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STABILITY IN KEY AREAS (SIKA) – EAST

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Work progresses on the Karez Village protection wall in Ghazni's Khwaja Umari District.

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Highlights of the Week:

- During the week, Logar Province witnessed the completion of the Smooch karez extension project in Mohammad Agha District. This project cost over \$75,000 and will benefit more than 1,100 men and women.
- Two projects started during the week: Bagh Yarak school boundary wall in Khoshi District of Logar Province and Qala-e-Giro culvert construction in Jalrez District of Maydan Wardak. The two projects together cost over \$82,000 and will benefit over 2,000 people.



Participants discuss the expansion of SIKA-East into Muqur District during a stakeholder planning meeting.

SIKA-East Results:

- **Training:**
 - Sixteen training sessions were held during the week for 210 men and 24 women in all five currently targeted provinces.
 - Since the beginning of the program, 23,156 individuals – 17,755 men and 5,401 women – have attended a total of 799 training sessions.
- **Grants:**
 - Four grant awards, valued at over \$175,000, were made for projects in the districts of Mohammad Agha (Logar), Zadran (Paktya), and Jalrez and Chaki Wardak (Maydan Wardak).
 - To date, 462 grant applications – including 367 infrastructure, 78 non-infrastructure, and 17 transition initiative projects, all valued at over \$17.8 million – have been received, and 337 applications have been approved by USAID.
 - So far, 104 grant projects have been completed in SIKA-East–targeted provinces. The cumulative value of these projects is over \$3.6 million.
 - Fifty-five projects, worth over \$2.2 million, have passed the warranty period of 90 days and are officially closed.

Stakeholder Engagement Process in Full Swing

The expansion of SIKA-East into eight new districts is proceeding apace. Office facilities are being set up and new staff hired. The identification of residents in the new districts who are candidates to participate in SIKA-East activities is also under way. This is how SIKA-East goes about identifying possible stakeholders in the program.

Before the program's launch in a new district, the SIKA-East team, District Governor, and PRRD Director hold discussions and reach agreement on the standardized stakeholder identification routine. Then a multidisciplinary committee representing diverse interests and responsibilities is formed to lead the effort, typically comprising government officials, recognized district leaders, and civil society representatives.

Once formed, the committee convenes to plan an opinion survey of notables who are well-versed in the local context and realities on the ground. These commonly include local officials, as well as prominent religious scholars, politicians, tribal elders, professionals, business leaders, and other senior opinion shapers. Committee members and SIKA-East staff form small teams to conduct interviews, probing who is respected, who is influential, and who may play an adverse role if excluded, marginalized, or left uninformed. This consultative process leads to the identification of a spectrum of stakeholders, both male and female, judged to have the voice, standing, wisdom, and capabilities to sway local stability and improved government service delivery.

Analyzing this list for frequency of nomination, diversity of background, range of expertise, and similar factors, the committee develops the "Stakeholder Register." Those listed therein are invited to participate in SIKA-East.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

STAKEHOLDER MAPPING FOR NEW DISTRICTS

- As part of preparations for the launch of SIKA-East in eight new districts, stakeholder mapping got under way in two of them – Maydan Shahr of Maydan Wardak Province and Muqur of Ghazni Province. The process will be completed for all newly targeted districts by the middle of June.

DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT PLANS

- SIKA-East reviewed District Development Plans (DDP) of six newly targeted districts: Nadir Shah Kot of Khost; Mirzaka, Sayed Karam, and Ali Khail of Paktya; Maydan Shahr of Maydan Wardak; and Moqur of Ghazni. Four hundred and twelve projects were found, of which 170 are eligible according to SIKA-East criteria. The projects prioritized by District Development Assemblies (DDA) during development of the DDPs is 189 in all of the districts, of which only 89 are feasible based on SIKA-East Grants policy.

GENDER ACTIVITIES

- The SIKA-East management team recently discussed the challenges of recruiting and retaining female staff and confirmed SIKA-East's intention to achieve a 20% target (currently about 13%). This is particularly important as recruitment moves forward in new districts and staffing is reviewed in existing districts. The following decisions were made and are now under implementation:
 - Female applicants will be allowed to submit CVs in hard copy directly to PMU/DMT leaders for any open position;
 - Hard copies of position announcements in local languages will be taken for posting to Department of Women's Affairs (DoWA), local organizations, and other locations where women gather;
 - Field staff will be encouraged to recommend options to effectively reach out to more female applicants in each area;
 - Job postings will be carefully reviewed to ensure that these will not create any undue risks for offices and staff as outreach to females is expanded; and
 - Female applicants will be given first consideration for short-listing.

SIKA-East will begin sex-disaggregated tracking at each recruitment step (applications, short-listing, offers, hires).



