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# **STABILITY IN KEY AREAS – SOUTH**

## **MID-TERM PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

**October 2014**

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# STABILITY IN KEY AREAS – SOUTH

## MID-TERM PERFORMANCE EVALUATION



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Measuring Impact of Stabilization Initiatives (MISTI)

### **DISCLAIMER**

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# ACRONYMS

AECOM	Architecture, Engineering Consulting, Operation and Management
ADS	Automated Directives System
AGE	Anti-Government Element
CDC	Community Development Council
CDP	Community Development Plan
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
DCC	District Community Council
DDA	District Development Assembly
DDO	District Development Officer
DDP	District Development Plan or District Delivery Program
DE	District Entity
DG	District Governor
DoWA	Department of Women's Affairs
DPP	District Project Portfolio
DRRD	District Rural Rehabilitation and Development
FOG	Fixed Obligation Grant
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (referred to as "the government" throughout the report)
IDLG	Independent Directorate for Local Governance
IL	Implementation Letter
IR	Intermediate Result
IP	Implementing Partner
ISAF	International Security Assistance Forces
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MISTI	Measuring Impact of Stabilization Initiatives
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
NSP	National Solidarity Program
NABDP	National Area Based Development Program
PCN	Project Concept Note
PE	Provincial Entity
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PoP	Period of Performance
PRRD	Provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development
SAM	Stability Analysis Methodology
SIKA	Stability in Key Areas
SOI	Sources of Instability
STAB-U	Stabilization Unit
STAS	Stability Technical Assistance Sessions
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VSU	Vetting Support Unit
WAC	Women Advisory Committee

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Stability in Key Areas (SIKA)-South seeks to expand and improve the legitimacy of the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) at the sub-national level. Implemented by Architecture, Engineering, Consulting, Operations and Maintenance International Development (AECOM), SIKA-South works closely with the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance (IDLG) to implement development projects, facilitate governance and democracy initiatives, and deliver training and mentoring to district and provincial line entities.

In line with these objectives, in July 2012 SIKA-South began piloted programming in Daman. Currently SIKA-South covers Zabul, Helmand, Nimroz, Kandahar, and Uruzgan provinces. SIKA-South programming includes but is not limited to the following: district government confidence-building initiatives, mitigation activities, and grants aimed at addressing community-identified sources of instability in the targeted districts. SIKA-South's strategy in these locations was aimed at first assisting district entities to better understand their operating environment and identify the challenges to stability they face, and then enabling district governments to implement activities aimed at addressing identified sources of instability (SOIs).

The following report describes findings from the mid-term performance evaluation of SIKA-South's grants and activities up to the end of March 2014 (period of performance) in Kandahar, Zabul, and Helmand provinces, covering the six districts (Arghandab, Daman, Tarnak wa Jaldak, Qalat, Bost, and Garmser) where the majority of programming has taken place.

The evaluation team consisted of one expatriate monitoring and evaluation (M&E) Specialist, two Afghan advisors based in Kabul, and one interviewer in each of the three provinces able to travel within the project districts. A female interviewer visited Arghandab and Daman districts. The evaluation scope of work required the evaluation teams to address eleven key questions: theory of change, sources of instability, gender programming, adherence to the Kandahar Model, branding, bottom-up communication, capacity building in relation to the development program cycle, most and least valued components of programming, and activities contributing to stabilization and empowerment.

The evaluation team began fieldwork in June and concluded in late-July 2014. During this period, the team conducted a total of 512 interviews with various key stakeholders, including USAID and SIKA-South staff, Afghan government officials, Community Development Councils (CDCs) and District Development Assembly (DDA) members, community elders, project beneficiaries, and other members of the community in three provinces where SIKA-South operates. The Kabul-based team reviewed project documents and conducted interviews with key USAID, SIKA-South, and Afghan government officials. Local interviewers traveled to six SIKA-South districts to view select projects and interview beneficiaries.

## KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SIKA-South grants and activities appears to have addressed the SOIs listed on the District Project

Portfolios (DPPs), and many respondents expressed enthusiasm and interest in the projects and activities chosen by the community leaders. Currently, it is still too early to fully determine whether these grants and activities had any long-term stabilizing impact, as many of the projects are either on-going or waiting for approval from SIKASouth and USAID. Results from the four semiannual MISTI surveys from September 2012 to June 2014 indicate little change in stability across most districts, and mixed confidence in local government. Most districts experienced a decline in stability during the drawdown of International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) in the Fall of 2013 but appear to have rebounded to near baseline levels by Spring 2014.

