

WEEKLY REPORT

Farah Province

Milestones Achieved

- On February 26th, Media training was provided to twenty Pusht-e Rod District Government staff including the District Governor, the Directorates of Agriculture, Telecommunications, Justice, DRRD, Education, Finance and Irrigation.

The training increased the participants' knowledge in media relations, how to write effective press releases, press interview techniques and how to use the press more effectively to get the government's messages out.

- On February 26th, Communications Plan training was provided to three Pusht-e Rod farmers' cooperative communications focal points at the District Governor's compound.

The training helped the farmers to better understand how to put varied communications activities into a holistic plan. The farmers' communications plan includes raising awareness campaigns on plant and animal diseases and information on how to apply for small loans.

- On February 28th, the Bala Boluk District Governor's Communications Plan was signed by the District Governor. The Plan aims to improve the capacity of the District Governor's office to communicate, raise awareness of the District residents on district government activities, and teach people that they need to be responsible for securing their own village.

In addition to usual communications techniques like SMS messaging and complaint lines, the plan reinforces traditional Islamic values and methods of communications, such as using Friday prayers and the influence of *mullahs* to spread messages of peace.

- On March 04th, the Grant Agreements of the water dividers and vocational trainings projects were signed by the relevant CDCs' heads in Piho, Tape Sadat, Alkozai, Todanak Haji Malak Shir, Ziarat, Todanak Abdul Wadood, Khowja Han, Shewan Wasat, Kanesk Wasat and Akbar Abad communities in Bala Boluk District.

- On February 28th, the Farah PST Manager organized a meeting with Dehzak community elders to help them facilitate the re-election of Dehzak Community Development Council (CDC) management board.

- In Bala Boluk the tailoring vocational training for 15 women and five literacy courses for 125 female beneficiaries remain ongoing.

- In Pusht-e Rod, three literacy courses for 75 students (25 female, 50 male) remain ongoing.

- In Farah DRRD the computer course for 11 people (2 females and 9 males) remains ongoing.



Pusht-e Rod District Government Staff receive Media training on February 26th.



Women receive instruction at the Kanesk Literacy Course, Bala Boluk District.

- To date 33 employees including 24 professional staff (1 female, 23 males) and 9 support staff (1 female, 8 males) have been hired and 9 positions are in the recruitment process. In addition to this number, 16 STTAs have been directly hired as literacy, computer and vocational training instructors.

Challenges/Action

- The feasibility survey of Massow canal excavation/reshaping project featured in Pusht-e Rod DPP # 1 was canceled because the Farah Police Commander was in Kabul and therefore, couldn't provide proper escort for the technician team. The survey will be undertaken when the Police Commander is back and provides security forces.

Forward Looking

- Prepare and conduct the sixth Pusht-e Rod DSC meeting scheduled for March 10th.
- Provide Community Development related trainings to newly recruited staff.

Badghis Province

Milestones Achieved

- On February 28th, as part of the activities to implement the Qadis Youth Association's Communications Plan, the youth conducted their first internal communications meeting in Qadis District Center. The youth shared their Communications Plan with more than 30 participants and developed a plan for their upcoming "Go to School" communications campaign.
- On March 4th, the Qadis District Governor's Communications Plan was signed by the District Governor. The plan aims to improve the communication capacity of the District Governor's office and share the District Government activities and achievements with the District residents. Conducting public meetings, printing informative fact sheets and sending regular press releases and SMS are some of the activities listed in the plan.
- During the week a series of orientation training sessions were provided to 5 newly recruited PST and DST staff. Sessions included: Intro to HR and Code of Conduct, MRRD Stability Program, Intro to Stabilization Programming, Intro to Gender Awareness, Intro to Communications and Community Development.
- On February 26th, the Badghis Gender Officer met with the Department of Women's Affairs (DoWA) Director to coordinate the inclusion of seven female Qadis DSC members in the Women Handicraft Exhibition organized by DoWA for women to market and sell their products for International Women Day on March 8th.



Five newly Badghis PST and DST staff receive orientation trainings.