The Smooch CDC in Mohammad Agha District of Logar Province holds a ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark completion of their karez extension project.



Part of the repair work on this school complex in Khwaja Umari District of Ghazni Province was the rehabilitation of the water well in the foreground.



Members of the Zurmat Communication Committee in Paktya Province discuss the imminent launch of their District Communication Plan Implementation Meeting.

REVISED SIKA-EAST INDUCTION TRAINING

- The contents and outlines for SIKA-East Induction training have been revised and customized based on the requirement of the engagement officers to be hired. Discussion is still under way with Independent Directorate for Local Governance (IDLG) on the recruitment of candidates for the positions. The SIKA-East induction will be conducted soon after the engagement officers are hired.

CAPACITY BUILDING

- In sixteen training sessions during the week, 210 men and 24 women were trained in nine districts. The training sessions included Grants Management, Infrastructure Project Implementation, Negotiation Strategy, Unity Building, Operation and Maintenance, and Lobbying. Four separate training sessions were conducted for government partners in Khost and Maydan Wardak Provinces. A total of 36 trainees underwent training in Negotiation Strategy and Unity Building in Khost, while 49 men and 22 women had training in Lobbying and Unity Building in Maydan Wardak. The participants included staff from Provincial and District Governors offices and Provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD).

GRANTS AND ENGINEERING

- During the week, Logar Province witnessed completion of the Smooch karez extension project in Mohammad Agha District. This project cost over \$75,000 and will benefit more than 1,100 men and women.
- Four grant awards, valued at over \$175,000, were made for projects in Mando Zayi, Zadran, Jalrez, and Chaki Wardak Districts.
- Twenty-nine milestone payments, valued at over \$306,000, were made to projects in 15 districts.
- Seven grant applications, valued at over \$354,000, were reviewed and approved by joint MRRD and SIKA-East Grant Review Committees. The approved projects are slated for seven districts.
- To date, 235 projects, with a total value of over \$8.2 million, have been awarded to 22 districts including Garda Serai Sub-district.
- Four hundred and sixty-two grant applications – for 367 infrastructure, 78 non-infrastructure, and 17 transition initiative projects, valued at over \$17.8 million – have been received, and 337 applications have been approved by USAID.
- Seven grant applications, valued at over \$354,000, were reviewed and approved by joint MRRD and SIKA-East Grant Review Committees. The approved projects are slated for seven districts.
- Five engineering designs, worth over \$290,000, were completed for five districts.

GHAZNI

- SIKA-East conducted Photojournalism and Video Editing training sessions for representatives of government partners in Ghazni Province on May 19 and 20. The thirty trainees, including three women, were staff from Provincial and District Governors' offices, PRRD, and DoWA. Both trainings were intended to enhance the capacity of the governmental staff and entities in these technical areas.
- A two-day Infrastructure Project Implementation training was conducted for eight men from Qarabagh.

- Seven milestone payments, worth nearly \$77,000, were paid for projects in Ghazni Province during the week. This included six infrastructure grants for Khwaja Umari and Andar Districts and one non-infrastructure grant for Dih Yak District.
- One engineering design, worth almost \$95,000, was completed for Andar District.
- Joint PRRD and SIKA-East Grant Review Committees (GRC) reviewed and approved two projects, valued all together at over \$173,000, for Jaghatu and Andar Districts.
- Sixty grant project applications, cumulatively worth more than \$1.9 million, have been received for Ghazni Province to date. Forty-nine projects have been approved by USAID; of these, 25 have been awarded and are under way, and 11 have been pronounced physically complete.

KHOST

- Five training sessions were conducted during the week in Khost Province. These included a one-day Infrastructure Project Implementation session for eight men from Jaji Maydan, a three-day Grants Management training for 16 men from Mando Zayi, and a one-day Operation and Maintenance training for nine men from Tani. In addition, two sessions were conducted on Negotiation Strategy and Unity Building, which were each attended by 18 men from PRRD, the Provincial Governor's Office, and DoWA.
- Four milestone payments, with a total value of nearly \$37,000, were made to projects in Gurbuz, Jaji Maydan, and Mando Zayi Districts.
- One engineering design, worth over \$50,000, was finalized for Mando Zayi District.
- A joint PRRD and SIKA-East GRC reviewed and approved two projects, valued at over \$74,000, for Mando Zayi and Gurbuz Districts.
- A grant project, worth nearly \$23,000, was awarded for Mando Zayi District.
- To date, SIKA-East has received 68 grant applications, worth nearly \$2.3 million, in Khost Province. Fifty-nine projects have received USAID approval, and 46 of them have been awarded: 13 for Gurbuz, nine for Jaji Maydan, 12 for Mando Zayi, and 12 for Tani. Twenty-three projects, valued at nearly \$578,000, have been completed.

