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# STABILIZATION IN KEY AREAS (SIKA) – WEST

WEEKLY REPORT  
(SEPTEMBER 22-26, 2012)

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# STABILIZATION IN KEY AREAS (SIKA) – WEST

## WEEKLY REPORT

**Submitted to:**

USAID | Afghanistan

**Prepared by:**

AECOM International Development

**DISCLAIMER:**

The authors' views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

## BACKGROUND

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The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) awarded AECOM International Development the Stabilization in Key Areas (SIKA)-West program on January 29, 2012. The SIKA-West 18-month contract (with an additional 18-month option period) is intended to increase stability and pave the way to transition in the western provinces of Herat, Farah, Badghis, and Ghor. The program will be led by the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) in partnership with USAID and SIKA-West.

## KEY PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

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### SUMMARY OF WEEKLY REPORT

During the week SIKA-West compiled a draft of the Bala Baluk District Project Portfolio (DPP), using information gathered at the previous District Stabilization Committee (DSC). Ongoing interviews to recruit staff for vacant positions in the Provincial Stabilization Teams and District Stabilization Teams were held, with the majority of positions being filled. The Gender Working Groups went ahead in both Herat HQ and Farah PST offices. On September 17, a meeting discussing the signing of the Implementation Letter was held in Kabul between USAID, all SIKAs East, MRRD and IDLG. Introduction letters were requested from IDLG, addressed to relevant District Governor's allowing the SIKAs to start roll-out activities in the very near future. Preparations have been ongoing in Farah province for the upcoming DSC meeting, and roll-out into Pusht Rod District.

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WEEK INCLUDE:

#### INTERMEDIATE RESULT 1

##### Highlights

- The IR1 Stability Program Department focus this week was on preparations for the next Bala Baluk District Stabilization Committee (DSC) meeting, tentatively arranged for early next week; arrangements for the Pusht Rod District engagement; review of the District Project Portfolio (DPP) format and process; review, analysis and update of the Bala Baluk District Stabilization Matrix (DSM); and preparations for key district engagement in Herat and Badghis Provinces.
- On September 23, IR1 Stability Program Officers (SPOs) researched gender issues in Bala Baluk District, Farah Province. IR1 collected contact numbers of the influential women through male member of the Bala Buluk DSC and submitted the list of the names and numbers to the CBD for their action. CBD female colleagues/gender officer will contact the women to hear their concerns and issues. This information will then be incorporated into the Bala Buluk DSM.
- On September 24, a meeting was held between the Herat DRRD Director, SIKA-West staff and USAID representatives. The DRRD Director was updated on the status of the Implementation Letter (IL) and formation of the SIKA-West Provincial Support Team (PST), the Shindand District engagement plan and workspace for SIKA-West PST embeds at DRRD. At the end of the meeting the Director promised his full support and cooperation with SIKA-West, after he receives an introductory IL from MRRD. At the same time the SIKA-West staff and USAID representative held an introductory meeting with the NABDP Head of Office. During the meeting the NABDP head answered queries on his organization's activities in Shindand District and the Western region, urging the SIKA-West team to take a very low profile approach when implementing activities in the district.
- On September 25, IR1 held a coordination meeting the Director of the DRRD Badghis notifying him of the recent IL approval and that the SIKA-West is planning to begin rolling out in Muqur District.
- On September 25, IR1 held meetings with IR4, IR2, IR3 and CBD to discuss the DPP format and process. The Bala Baluk DSM input into the DPP was also discussed. Each IR discussed their role and further actions with the DPP and agreed with IR1 to initiate the DPP process before sending it to IR4. IR4 will then coordinate with the other relevant departments for their inputs. IR4 is responsible for the DPP and after completion will send it to COP for approval.

- On September 26, IR1 SPOs and SPD held a Strategic Stabilization Meeting (SSM) on the Bala Baluk DSM with the other program departments. IR1 discussed the latest findings and information from the Bala Baluk DSC, which will be used to update the DSM.

### **Challenges**

- NTR

### **Coming Next Week**

- IR1 HQ SPOs will travel to Farah early next week to meet with the Farah DRRD Director and brief him on SIKA-West Pusht Rod engagement plan, as well as meet with the Pusht Rod District Governor in order to brief him on the SIKA-West program and discuss the Pusht Rod engagement plan and DSC formation.
- During their field trip IR1 staff will also prepare Farah PST staff to facilitate the upcoming Bala Baluk DSC meeting on approximately October 1.
- Staff will also follow up on SOI root causes (RC2 - Lack of GIRoA Services & Capacity RC3- Lack of Trust between GIRoA & Communities.)

