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STABILITY IN KEY AREAS (SIKA) – EAST

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Photo: Mohammad Qasim Desiwal, District Governor of Andar District in Ghazni Province, recently cut the ribbon commemorating completion of a bridge and culvert construction project in Andar's Payendi Village.

January 13, 2014

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Highlights of the Week:

- IDLG hosted a major coordination meeting attended by senior representatives of all four SIKAs, USAID, and the government partners.
- A joint PRRD and SIKA-East Grant Review Committee reviewed and approved four projects in Khost Province.
- SIKA-East is working closely with the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development / Community Led Development Department (MRRD/CLDD) to integrate two curriculums, Community Engagement from MRRD/CLDD and SIKA-East's Stakeholder Engagement, for training newly hired District Social Workers.



Photo: A participant in the Khost sub-coordination meeting poses a question to the representative of a line department. Over 40 men from DDAs in all four districts where SIKA-East is active in Khost attended the meeting.

SIKA-East Results:

- **Training:**
 - Four training activities conducted in Ghazni and Paktya Provinces during the week were attended by 67 men and 31 women.
 - Since the beginning of the program, 17,763 individuals, of whom 13,091 are men and 4,672 women, have attended a total of 486 training sessions.
- **Grants:**
 - Two new grants, worth \$82,333, were awarded to Andar District of Ghazni Province and Zurmat District of Paktya.
 - One hundred and six grants, with a value of over \$4.6 million, have been awarded in Andar, Dih Yak, Baraki Barak, Mohammad Agha, Chaki Wardak, Nirkh, Saydabad, and Zurmat Districts. Forty-seven projects have been completed.
 - Six new engineering designs were completed during the week for projects in Khwaja Umari, Tani, Laja Mangal, Ahmad Abad, and Zurmat Districts.

Major Sub-coordination Meeting in Khost

On January 5, a major sub-coordination meeting was organized by SIKA-East in Khost Province. The participants included key members of the DDAs for Gurbuz, Tani, Jaji Maidan, and Mando Zayi Districts, as well as representatives of the line departments of Health, Education, and Agriculture, several District Governors, and other officials.

The heads of the line departments each described their organization's programs, plans, and challenges. They then answered questions from the participants. Several of these were about the low quality of girls' education due to a lack of qualified female teachers, the chronic shortage of medicine in district clinics, and the lack of veterinarians in district veterinary centers. The government officials explained the reasons for the problems, mostly budgetary, and promised to work to rectify them.

The mood of the meeting was positive, and the DDA members came away with a better understanding of the duties and responsibilities of each line department, as well as the services they have to offer and how to access them. SIKA-East's manager for Khost Province urged the DDAs to coordinate their DPP projects with the appropriate departments.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Institutional Strengthening and Stabilization

- During the week, USAID approved the revised version of the Mohammad Agha District Project Portfolio (DPP). A few months ago, SIKA-East and Provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD) experienced some initial challenges in the development of the DPP and Cycle I in Mohammad Agha, due to which SIKA-East subsequently reached an agreement with USAID, the District Entities, Provincial Governor, and PRRD Director to include additional projects in both documents. The DDA+ developed the original DPP and Cycle I, where projects were prioritized in a way that benefited nine out of 18 hawzas, which expectedly caused serious tension among tribal elders, especially those whose communities had not received any projects. As SIKA-East wanted to avoid a situation where the program causes conflict in the community, the DDA+ was encouraged to hold a separate session and address the unequal distribution of projects. The meeting was held in October, and all the stakeholders agreed to revise DPP/Cycle I to include additional projects that would benefit the remaining nine hawzas. The revised version approved this week was the result.

Transition Initiatives

- In support of the transition leading toward stronger GIRoA-led stabilization planning processes and thereby enhancing the sustainability of the program, in consultation with MRRD and IDLG, SIKA-East has initiated a series of additional institutional strengthening and capacity building activities.
- Complementing the existent training and grant program, these activities specifically target the institutional strengthening needs of PRRD, IDLG, and district entities in the context of Afghanistan's Subnational Governance Policy (SNGP). These activities are specifically designed to enable the entities to assume an increasingly more active role in SIKA-East and public administrative processes in general, but also address underlying systemic deficiencies and root causes of instability.
- This week, the vendor started capacity assessments in District Governor Offices in Nirkh, Andar, Muhammad Agha, Jaji Maidan, and Zadran Districts. Before starting field work, the vendor briefed Provincial Governors and Deputy Provincial Governors, as suggested by IDLG. These briefings took place on January 5.
- SIKA-East, in close coordination with MRRD and CLDD, is working on the integration of two curriculums, Community Engagement from MRRD/CLDD and SIKA-East's Stakeholder Engagement, for training the newly hired District Social Workers (DSWs). The

IDLG-MRRD Coordination Meeting

On January 6, the leadership of all four SIKAs met with Farid Mamondzai, Deputy Minister of IDLG, and other IDLG staff, as well as senior representatives of MRRD, USAID, and the IDLG and MRRD SIKA Coordination Units. IDLG called the meeting to allow the SIKA leaders to present their achievements, discuss challenges, and propose ways to align their programs with GIRoA strategic priorities during the Option Period.