It is MISTI's opinion that SIKASouth will require more time to responsibly complete and implement existing projects, or where appropriate, approve proposed activities listed on the DPPs. MISTI is particularly concerned that the grants approval process, as it currently stands, may hinder performance levels and result in negative implications for sub-national government entities where SIKASouth directly intervenes. Nothing in the findings would suggest scaling-up; however, acceleration of the gender programming should take place before program closeout to encourage more participation and gender mainstreaming in districts.

This report is structured so that specific programmatic challenges are discussed in the body of the findings, and recommendations are listed in order of priority. The key findings and recommendations are listed below:

- ***Theory of Change With Causal Attribution:*** SIKASouth currently lacks an adequate theory of change that clearly delineates a clear causal pathway between activities and intended programming outcomes. A new theory of change could be separated into two separate but distinct measurable theories; one focused on development projects and aligned with the MRRD, and the other affiliated with governance activities associated with the IDLG. To this end, the M&E Unit should make a comprehensive review of the current Performance Management Plan (PMP), match the IRs to specific theory/ies of change, and create measurable indicators that address the IRs. The September 2013 PMP approved by USAID has a general overview of the SIKASouth strategy written as if it were a theory of change. However, this is neither adequate for a stabilization program nor is this general overview tied to measurable outcome indicators within the Results Framework. MISTI does not consider this adequate because a causal logic is missing through a measurable outcomes framework. USAID should have required a logical framework and associated project M&E plans (such as impact assessments). Unfortunately, there was no overarching stabilization strategy at the country level during the SIKAS design that could have guided the SIKAs to produce an associated results framework. This is why across all the SIKAs, MISTI has found a lack of performance indicators which would help assess impact at an activity (or IR) specific level.
- ***Performance Management Plan:*** The PMP indicators are limited in their ability to accurately measure inputs and outputs. A majority of the Results Framework is based on output and no outcome indicators, denying the ability to clearly identify causal relationships between activities and outcomes. The PMP should also include outcomes indicators at the Intermediate Results (IR)-levels in order to inform whether programs have had a measurable effect on the treatment communities. For instance, rather than tallying the number of meetings held, SIKASouth should focus on progress towards the IR's objective after the intervention on a specific activity. There is an overreliance on using the

MISTI survey results for outcomes measurement. However, these results look at the district as a whole and not at SIKA-South specific programming (i.e. capacity building). SIKA-South has not done any outcomes measurement of specific programming under the period of performance and, hence, cannot accurately assess whether this programming had its intended outcomes. Impact assessments at the specific programming level are important and have been overlooked by SIKA-South. Furthermore, it is important for SIKA-South to conduct impact assessments on major programming types (capacity building, gender, stability trainings, etc.) in order to assess effectiveness instead of relying exclusively on unsystematic word of mouth reporting from local staff, MISTI survey results, and output indicators to assess effectiveness of programming. Any properly staffed M&E department should conduct impact assessments and not have to wait for a nudge from the mid-term performance evaluation to do them.