## **INTERMEDIATE RESULT 2**

### **Highlights**

- On September 26, IR2 met with the SIKA-W Chief of Party (CoP), providing her with an update of the department's activities, lessons learned, and future plans. During the meeting, the IR2 lead also highlighted significant departmental achievements such as completing data collection for the Bala Baluk Service Provider Catalogue (SPC) and ongoing information gathering for the Pusht Rod SPC.
- Following the above meeting, the IR2 lead revised the departmental work plan, prioritizing a roll-out into Pusht Rod and Shindand Districts.
- On September 26, an outline of the SPC was sent to a local illustrator, as part of testing procedures to identify a person who will turn collected SPC data into graphic illustrations, allowing illiterate people to access district services.
- Data collection for the Pusht Rod SPC was started on September 24 by the PST staff who collected information on Health, Education and Agriculture resources available in the district.

### **Challenges**

- NTR

### **Coming Next Week**

- IR2 will follow up on the data collection process in Pusht Rod, with a first draft expected to be by October 4.
- Information gathering for the Shindand SPC will be started on September 28, with the IR2 lead working closely with the PST focal point and DRRD-Herat.

## **INTERMEDIATE RESULT 3**

### **Highlights**

- As part of internal capacity building for the month of September, IR3 provided other IRs' field trainers with information on recent IR3 activities on September 24. This included an update on the status of provincial and district profiles and plans of IR3.
- Following the completion of Shindand District Profile, IR3 completed the first draft of Kusk-e Rabate-Sangi District Profile. The draft is under revision and is expected to be completed by early November 2012.
- On September 22, IR3, with the support of the Farah PST, completed the gathering of information and data for the Pusht Rod district profile. IR3 has started working on a draft of the profile and it is expected to be completed by the end October 2012.
- During the week, IR3 also developed a training module on "*How to Develop a Communication Plan*", which will be used by IR3 officers to mentor district partners. In-depth communication planning by

district partners is key to taking the first step in bettering district governance by improving the flow of information and making the government more visible and accountable.

### **Challenges**

- NTR

### **Plans for the coming week**

- On September 29, an IR3 Communication Officer will fly to Farah in order to meet with the IR3 DRRD counterpart to discuss a planned information brochure, and work on finalizing the DRRD communication plan.
- On October 1, an IR3 Communication Officer will sit on the interview panel for Bala Baluk DST members. The interview was initially planned for a week ago, but has been postponed due to cancellation of Air Embassy flights.
- On September 29-30, an IR3 Communication Officer will conduct training updates for IR3 PST members on “*How to Develop Communication Plan*”. Following this capacity building, on October 4, IR3 PST member will conduct training for DSC and DRRD counterpart covering the same training module.

## **INTERMEDIATE RESULT 4**

### **Highlights:**

- The IR4 lead was part of a panel, which interviewed five applicants for the positions of Community Mobilizer, and Community Development Technician (CDT) based in Herat PST. The panel also interviewed two candidates for the position of Community Development Officer (CDO), based in Herat HQ. Based on previous lessons learned, all candidates were required to take a written test prior to the final interview process.
- The IR4 CDO returned to Herat on September 22 by road, following his successful mission in the Farah PST, building the capacity of SIKA-West staff and DSC counterparts. The CDO was part of the mission that was stuck in Farah for three days following Embassy Air flight cancellations.
- IR4, working with IR1, finalized a draft copy of the District Project Portfolio (DPP) format on September 24, which has been sent to senior management for feedback. It is expected that the DPP will be populated with projects identified by the Bala Baluk DSC during the coming week’s activities.
- During the week the IR4 Grants Officer oversaw the bid opening, technical evaluation and cost evaluation of the Adult Computer Training Program RFP for GIROA Officials in Farah. Comments have been sent back to one of the bidders to adjust the proposed budget.
- The Grants team also conducted a bid opening for the English Language Training Program RFP for GIROA officials in Farah on September 26.

### **Challenges:**

- An ongoing challenge, which has been mentioned in previous weeks’ reports, is the issue of secure accommodation for national staff in Farah and Badghis. A guesthouse has now been identified in Farah and negotiations are ongoing with the owner to rent the property.