In addition, 13 banners were designed and printed to hang on at the public places in Badghis Province. The banners deliver messages supporting the women's participation in social activities. "Lets' support women's participation and leadership in decision, policy and law making process", is one of the messages.

- To date, 30 employees including 22 professional staff (2 females, 20 males) and 8 support staff (0 female, 8 males) have been hired, and 5 positions are in the recruitment process.

Challenges/Action

- The 2nd Muqur DSC meeting scheduled for February 26th was postponed due to inclement weather and security issues.

Forward Looking

- Continue providing orientation trainings to newly recruited staff.
- Conduct Communications training to Muqur DSC members.
- Coordinate with Muqur District Governor to reschedule the 2nd Muqur DSC meeting.
- Conduct feasibility survey of the five diversion weirs located in Kamenji Sufla, Zad Paiwand, Mirza Ali, Jarie Pashie, Baba Doste and Buz Bai communities proposed by Qadis DSC.

Herat Province

Milestones Achieved

- On March 02nd, training on “The Main Elements of Communications” was provided to 57 members from 14 Pashtun Zarghun Saffron Cultivation Unions. Topics included, basic communications skills, importance of communications and messaging. At the end of the training a communication needs assessment was also conducted.

Farmers are seeking ways to improve their communications and marketing skills to sell their high-value Saffron outside of the country. The training will be followed by “Marketing” training scheduled for March 9th

- This week the Herat technicians started the feasibility survey, sketches, drawings and cost estimation of the proposed projects in Shindand District. The feasibility survey is planned to be completed by the end of March 2013.
- On March 03rd, the feasibility survey of the Khola Morgh road rehabilitation project recommended by the Kushk Rabat-e Sangi DSC members was undertaken.
- This week the feasibility surveys of Joyee Soor water intake, Qala Omer, Koshak and Shura Kariz rehabilitation and Posht Shahr and Rahmdel protection wall construction projects recommended by Shindand DSC members were undertaken.
- On February 26th and 27th, a two-day “Work Plan Development” training was provided to 5 instructors of the Shindand District literacy courses. By the end of the training, the instructors developed a six-month literacy work plan.

These literacy courses are part of the Mitigating Activities proposed by Shindand DSC members and address illiteracy and lack of education services in Shindand District.

- As part of gender-related activities, the Herat Department of Women’s Affairs (DoWA) was provided with support and guidance to produce a brochure for release on International Women Day on March 08th.



57 Saffron farmers from Pashtun Zarghun receive communication training on March 02nd.



Shindand literacy instructors receive work plan development training on Feb 26th and 27th.

Almost 1000 brochures were printed and sent to Herat DoWA. The brochure provides information on history of the women day, gender equity and roles of women in community development.

- In Shindand, five literacy courses for 125 female beneficiaries remain ongoing.
- To date 32 employees including 26 professional staff (4 females, 22 males) and 6 support staff (1 female, 5 males) have been hired, and 4 positions are in the recruitment process. In addition to this number, 5 STTAs have been directly hired as literacy instructors.

Challenges/Action

- The third Pashtun Zarghun DSC meeting scheduled for March 03rd was postponed due to a SIKA-West DST recruitment issue and unavailability of the District Governor.

Forward Looking

- Continue feasibility survey and cost estimation of the proposed projects in Shindand and Kushk Rabat-e Sangi Districts.
- Facilitate the Shindand District Governor communication meeting with the Shindand farmers.
- Conduct Marketing training to the members of Pashtun Zarghun Saffron Cultivation Unions.
- Organize the Herat Gender Working Group meeting.

Ghor Province

Milestones Achieved

- A team from HQ traveled to Chaghcharan, Ghor Province to facilitate the roll-out into the Chaghcharan District

Challenges/Action

- Winter weather, insecurity and remote locations are the main concern.

Forward Looking

- Prepare and conduct coordination meeting with Ghor DRRD and Deputy Provincial Governor.

Additional Herat-based HQ Support

- To date 86 employees including 62 professional staff (12 females, 50 males) and 24 support staff (12 females, 12 males) have been hired, and 19 positions are in the recruitment process.