- **Gender Mainstreaming:** While gender programming is inherently difficult in Afghanistan, SIKA-South did make some progress towards gender programming during the period of performance. This effort, while not desultory, was perfunctory in the researched districts and should be accelerated in several provinces. The evaluation team noted considerable female interest in gender programming in Bost and Nad-e-Ali and Nahr-e-Siraj districts (Helmand). Capable Women Advisory Committee (WAC) members existed in those two districts who could identify, plan, implement and monitor gender related projects. The SIKA-South Gender Team should mentor and work with established WACs to accelerate projects and better capitalize on opportunities. While low literacy rates do not preclude women's participation in WACs, careful consideration should be given to ensure the selection of WAC members with the skills needed to perform their gender-programming tasks as required by the committee mandate. In order to build the capacity of WACs, the Gender Team along with the M&E Team should coordinate with the IR1 Team to include WAC members' participation in specific trainings and Stability Technical Assistance Sessions (STAS). The Gender Team could also consider partnering with Afghan organizations with technical expertise in gender mainstreaming to assist WACs and DDAs with gender programming initiatives. The Gender Team should now be focused on the outcomes of including women in the stabilization process. While processes are important and are measurable performance, outcomes are what really matter and SIKA-South has, to date, only had a limited affect on the empowerment of women in decision-making processes.
- **Kandahar Model:** SIKA-South has done well to implement the spirit of the Kandahar Model, albeit focusing more on the *governance process approach*, which does not prioritize quick delivery over good governance, stakeholder inclusiveness, and transparency in its *adaptation* of the Kandahar model. However, delays in the approval process of proposed projects on the DPP directly contravene MRRD guidelines, which require a reduction in red tape and quick delivery. The IR1 and the IR4 teams should work closely together to coordinate field teams and track the timeline between receiving requests and approval. The IR1 team should use this information to better manage DDA members and beneficiary expectations regarding the status of project activities. They should also coordinate with the IR4 team through the Stability Technical Assistance Session (STAS) Forums to keep communities and DDAs actively involved in the development process.
- **Capacity Building:** The evaluation team found that depending on the beneficiaries interviewed, feedback on capacity building activities ranged from useful to irrelevant. While the district entities have shown considerable enthusiasm, the Provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD)

and other line departments noted that many of the capacity building engagements were not relevant to their needs and functions. The capacity assessments conducted by SIKA-South dated March 2013 and March 2014, while useful for assessing the general needs of the overall organization, were not sufficiently detailed to capture the specific needs in each of the line departments. Many provincial level officials interviewed expressed this concern, stating that the curriculum was either not relevant, or in some instances too basic for them to make use of. The SIKA-South Capacity Building Unit and the M&E team should reassess the capacity building needs of each department so that trainings are tailored to fit functional requirements. Particularly in this case, impact assessments conducted by the M&E unit are strongly recommended to assess relevance and effectiveness.

- ***Community Joint Monitoring Program:*** The community joint monitoring program brings the DDAs, line departments, Provincial Governor's Office, and IDLG representatives, and the Sector Working Groups together to monitor project progress. Performed by district entities, such monitoring activities increase the government's profile in communities. Under SIKA-South's guidance, these monitoring activities appear to be working well. Moreover, they align with a key element of the Kandahar Model requiring community participation and ownership. However, these activities are unsustainable without the support of SIKA-South staff and resources (e.g. transportation). The MRRD should consider how these district entities can continue to fund these monitoring activities following SIKA-South's closeout if this is to remain a priority.
- ***Delays in SIKA and USAID Project Approval Process Undermine Stability Programming with Communities:*** The major issue identified with the project approval process involved delays in project concept approvals. Many projects listed in the Community Forum Project Concept Notes (PCN) had no status (e.g. 72 out of 135 projects listed in the Helmand PCN had no status) because the IR4 team in Kabul had not determined in a timely fashion whether to give the proposed concepts a formal status or to reject them. This had the effect of disappointing community expectations and undermined communities' perceptions of local government. Delays in the project approval process in some instances also undermined the STAS Forum activities because communities saw no reason to continue with these meetings when nothing tangible appeared to be resulting from their efforts. The IR1 Team should coordinate with the IR4 Team and their MRRD counterparts to identify grants that have been unduly delayed, determine the cause/s of these delays, and determine ways to fix them. This is also a contractual requirement.
- ***Community Forums and Empowerment:*** Community Forums and STAS are only effective if properly organized and funded. The organization and funding of these events is currently dependent on SIKA-South. At present, the Community Forums or follow-up STAS sessions do not appear to be sustainable beyond the life of SIKA-South. The district entities (CDCs, DDAs) that participate in these forums are widely valued by their communities. In addition to their stabilization function, CDCs and DDAs have also proven effective intermediaries for conflict resolution and other issues affecting local communities. In order to maintain them, and to continue the forums and mitigation activities performed by these district entities (DEs), the Afghan government will have to organize and fund these events and activities once SIKA-South has departed. In the interim, SIKA-South should continue to support these DEs and begin discussions with the IDLG and MRRD on how to transition the coordination and funding of these DEs and activities to the Afghan government.