### **Coming Week:**

- By the end of the coming week IR4 plans to input three identified projects into the DPP for Bala Baluk District.
- On September 29, IR4 Farah PST Community Development Technician and the PST Community Development Officer plans to complete feasibility studies on the Dehzak, Shivan and Kanisk Community Center Refurbishment Projects.
- IR4 Community Development Technician plans to finalize a safety training program for PST and DST technicians.
- The Grants team plans to conduct a cost negotiation with a selected implementing partners for the Computer Training Program for GIROA officials in Farah province on October 1.
- The Grants team plans to conduct technical and cost evaluations for the English Language Programs for GIROA officials in Farah on September 30.

## PROVINCIAL ACTIVITIES

*As part of capacity building, M&E is providing PST Managers with ongoing training to improve report writing abilities. To this end any information provided in the provincial activities section is kept as basic as possible, and as the program grows and the capacity of the PST Managers increases, then this section will expand in both quality and quantity.*

### FARAH PST

- The Farah PST staffs were instrumental in collecting information for the Pusht Rod District Profile, focusing on gender issues, media and communication networks. It was found that all villages in Pusht Rod District have access to media broadcasts from the provincial center.
- The Farah PST also collected information as part of the process of producing a brochure for the Farah DoWA, aimed at tackling violence against women, and improving family life. The brochure will be produced in cooperation with DRRD staff and signed off by SIKA-West HQ staff.
- The PST staff assisted the Farah DRRD focal point in installing a notice board at the DRRD offices, which will enable DRRD staff to post information and advertisements on DRRD activities.
- Staff collected information on organizations that deliver services in Pusht Rod District of Farah Province. The data was collected by the IR2 focal point in order to develop an SPC for Pusht Rod District.
- The Farah PST Manager participated in a meeting with the DDA chairman and representatives from Dehzak villages, and influential people from Bala Baluk District, including Sayed Abdurrahim Agha, Khair Muhammad Khan, and Bala Baluk District Team Leader Haji Sher Ahmad in order to identify potential vocational courses for women in Dehzak village.
- The Bala Baluk SIKA-West team met with youth leaders in Shiwan, Ganjabad, Granik, and Nawi Dasht villages, in order to listen to any comments or suggestions provided by youth in the area on mitigating SOIs. The representatives suggested that a football ground be built in Nawi Dasht village, and a public library be built in Ganjabad District.
- The PST advertised three vacant posts through the local Farah TV, including two for Pusht Rod District (Team Leader and Community Technician), and a Senior Engineer for the Farah PST.
- In the coming week PST staff plan to continue collecting data for the Pusht Rod SPC, and conduct a meeting with the Pusht Rod District Governor in preparation for the formation of the DSC on October 1.
- PST staff will also be tasked with conducting preliminary surveys on community centers, which have been identified as potential refurbishment projects in the DPP.

### Farah Gender Programming

- The Farah Gender Working Group with representatives from Farah PST, DRRD (NABDP), DOE and DOPH, Wadan Afghanistan and DOWA met on September 17 and discussed the following points:
  - Provided an update on the gender components of the current Bala Baluk DSM process, with regard to the inclusion of DOWA in the monthly DSC meetings and the upcoming roll out of vocational and infrastructure programming.
  - The Farah Gender Officer gathered data on 300 IDP families in Farah Provincial Center from the Farah Province Immigration Department-(Ministry of Refugees & Repatriation). The next step is to identify members of these families who may benefit from literacy training and other forms of support.
  - HOLD has requested that SIKA-West provide Embroidery and Tailoring vocational programming to 430 young women in Farah Provincial Center. SIKA-West is reviewing this request.
  - Coordination with HOLD to visit their Women's Rights workshop which discusses Violence Against Women within Farah Province and the districts. Consider areas where SIKA-West can support these activities.
  - Discussions centered on a local radio station known as Radio Farhad which broadcasts programming related to Mens/Womens Health & Education. This information has been shared with IR3 to see if support may be provided.