LOGAR

- PRRD engineers, along with representatives from the Provincial Governor's office and SIKA-East, jointly visited Ab Paran karez extension project on May 18. The PRRD engineers were satisfied with the progress of the project.
- The Smooch karez extension project in Mohammad Agha District, which is worth over \$75,000, was completed during the week. At the opposite end of the project cycle, the Bagh Yarak school boundary wall construction project in Khoshi District was kicked off this week in a ceremony attended by the District Governor, representatives of the Education Directorate, and DDA+ members.
- Two training sessions were conducted for a total of 24 men from Khoshi District during the week: Grants Management for 16 individuals and Infrastructure Project Implementation for eight.
- Five milestone payments, worth over \$45,000, were made for Baraki Barak, Mohammad Agha, and Khoshi Districts.
- One engineering design, worth over \$26,000, was completed for Baraki Barak District. The project was then reviewed and approved by a joint PRRD and SIKA-East GRC.

- To date, USAID has approved 70 grant projects, worth over \$3 million, for Logar Province: 27 for Baraki Barak, 15 for Khoshi, and 28 for Mohammad Agha. Thirty projects have been completed, including three that are officially closed.

MAYDAN WARDAK

- The Qala-e-Giro culvert construction project in Jalrez District was opened in the presence of DDA+ and CDC members.
- Seven training sessions were conducted in Maydan Wardak Province during the week. These included three Operation and Maintenance training sessions for a total of 30 men from Nirkh and Chaki Wardak Districts; two Grants Management training sessions for 12 men and two women from Chaki Wardak and Jalrez; and a Unity Building training session for 24 men and 11 women, as well as a Lobbying training session for 25 men and 11 women. The last two sessions were conducted in Maydan Shahr and were attended by representatives of the District Governors office, DoWA, and PRRD.
- Five milestone payments, worth over \$34,000, were made to CDCs implementing projects in Jalrez, Chaki Wardak, and Nirkh.
- Two grants projects, worth nearly \$77,000, were awarded for Jalrez and Chaki Wardak Districts.
- To date, 108 grant applications have been received for Maydan Wardak Province: 20 for Chaki Wardak, 31 for Jalrez, 23 for Nirkh, and 34 for Saydabad. Eighty-six projects have received USAID approval, and 65 projects, valued at over \$2.1 million, have been awarded; 33 of these have been completed.

PAKTIKA

- SIKA-East is preparing to roll out in Sharana and Yosuf Khail Districts of Paktika Province. The recruitment of technical staff has begun. The program launch in those districts is scheduled for June 8.

PAKTYA

- A Grants Management training session was conducted for 18 men from Zadran District.
- Eight milestone payments, worth over \$112,000, were made for projects in Laja Ahmad Khail, Zadran, and Zurmat Districts.
- One engineering design, valued at over \$40,000, was finalized for Ahmad Abad District.
- A joint PRRD and SIKA-East GRC reviewed and approved two projects, worth over \$80,000, for Ahmad Abad and Laja Ahmad Khail Districts.
- One grant project worth nearly \$80,000 was awarded for Zadran District.
- To date, 127 grant applications have been received for Paktya Province: 24 for Ahmad Abad; 19 each for Laja Ahmad Khail, Laja Mangal, and Zadran; 18 for Zurmat; and 28 for Garda Serai. SIKA-East has received 60 grant application approvals from USAID for projects in Paktya Province, and 34 grants have been awarded.

CHALLENGES

- Seasonal rains and flooding in Khost, Logar, and Paktya Provinces continue to affect project progress. Two projects in Khost, one in Logar, and three in Paktya Province have been forced to stop till the water recedes.

- In Ghazni Province, insecurity is the main challenge affecting grant projects in Andar, Dih Yak, and Khwaja Umari Districts. In Andar, insurgents have planted roadside bombs, making access to project sites a challenge. Security is also a problem for two projects in Zurmat District of Paktya Province.

SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT WEEK

- Develop district profiles for Maydan Shahr and Sayed Karam Districts;
- Hold a meeting with PRRD and National-Based Development Program (NABDP) to finalize the list of quick implementation projects in all six districts;
- Make 27 milestone payments for 13 districts; and
- Review and approve five grant projects for Ahmad Abad, Laja Ahmad Khail, Jalrez, and Qarabagh Districts.