- ***GIRoA-led Service Delivery:*** MISTI survey findings on governance perceptions have yielded mixed results in regards to government services delivery. SIKa-South has done well under the Subat Program (the MRRD’s title for the SIKa program) to improve service delivery in several districts. While some community members may understand foreign funding has been used to facilitate Subat activities, the community members also recognize that the Afghan government is central to delivering those services. The success of Subat going forward will depend on the ability of the Afghan government to continue to deliver these services and, in some districts, expand on them. IR1 should work with IR4 to build Afghan government capacity in service delivery while the IR3 team communicates service delivery project status and successes to the public.
- ***Branding:*** Branding of infrastructure activities should include MRRD (or Afghan government) signboards. This will encourage people to further support the government and give them greater ownership of government-sponsored projects. During the period of performance, IR3 did a good job of communicating the Subat program’s activities and successes to the Afghan public using radio adverts. The IR3 team should also consider using traditional word-of-mouth channels, including local elders, religious leaders, and tribal leaders to further promote the Subat program at not only the provincial level but also at the district and CDC levels. Radio and word-of-mouth mechanisms also avoid issues with literacy levels. Most residents in southern Afghanistan are unable to read printed materials or make use of the Internet. Other SIKAs have successfully used outreach activities of this sort to brand activities.
- ***Most and Least Valued Components:*** Infrastructure and water related-projects are most valued because they provide tangible results and can be implemented with high levels of community participation. Such projects create short-term *cash-for-work* opportunities and provide people with access to basic services. Furthermore, infrastructure and water projects protect communities against the ill effects of natural disasters that in some areas can have a destabilizing effect. Stability Analysis Methodology (SAM) Trainings and Community Forums are also valued because they provide communities with opportunities to voice their concerns, be consulted by DEs, and to participate in decision-making processes that affect their areas. The clustering of CDCs to tackle issues that cut across communities (e.g. conflict resolution) is also valued. These improve inter-community cohesion and mitigate against the destabilizing effect of project envy.
- ***Bottom Up Communication:*** Traditional forums (jirgas/shuras) are the most effective way of communicating community-level needs to DEs and on up to district and provincial government line departments. The PRRDs have been very successful at leading these efforts supported by SIKa-South staff and resources. This model of bottom-up communication is consistent with MRRD guidelines and should continue to be the foundation of development planning processes.

## CONCLUSION

SIKAs-South’s September 2013 PMP includes two paragraphs of what they believe is a theory of change. However, a proper theory of change includes causal hypotheses that are then measured at the IR levels. SIKAs-South does not measure specific programming outcomes through its Results Framework. This is required under USAID ADS 201.3.11, 201.3.2.3, and 201.3.4.2(1). Without a causal relationship it is difficult to develop a results framework supported by relevant indicators that address program outputs and, more importantly, intended outcomes. Many of SIKAs-South’s output indicators were improperly

labeled as outcome indicators and did not inform USAID of the IP's progress towards its intended results.

It was still too early to assess whether any of SIKASouth's prioritized activities had any long term impact in the target communities as too few projects were completed during the period of performance for MISTI to assess impact. Only two districts in Kandahar province had completed what one could describe as an evaluable body of projects. That said, it was apparent that SIKASouth had made a good-faith effort to integrate the Kandahar Model in its programming. A major component of the Kandahar Model was lacking however, the quick delivery element, which was hampered by the need to adhere to a *governance process approach* that required multiple approvals of project activities by Afghan Government and United States Government entities including USAID's Vetting Support Unit. This resulted in many projects languishing for as many as four to five months in the approval and vetting processes.<sup>1</sup> While many of these delays were the unfortunate consequence of vetting laws and lengthy coordination with the government, stabilization programming must include quick delivery coupled with good governance processes in order to create the stable environment needed for transition to sustainable development. Governance programming without quick delivery is not stabilization programming and in turn positions SIKASouth not as a stabilization program, but as a governance program with a stabilization component.

Another program element that had limited effect was gender programming. This was due to a lack of care in the selection of WAC members by the DoWA, and SIKASouth's inability to effectively intervene to ensure that the women selected for the WACs were appropriately skilled, trained and guided.

SIKASouth activities were successfully presented as government-led activities connecting people to resources under a local name, the Subat (Stabilization) Program. Additionally, since SIKASouth worked through existing MRRD-linked CDCs and DDAs, bottom-up communication appears to have worked well, linking both the district and provincial development processes. Capacity building initiatives were somewhat effective among certain groups such as the CDCs/DDAs and other district line departments, however needed to be better tailored towards the trainees' professional functions and duties.

