadran and Gurbuz. The table on the following page outlines progress.
- The review of design documents for several projects continued during the week. The final review was completed for projects of Chaki Wardak District. The documents were sent for CDC/PMC approval.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting Unit

- During the week, MERU completed 25 site visit reports for first, second, and third milestones: eight in Mohammad Agha, eight in Saydabad, four in Nirkh, two for Dih Yak, one for Andar, and two in Chaki Wardak.

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	0	19	0	1,113,264
	C	Chaki Wardak	1	14	37,556	769,822
Logar	B	Mohammad Agha	6	25	374,111	1,406,845
	A	Baraki Barak	9	16	346,220	957,177
Ghazni	B	Dih Yak	1	12	0	602,434
	C	Andar	4	4	204,006	331,285
Paktya	C	Zadran	3	1	449,604	85,592
	C	Zurmat	0	0	0	0
Khost	E	Gurbuz	0	0	0	0
Sub-totals			28	121	1,501,197	6,093,359
Grand Totals			145		7,594,555	

Human Resources and Recruiting Unit

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

Security and Risk Management Unit

- The Security Department followed up the theft of seven laptops with the Logar Criminal Investigation Command (CID) Department. Security asked for a detailed report prepared by CID Department.
- The Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF) Level of Effort (LoE) was delayed due to the review and changes made in the cost sheet by the APPF Contract Department.
- An insurgent attack on NDS facilities in Maydan Shahr during the week blew out the windows in SIKA-East's guesthouse. Two more attacks on the Baraki Barak and Khwaja Umari district centers resulted in no casualties or damage to government facilities.

PROJECTED FIELD ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT WEEK

GHAZNI

- Participate in regular coordination meetings with the PRRD Director and District Governors;
- Disburse second milestone payments for two projects;
- Conduct Infrastructure Project Implementation training for Dih Yak district entities;
- Conduct a meeting on implementing the strategic communication plan;
- Conduct a meeting with Ramak and Tanfer CDC members;
- Conduct site visits to Shetam and Tasan protection wall projects in Tasan; and
- Prepare the first milestone documents for the Shatam project.

KHOST

- Participate in regular coordination meetings with the PRRD Director and District Governors;
- Continue Grant Process and Development training for Gurbaz men from the DDA+ and CDCs;
- Continue Stability Planning Process training for Tani women;
- Continue Grant Process and Application Development training for Tani men; and
- Continue Grant Process and Application Development for Jaji Maydan men from the CDC and DDA+.

LOGAR

- Participate in regular coordination meetings with the PRRD Director and District Governors;
- Conduct Infrastructure Project Implementation training; and
- Conduct communication committee and sub-coordination meetings.

MAYDAN WARDAK

- Participate in regular coordination meetings with the PRRD Director and District Governors;
- Conduct project surveys according to the Engineering group's schedule;
- Monitor ongoing SIKA-East projects in Chaki, Wardak, Nirkh, and Saydabad Districts;
- Fill out grant applications according to the Grants unit's plan;
- Collect data to update the Service Providers Catalogue; and
- Conduct communication committee and sub-coordination meetings.

PAKTYA

- Participate in regular coordination meetings with the PRRD Director and District Governors;
- Conduct Security messaging training for all Paktya staff;
- Conduct sub-coordination meetings in Laja Ahmad Khail and Zurmat;
- Conduct communication committee meetings in Zadran and Zurmat; and
- Conduct Stability Planning Process training for Garda Serai Sub-district.

PROJECTED KABUL-BASED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT WEEK

- Conduct the second round of Advanced Advocacy ToT;
- Prepare for the Project Design and Development and Advocacy ToTs;
- Continue surveys and designs for Nirkh, Chaki Wardak, Baraki Barak, Dih Yak, Zadran, Zurmat, and Gurbuz based on DPP Cycle 1 projects;
- Review project implementation reports and provide confirmation to Grants in order to compare the completed activities with the milestones;
- Process and finalize the APPF LOE with the contract department;
- Follow up with Kabul International Airport for passes for SIKA-East armored vehicles;
- Continue recruiting to fill 132 positions:
 - 108 vacancies in process for AECOM;
 - 4 vacancies in process for OSC; and
 - 20 vacancies in process for IRD.