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)

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(On-going)		Grants Completed		Closed Grants(Past Retention Period)		Total Grants Awarded	
	No.	No.	\$ Value	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	\$ Value	No.	\$ Value	No.	Amount USD	No.	\$ Value	No.	\$ Value
Andar	3	17	\$498,892	5	4	17	14	12	\$465,699	3	\$169,085	1	\$17,887	2	\$132,748	6	\$319,721
Jaghathu	0	4	\$95,666	2	0	4	2	2	\$95,666	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Dih Yak	1	16	\$678,817	3	9	20	17	16	\$616,897	4	\$152,862	2	\$24,783	6	\$240,332	12	\$417,978
Khwaja Umari	0	19	\$570,283	12	4	19	17	16	\$509,512	13	\$381,284	0	\$0	0	\$0	13	\$381,284
Qarabagh	5	4	\$120,575	1	0	4	4	3	\$95,692	2	\$45,560	0	\$0	0	\$0	2	\$45,560
Muqur	0	0	\$0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Gurbuz	13	18	\$723,906	7	3	18	17	17	\$623,906	5	\$164,888	8	\$224,316	0	\$0	13	\$389,204
Jaji Maidan	7	12	\$410,751	1	3	13	8	10	\$356,287	5	\$184,669	4	\$95,196	0	\$0	9	\$279,866
Mando Zayi	11	17	\$479,097	5	0	17	16	16	\$446,954	7	\$170,899	5	\$119,130	0	\$0	12	\$290,029
Tani	12	21	\$679,006	2	4	19	16	16	\$563,739	6	\$242,913	6	\$139,115	0	\$0	12	\$382,029
Nadir Shah Kot	0	0	\$0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Baraki Barak	6	31	\$1,343,676	6	16	31	27	27	\$1,117,108	8	\$237,957	9	\$300,858	4	\$197,561	21	\$736,375
Khoshi	0	18	\$827,454	9	3	19	14	15	\$679,092	6	\$191,245	0	\$0	0	\$0	6	\$191,245
Mohammad Agha	1	33	\$1,469,852	4	23	33	28	28	\$1,276,266	10	\$453,397	3	\$131,927	14	\$613,511	27	\$1,198,834
Chaki Wardak	5	20	\$830,797	6	9	19	18	18	\$735,358	10	\$360,591	1	\$10,946	3	\$144,072	14	\$515,609
Jalrez	0	31	\$799,600	5	0	23	18	17	\$348,499	13	\$228,821	0	\$0	0	\$0	13	\$228,821
Nirkh	4	23	\$1,149,330	0	21	22	20	20	\$1,000,537	4	\$166,465	1	\$65,983	10	\$499,641	15	\$732,088
Saydabad	3	34	\$1,037,197	4	18	33	31	31	\$1,148,010	5	\$157,801	2	\$100,208	16	\$447,720	23	\$705,730
Maydan Shahr	0	0	\$0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Ahmad Abad	6	24	\$1,252,829	19	1	20	11	10	\$538,503	1	\$75,676	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$75,676
Laja Ahmad Khail	4	19	\$614,968	5	2	19	15	15	\$414,403	9	\$252,824	4	\$86,744	0	\$0	13	\$339,569
Laja Mangal	4	19	\$700,686	6	6	16	14	14	\$537,294	7	\$271,261	3	\$62,475	0	\$0	10	\$333,737
Zadran	10	19	\$649,501	3	10	10	7	7	\$418,427	3	\$228,797	0	\$0	0	\$0	3	\$228,797
Zurmat	1	18	\$1,092,693	10	4	15	12	12	\$671,176	6	\$324,731	0	\$0	0	\$0	6	\$324,731
Zadran (Gerda Serai)	10	28	\$1,070,765	6	1	4	3	2	\$123,606	1	\$47,395	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$47,395
Jaji Ayoub	0	0	\$0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Sayed Karem	0	0	\$0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Mirzaka	0	0	\$0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Sharana	0	0	\$0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Yosuf Khail	0	0	\$0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Total	106	445	\$17,096,340	121	141	395	329	324	\$12,782,630	128	\$4,509,124	49	\$1,379,569	55	\$2,275,585	232	\$8,164,277
Infrastructure Grants	84	367	\$14,715,7165	86	120	325	286	286	\$11,506,819	123	\$4,427,423	44	\$1,296,322	55	\$2,275,585	222	\$7,999,330
Non-Infrastructure Grants	22	78	\$2,380,625	35	21	70	43	38	\$1,275,811	5	\$81,701	5	\$83,246	0	\$0	10	\$164,948
Transition Initiative Grants	17	17	\$729,675	14	3	17	14	13	\$597,652	3	\$128,720	0	\$0	0	\$0	3	\$128,720
Total	123	462	\$17,826,016	135	144	412	343	337	\$13,380,282	131	\$4,637,844	49	\$1,379,569	55	\$2,275,585	235	\$8,292,997