Many of the respondents interviewed for this evaluation stated that hard projects were most valued, however they expressed frustration with delays in the grant approval and milestone payments processes. Many of the infrastructure activities undertaken by SIKASouth appear to have had a stabilizing effect on their communities. SIKASouth has successfully worked through government structures to empower community leaders and district governments. This has, in turn, improved their effectiveness and legitimacy with communities. Key issues such as gender inclusion and delays in the grants approvals/denials process are the biggest hurdles for SIKASouth to overcome.

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<sup>1</sup> At the time of this writing, SIKASouth has made significant strides in accelerating project activity approvals and delivery, especially hard infrastructure projects. These necessitate time to complete past the contractual period, and can be delayed due to seasonality, security, and other factors that contribute to delays of project implementation. SIKASouth may require more time to efficiently closeout its programs.

# EVALUATION PURPOSE & QUESTIONS

## EVALUATION PURPOSE

The objective of this mid-term performance evaluation is to assess the performance, relevance, and success of the SIKA-South program. Specifically, this evaluation provides information to USAID and the implementing partner on whether the stabilization processes and activities being conducted by SIKA-South are achieving their intended results. A secondary objective is assessing the impact of the program's activities on the local population given available data.

This mid-term performance evaluation documents accomplishments and lessons learned from April 2012 through the end of March 2014. Its intended audience includes USAID management, SIKA-South staff, the Implementing Partner (AECOM), MRRD, and IDLG. The evaluation incorporates the results of MISTI's stability trends analyses, SAM Evaluation findings, and interviews with the SIKA-South teams and beneficiaries to extract lessons learned and determine the need for SIKA strategy modification(s). The evaluation methodology is addressed in a separate chapter below.

## EVALUATION QUESTIONS

In keeping with the scope of work, the MISTI Team considered the following key questions:

1. **Theory of Change:** Are the assumption and logic built into SIKA-South's theory of change still valid and consistent with the evaluation findings?
2. **The Sources of Instability:** To what extent did program activities and grants address sources of instability?
3. **Gender Programming:** Was the approach to women inclusion appropriate and effective in terms of empowering and increasing women participation in decision making in SIKA-South activities?
4. **Kandahar Model:** How did SIKA-South integrate key steps in the Kandahar Model into the identification of projects and the execution and management of grants?
5. **Service Delivery as GIRA Led:** To what extent have SIKA activities been successfully present as government activities, connecting people to resources (both government and non-government) or service delivery?
6. **Bottom Up Communication:** How effectively was bottom-up communication process promoted linked MRRD-developed CDC and DDAs to the overall district and provincial development planning processes?
7. **Capacity Building on Development Projects:** How effective were capacity building initiatives aimed at teaching district entities how to plan, design, implement, and monitor various types of development projects?

8. ***Valued Component:*** What components of SIKA-South were most and least valued by district and provincial entities?
9. ***Activities Contributing to Stabilization:*** Which activities undertaken by SIKA-South have the most or least contribution to Stabilization objectives?
10. ***Empowerment:*** How effectively did SIKA-South work through Afghan government structures and within Afghan government processes to empower the community leaders and district government in decision-making and community engagement under existing district level interventions?
11. ***Lessons Learned:*** What lessons learned from the SIKA-South Program implementation can inform future USAID Programming

# INTRODUCTION

The objective of the SIKA-South program is to promote stabilization in key areas by supporting the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (the government) to implement community led *development and governance initiatives* that respond to the population’s needs and concerns. SIKA-South supports district entities to identify and respond to challenges to stability with an aim to build confidence in local government and increase the provision of basic services. SIKA-South’s work focuses on key districts identified based on district selection criteria which USAID, the Afghan government, and SIKA-South agree upon, and is aligned with other district priorities as determined by the provincial governments.