Responding to the SIKA-East presentation, the Deputy Minister said he was pleased to see how the program has managed to reconcile both development and governance approaches. He also said that IDLG appreciates the number and diversity of grants in different sectors, and would like more detail on strategic communications and strategic planning at the district level.

An MRRD representative said his organization appreciated how SIKA-East was adopting MRRD regulations, modules, and systems, rather than creating its own, and helping the ministry to implement them in the districts. He also asked USAID to address the vetting delays, which are causing a great deal of damage to the program.

The IDLG Deputy Minister emphasized that all the organizations involved with the SIKA program need to coordinate more closely. He promised to issue a Stabilization Position Paper soon that will contain seven principles of engagement for SIKA, and he proposed that a management Task Force be formed to ensure GIRoA is providing strategic guidance for the programs and to ensure closer cooperation. Finally, he urged greater SIKA engagement, including training initiatives, with District Governors' offices.

training is planned to take place from January 26 to 30 and represents a start of the transition of some of SIKA-East functions to the government of Afghanistan.

Training

- Four training activities were conducted during the week. These were attended by 67 men and 31 women. The training topics were Unity Building and Grant Management.
- Seven DDA+ communication committee meetings for men and women took place in Khoshi, Laja Mangal, Andar, and Baraki Barak Districts.

Grants

- By the end of the week, the number of awarded projects reached 106, and the number of completed projects rose to 47. The latter are worth \$1.9 million and are located in eight districts: two in Andar, five in Dih Yak, four in Baraki Barak, 12 in Mohammad Agha, two in Chaki Wardak, nine in Nirkh, and 13 in Saydabad.
- Two grants, with a cumulative value of approximately \$82,000, were awarded for Andar and Zurmat Districts.
- Six new engineering designs, valued at over \$224,000, were completed in the reporting period. These designs were for two projects in Khwaja Umari, and one each for Tani, Laja Mangal, Ahmad Abad, and Zurmat.
- To date, 214 grant applications, including 208 infrastructure and six capacity building projects valued at over \$10 million, have been received, and 158 applications have received USAID approval.
- Four grants, valued at over \$172,000, were reviewed and approved by joint MRRD and SIKA-East Grant Review Committees (GRC). These include one project each for Laja Mangal, Tani, Ahmad Abad, and Zurmat Districts.
- Six Transition Initiatives grant packages, worth over \$56,000, were received this week.
- So far, six Transition Initiatives grant applications, valued at over \$447,000, have been received, and five have been approved by USAID.

SIGNIFICANT PROVINCIAL ACTIVITIES

GHAZNI

- Three training sessions were conducted in Ghazni Province during the week: one Grant Management training session for ten men from Andar, and two separate Unity Building training sessions for 46 men and 31 women from Jaghatu District.
- One grant, worth over \$23,000, was awarded to Andar District during the week. However, the Governor of Ghazni Province has advised the manager of the Provincial Management Team (PMT) to keep the construction projects on hold, as the weather is not suitable for construction.
- During the week, Dih Yak DMT officers visited the sites of the Tassan Balla and Zogone karez extension projects and found that work was proceeding smoothly.

KHOST

- On January 5, a major sub-coordination meeting was held for men from the DDA+s for Gurbuz, Jaji Maidan, Mando Zayi, and Tani Districts – along with District Governors and other officials – and

representatives from the Directorates of Education, Health, and Agriculture. See Highlights page for more details.

- One engineering design for Tani District was completed during the week. The total cost for the project is approximately \$25,000.
- A joint PRRD and SIKA-East GRC reviewed and approved four projects in the province, one each for Ahmad Abad, Laja Mangal, Tani, and Zurmat Districts. Their combined value was over \$170,000.
- To date, 18 grant applications, valued at over \$842,000, have been received for Khost Province. Fourteen applications have been submitted to USAID for approval, and eight requests, with a cumulative value of over \$403,000, have been approved.

LOGAR

- To date 51 grant application worth \$2.5 million have been received for Logar Province.
- During the week, a coordination meeting was held with members of the Baraki Barak women's DDA and the vendors for their three non-infrastructure grant projects – for training in vegetable and fruit processing, tailoring, and embroidery – to coordinate activities and resolve minor problems.

MAYDAN WARDAK

- This week, SIKA-East completed the Jalrez district profile, which contains overall information on the district's demographics, socioeconomic condition, population, and culture.
- Grant and engineering staff from the Nirkh DMT visited the Ander Payan karez extension and Bazi Khil road rehabilitation projects and found construction quality and progress to be good.
- To date, 47 projects have been awarded to Maydan Wardak Province, of which 24 have been completed and the remaining 23 are being implemented. This is the largest number of projects in any of the five provinces where SIKA-East is active.