- WADAN Clinic is looking for ways to have SIKA-West support their drug treatment center, which currently supports 20 beds for women and 15 beds for children. We are looking at ways to connect female/child drug addicts in Bala Baluk to this clinic.
- DOWA has been invited to provide presentations to the Gender Working Group on Women/Children's Rights, Violence Against Women and Gender Awareness

#### **CBD- Farah Program Activity Support**

- CBD plans to facilitate the upcoming Bala Baluk DSC Meeting at the end of the month. During this meeting, the DSC will receive an update on progress to provide support to mitigation activities. Key additions to this DSC meeting will be the presence of District Mullahs (Shewan, Kanesk, Tap-e-Sadat, Zir-Koh, Ganjabad, Gerani, Khwaja Khedr, Zarmardan and Haji Abad Farah Road) as well as CDC members from the communities of Shewan, Dehzak and Kanesk. CBD and IR1 have collaborated on the Agenda for this meeting and the logistical arrangements.
- There were no trainings recorded in Farah this week, as PST/DST staff are preparing for the upcoming DSC meeting.
- CBD/IR1 have collaborated on the preparation of the program roll schedule out for Pusht Rod District. During next week, the Farah PST in coordination with the DRRD will engage with the Pusht Rod DG and take the first steps in launching the Pusht Rod DSC.

#### **BADGHIS PST**

- During the week, PST staff collected tribal information, and data on irrigation systems for the IR2 lead and SPC.
- Previous data collected by PST staff was also verified by tribal elders and then forwarded to SIKA-West HQ.
- The Badghis PST had no challenges to report.
- Next week staff plan to identify a secure guesthouse in the provincial center to house visiting national staff from the SIKA-West HQ and other PST offices.

#### **Badghis Gender Programming**

- The Badghis Gender Officer resigned during the past week, and SIKA-West is currently working on recruiting a replacement.

#### **HERAT PST**

- During the week, the Herat PST Manager, sat on a panel to recruit a PST M&E Officer. Four applicants were interviewed, and one candidate selected. The Herat PST Manager also participated in interviews to recruit an IR4 Community Development Officer, described above.
- Next week the Herat PST will make preparations to move into a new office located on the DRRD premises.
- Next week the PST Manager will also participate in the interview panel to recruit staff for Shindand and Koshk-e Rabat Sangi DSTs.

#### **Herat Gender Programming**

- The Herat Gender Officer conducted the "Gender Mainstreaming Part II" training module for all Herat PST personnel, and provided support to the Gender Department in HQ in terms of tracking the SIKA West gender activities.

#### **CBD- Herat Program Activity Support**

- CBD/IR1 have prepared the Shindand District roll out plan which has been shared with USAID. On September 24 a meeting was held at the Herat DRRD to initiate the first steps of the program roll out in Shindand District. The following is a recap of the meeting:
  - The SIKA West Agreement Letter With MRRD has been signed, but the Herat DRRD has not yet received a copy. As soon as this letter has been received, we may begin the Shindand District Roll Out.
  - Mr. Saddiqi, the Herat DRRD Director commented that the program will benefit from the following:
    - a) Continual engagement with the Shindand DDA and District Shuras
    - b) Local staff must be employed as social mobilizers.
    - c) Low profile and local cars work best.

## GENDER AND CAPACITY BUILDING

### SIKA West Gender Programming HQ

- The Gender Department chaired the weekly Internal SIKA West Gender Working Group on September 25, which allows for gender related discussions, updates and guidance between all IR's and other departments. During this week's meeting the following issues were discussed and decided upon:
  - IR1-** Establish contact with female members of the Bala Baluk DDA, as well as contact senior female members of the communities represented by the DSC members. These communities include Ganjabad, Dehzak, Shewan, Kaneshk, Nawbahar, Aref Abad, Tapa Sadat, Gerani, Kal Kala, Said Noormamad, Zamardan, Pooza Langar, Kashman and Kariz Nabi.
  - Over the past week, IR1 has identified 13 female community members from the villages of Dehzak, Shewan and Kaneshk who will provide information on women's human development needs within those communities. It is expected that the first set of data will be received on Wednesday, October 3, 2012.
  - As part of SOI mitigating activities and bolstering support for local government, CBD Gender is planning the roll out of the following Bala Baluk District Government sponsored; gender focused vocational programs, pending approval from USAID in the upcoming DPP.

#	Vocational Program	Community	Participants
1	Tailoring	Dehzak	15 Women
2	Embroidery	Kaneshk	15 Women
3	Literacy	Ganjabad	100 Women
4	Literacy	Shewan	100 Women
5	Literacy	Gerani	100 Women
6	Tailoring	Ganjabad	10 Women
7	Tailoring	Gerani	10 Women
8	Tailoring	Shewan	10 Women
9	Tailoring	Dehzak	10 Women

- IR2-** Identify the services available for women & placing these services in the Service Provider Catalog. Over the past week, IR2 has provided a list of the Service Providers that cater to the human development needs of men, women and children in Bala Baluk District. This list will be reviewed and the Gender Department will identify areas where existing services may be expanded and/or improved.
- IR3-** Move Forward with Communications Support on a Brochure/Poster Campaign titled "*Educated Women & Healthy Society*". This messaging support will teach DOWA how to draft and write their own messaging through brochures and posters. Over the past week IR3 has received brochure templates from Farah DOWA as well as current materials to support the messaging campaign. A meeting is scheduled next week in Farah to finalize the next step for the brochure drafting.
- IR4-** Prepare For Vocational Training Programs and Infrastructure Programs For Men & Women In Bala Baluk. Over the past week, the following Bala Baluk DSC sponsored vocational training programs and infrastructure projects have been identified.