SIKA-South seeks to increase confidence in the district level government of the five selected Southern provinces of Afghanistan (Kandahar, Zabul, Helmand, Uruzgan and Nimroz) leading to greater legitimacy and the expansion of provincial and district governing structures. SIKA-South assists district governments to understand sources of instability (SOIs), increase coordination with line departments, and to improve communication with, and provide better basic services to constituents. SIKA-South complements other USAID stabilization efforts, such as SIKA-West, SIKA-East, SIKA-North the Community Cohesion Initiative, the Kandahar Food Zone, and the Afghanistan Civilian Assistance Program II, among other stabilization and development programs.<sup>2</sup>

SIKA-South is a three-year project that began in April 2012. Official implementation of program activities did not begin until September 2012 when the Ministry for Rural Rehabilitation and Development and the Independent Directorate for Local Government signed an implementation letter (IL) with USAID covering the SIKA programs.<sup>3</sup> Notwithstanding the delays in the implementation letter, SIKA-South’s leadership and the field-based USAID Contracting Officer’s Representative (COR) started piloted programs in Daman district, Kandahar, which started operations in July 2012.

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<sup>2</sup> As of this writing, the Stability Unit has since come under the Office of Democracy and Governance and operates outside the Stability Unit required PMP. For the purpose of this evaluation, the Stability Unit PMP indicators dated September 2013 were used for analysis.

<sup>3</sup> The implementation letter authorizes SIKA-South mandate with the Afghan government in order to implement stability programs aligning them with the government of Afghanistan and its sub-national government.

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) oversees a number of stability programs throughout Afghanistan aimed at improving security and extending the reach and legitimacy of the Afghan Government to unstable communities. These programs are aimed at addressing Sources of Instability and establishing an environment for sustained social and economic development. This is being accomplished through the engagement of communities in key districts, the implementation of projects aimed at extending the reach of the Afghan Government to unstable areas, provision of social and economic assistance as well as income generating opportunities, the building of trust between local citizens and their governments, and by encouraging local populations to play an active role in their own development.

USAID designed the SIKA programs to address two particular weaknesses at the district level: (1) lack of development, and (2) lack of good governance. SIKA was designed to deliver community developed and implemented projects in close partnership with the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development in order to build confidence in the Afghan government and increase stability by addressing these two key areas at the district level.

MRRD's approach to stabilization is to empower people, build unity within communities, and instill grassroots' level participation in decision making while maintaining the ultimate goal of building the population's confidence in Afghan institutions. These approaches to stability have been used by the MRRD since 2002 through the National Area Based Development Program (NABDP) and, since 2003, through the National Solidarity Program (NSP).

The NABDP is MRRD's primary stabilization initiative at the district level. Its goals are the sustainable reduction of poverty and an improvement in the livelihoods in rural Afghanistan. NABDP uses District Development Assemblies to create District Development Plans (DDPs) that link community priorities to the Afghan government's agricultural and rural development strategy.<sup>4</sup> It also strengthens the DDAs as the primary conduit for stabilization initiatives as well as social and economic development planning at the district level. The NSP was created to help local communities identify, plan, manage, and monitor their own development projects largely through the formation of Community Development Councils, which serve as the focal points for all village-level rural development in Afghanistan. Both programs complement each other at promoting a stabilizing influence at the district level.

MRRD realized that sporadic rural development was due mainly to insecurity, and that without development security would not improve. To improve development through successful project implementation in insecure areas, MRRD developed the Kandahar Model<sup>5</sup> that decentralized the procurement and financial procedures essential to community contracting. The model also provided a

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<sup>4</sup> DDAs are comprised of representatives of clustered CDCs. In the SIKA-South context, CDCs may include a multitude villages/communities. The CDCs make the preliminary identifications and priority of projects and "sources of instability" before moving forward with the Community Forums per SIKA-South requirements. DDAs are an elected body sponsored and supported under the NABDP scheme.

<sup>5</sup> MISTI interview, Assistant Country Director & Unit Head Sub-National Governance & Development United Nations Development Programme UNDP Country Office, UNOCA Complex, Kabul, Afghanistan, Kabul, July 2014

platform for direct community participation in project planning, budgeting and decision-making through established CDCs and DDAs, thereby increasing the population's confidence in their district level government entities. The Kandahar Model is essentially a bottom up methodology that allows the local population the opportunity to develop projects based on their needs while at the same time coordinating with the district and provincial line ministries. The local communities (through CDCs and DDAs) are involved in the following three phases of project implementation process:

1. Identification of needs and prioritization of projects
2. Implementation of projects
3. Monitoring of projects (implemented by CDCs or in those districts where the security does not allow for external monitors to visit the sites), including taking pictures and short videos.