PAKTYA

- A four-day Grant Management training was conducted for 11 men from Laja Ahmad Khail District.
- SIKA-East's Zurmat team is working to accommodate the Zurmat District Governor's request to move their office from the provincial center in Gardez to the district center in Zurmat in order to improve coordination at the district level.
- The Paktya PMT manager and gender officer met with the head of the Ahmad Abad District women's DDA to discuss improving girls education and women's health care and providing more opportunities for capacity building.
- Thirty-five grant applications, valued at approximately \$1.8 million, have been received so far for Paktya Province.

CHALLENGES

- The Paktya and Maydan Wardak PRRD offices issued letters to SIKA-East to put construction projects on hold if the temperature drops below -5° C.
- Out of 59 ongoing projects, five, valued at approximately \$252,166, have been put on hold due to high security risk; eight (\$464,659) are on hold due to cold weather; and three (\$80,276) are on hold due to restructuring of CDCs. In addition, 21 approved projects in Qarabagh District and 8 in Andar, both in Ghazni Province, are to be implemented in the areas where CDCs or DDA are not operational. SIKA-East is working closely with MRRD to facilitate the selection of new DDA head for Andar and establishment of interim Project Management Committees (PMCs) in the areas where CDCs do not exist.

SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT WEEK

- Hold a Stakeholder Engagement / Governance Foundation training as a refresher for the field staff to help them understand the transition to the government of Afghanistan;
- Make four grant payments, valued at \$103,614, to projects in the districts of Gurbuz, Andar, Mohammad Agha, Baraki Barak, Laja Ahmad Khail, Zurmat, Chaki Wardak, Nirkh, and Saydabad; and
- Award a grant for Gurbuz District.

SIKA-East Grants Pipeline

(Please note that the US dollar value of the grants may fluctuate in accordance with the fluctuating conversion rates between the US dollar and the Afghan national currency)

Province	District	Under Development	Applications Received		Vetting Pending with USAID	Vetting Approved by USAID	GRC Approved	USAID Approval Requested	USAID Approval Received		Grants Awarded/ Cumulative		Grants Completed	
		No.	No.	\$ Value	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	\$ Value	No.	\$ Value	No.	\$ Value
Ghazni	Andar	5	8	\$505,636	3	6	8	6	5	\$359,876	5	\$311,404	2	\$119,888
	Jaghathu	0	0	\$0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
	Khwaja Umari	2	8	\$365,940	6	0	8	7	4	\$185,119	0	\$0	0	\$0
	Qarabagh	6	0	\$0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
	Dih Yak	1	15	\$619,112	3	8	15	15	15	\$619,112	9	\$356,913	5	\$214,077
Khost	Gurbuz	5	8	\$420,574	7	1	8	8	5	\$259,224	0	\$0	0	\$0
	Jaji Maydan	4	4	\$127,306	2	0	4	3	2	\$70,287	0	\$0	0	\$0
	Mando Zayi	5	0	\$0	3	0	1	1	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
	Tani	4	6	\$294,485	2	1	3	2	1	\$72,541	0	\$0	0	\$0
Logar	Baraki Barak	9	22	\$1,095,602	3	15	22	20	19	\$826,382	17	\$701,261	4	\$185,322
	Khoshi	4	3	\$173,987	2	0	9	0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
	Moh. Agha	1	26	\$1,301,955	0	24	26	25	25	\$1,228,976	24	\$1,142,253	12	\$491,134
Maydan Wardak	Jalrez	11	0	\$0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
	Chaki Wardak	1	17	\$726,364	3	10	17	16	15	\$641,109	11	\$467,859	2	\$75,818
	Nirikh	0	23	\$1,178,945	3	17	22	20	18	\$959,786	15	\$813,524	9	\$465,088
	Saydabad	0	33	\$1,062,570	9	15	31	29	27	\$924,688	21	\$614,641	13	\$362,268
Paktya	Zurmat	6	11	\$698,487	8	3	13	10	8	\$461,463	3	\$197,918	0	\$0
	Ahmad Abad	14	3	\$168,394	2	0	3	0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
	Laja Ahmad Khail	11	5	\$151,615	2	0	5	4	2	\$76,889	1	\$16,380	0	\$0
	Laja Mangal	9	9	\$324,931	6	0	9	7	4	\$175,919	0	\$0	0	\$0
	Zadran (Garda Serai)	1	1	\$48,256	1	0	1	1	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
	Zadran	1	6	\$399,500	4	2	6	4	3	\$196,651	0	\$0	0	\$0
Total		100	208	\$9,663,659	69	102	211	178	153	\$7,058,022	106	\$4,622,153	47	\$1,913,595
Capacity Building Grants		6	6	\$447,720	3	2	5	5	5	\$222,580	0	\$0	0	\$0
Grand Total		100	214	\$10,111,377	72	104	216	183	158	\$7,316,604	106	\$4,622,153	47	\$1,913,595