#	Vocational Program	Community	Participants
1	Auto Mechanic Training	Shewan	15 Men
2	Mobile Phone Repair	Kaneshk	15 Men
3	Auto Mechanic Training	Dehzak	15 Men
#	Infrastructure Program	Community	Participants
1	Community Center Refurbishment	Dehzak	1000(Men & Women)
2	Community Center Refurbishment	Shewan	300(Men & Women)
3	Community Center Refurbishment	Kaneshk	600(Men & Women)



- **M&E-** Tracking All Activities Toward Meeting Program Gender Indicators. Over the past week, M&E has redesigned the reporting requirements for program activities and will provide training to the Gender Working Group and Field Trainers on these new requirements next week.
- In addition to the Gender Working Group, the SIKA West Gender Department also coordinated interviews to recruit five literacy teachers from Bala Baluk District. The interviews will take place next week, and will select one teacher from each of the following five communities, Shewan, Gerani, Ganjabad and Dehzak, to teach 25 illiterate female students from each community.

### Capacity Building Headquarters Component

- In total 57 training modules covering IR1-IR4/M&E and Gender have been completed and translated into Dari and Pashto and shared with the SIKA West program.
- Training Calendar for HQ, Farah, Herat, and Badghis updated as of September 26, 2012 and shared with all departments.
- Two CBD RFP's are currently being evaluated, RFP FH001 Adult Computer Programming for GIRoA Personnel and RFP FH002 Adult English Language Programming. CBD plans to roll these programs out by the end of the month.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

### Highlights

- During the week, all M&E staff were tested on their ability to use Trackstick technology, following capacity building training provided in the previous week.
- The M&E Officer spent an extra three days in Farah province, after the cancellation of Embassy Air flights. During this time he continued checking the PST filing systems and proposed changes as necessary.
- A HQ M&E Officer entered all Key Informant Interview data collected by the Bala Baluk PST M&E Officer, setting a baseline for IR3.4.

### Challenges

- M&E continues to experience ongoing challenges in the report writing capacity of some staff members, particularly at the provincial level. To improve capacity, the M&E lead has designed a simplified report writing template, and will be holding weekly critique sessions for staff from all IRs.

### Plans for the coming week

- Ongoing training presentations to Herat HQ staff and Herat PST staff, including Introduction to Gender Indicators.
- The M&E lead will also be completing the Bala Baluk Six-Month Engagement Plan and SIKA-West Work Plan, following feedback from IR leads.

## HR & RECRUITMENT

- To date, 83 employees (28 female, 55 male) have been hired and 43 positions are the recruitment process.

SIKA-West Recruitment				
Staff	Herat Office	Herat Province	Farah Province	Badghis Province
Hired	60	7	11	5
In process	14	9	8	12
Females hired	23	2	2	1
Males hired	37	5	9	4

## DELIVERABLES

- Weekly Report

## SECURITY OPERATIONS

- Security personnel conducted various Herat City moves without any incidents.
- In Herat, the SIKA-West compound was placed on lockdown on September 14 due to potential anti-American protests stemming from the inflammatory ‘Innocence of Islam’ video released on the Internet. The compound remained on lockdown, and staff were on mission-essential movements only.
- APPF staff conducted security during a recent recruiting visit from September 15 -19 in Farah Province. The trip went smoothly with no incidents to report.
- Embassy Air flight schedule has been erratic over the last week due to the loss of several of their pilots in a terrorist attack in Kabul. Numerous flights have been cancelled, and field trips for expatriate staff will be put on hold until the schedule firms up.
- Continued to liaise with other projects operating within the Herat area.
- Conducted ongoing weapons training with APPF MST personnel.
- Conducted compound defense plan with expatriate personnel.
- Additional security upgrades have been submitted, and vendors have been visiting the compound to conduct a site survey
- Security SOPs are currently being reviewed by the SIKA-West Operations Manager