SIKA-South also works closely with the Independent Directorate for Local Governance. IDLG is responsible for the District Delivery Program (DDP), an initiative designed to establish or improve the presence of the Afghan government by supporting district government efforts to respond to the needs of their constituents by building government's capacity to deliver basic services. The DDP builds on MRRD's stabilization and development efforts to create a foundation for economic stability and sustainable infrastructure.

Closely working with MRRD and IDLG, SIKA-South's strategic objective is for Afghans to have increased confidence in their district government, thereby expanding the authority and legitimacy of Afghan provincial government to the districts and, in particular, to unstable communities. SIKA-South's strategy is to assist district entities to better understand and mitigate challenges to stability in their areas. SIKA-South enables them to develop a localized methodology aimed at identifying and addressing sources of instability through community level activities.

USAID has identified four intermediate results required to achieve the strategic objectives:

1. Provincial and district entities increasingly address sources of instability and take measures to respond to the population's development and governance concerns;
2. Provincial and district entities understand what organizations and provincial line departments work within their geographic areas, what kind of services they provide, and how the population can access those services;
3. Provincial authorities improve their ability to communicate with district entities to help them better understand their population's needs and prioritize basic service delivery interventions; and
4. Provincial authorities improve basic service delivery by using the Afghan government, Community Development Councils, District Development Assemblies, Afghanistan Social Outreach Program District Community Councils (DCCs) to plan, design, implement and monitor projects and focus on labor-intensive projects or productive infrastructure.

USAID designed SIKA to function as an Afghan government program that works within the structures already established by the Afghan government. As such, SIKA works with MRRD and IDLG at the provincial and district levels to enhance the capacity of the Afghan government to plan and implement

stabilization programming, and to improve governance and service delivery in strategic districts by working within the existing framework of the NABDP and the Kandahar Model.

SIKA-South's stabilization programming is intended to serve as a quick delivery program where projects identified by the community through the localized SAM process are initiated quickly, but achieve long-term results. The SAM process is used to identify local sources of instability and their systemic and root causes. CDCs, with input from members of the government, analyze these SOIs to select mitigation activities. The communities themselves then implement these activities.

# EVALUATION METHODS & LIMITATIONS

## METHODOLOGY

This evaluation answered the 11 research questions using mostly qualitative methods. This process involved key-informant interviews conducted in Kabul, Kandahar, Zabul, and Helmand Provinces with SIKA-South staff, MRRD, IDLG, district and provincial entities, DDAs, CDCs, programming and project beneficiaries, other stakeholders, and USAID staff involved in SIKA design and programming. Survey data from the MISTI Stability Survey was used to support some of the findings.

In total, six districts were evaluated. Fieldwork occurred in Arghandab and Daman districts in Kandahar Province, where most of SIKA-South's projects have been implemented. In Helmand Province, the evaluation team visited Bost and Garmser districts where most of the projects have been approved and awarded but not fully implemented. Likewise in Zabul Province, programming in Tarnak wa Jaldak was evaluated based on a few activities that had achieved only the first milestone of completion. Qalat district, also in Zabul Province, was chosen based on the projects awarded and the number of COR approved activities; however, it has nominal measureable performance (see discussion under *Limitations*, below).

The SIKA-South evaluation team was comprised of a MISTI M&E Specialist and two local national MISTI M&E Advisors. The MISTI M&E Specialist and Advisors conducted the desk review and information interviews with MRRD Directorates, District Governors, and local staff managers at the regional head office. The local national M&E Advisors conducted site visits with locals from SIKA-South selected districts, local leaders, government officials, and beneficiaries. MISTI also hired four local national evaluators in select districts where projects had been completed or were almost completed.

## LIMITATIONS

Data collection was constrained by security considerations, which prevented members of the evaluation team from reaching several interview sites. Due to security, the MISTI M&E Specialist was not able to travel to Kandahar to conduct in-depth interviews, however high-level key-informants were either interviewed in Kabul or by telephone. Two local national M&E advisors traveled to select SIKA districts in Zabul, Helmand, and Kandahar Provinces.

In addition, four local male evaluators including one female were hired and trained to conduct beneficiary interviews in selected project locations inaccessible to MISTI's Kabul-based staff. The poor security situation stemming from the presidential election, and the Eid Al-Fitr Holiday, delayed interviews with local officials in some areas.

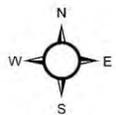
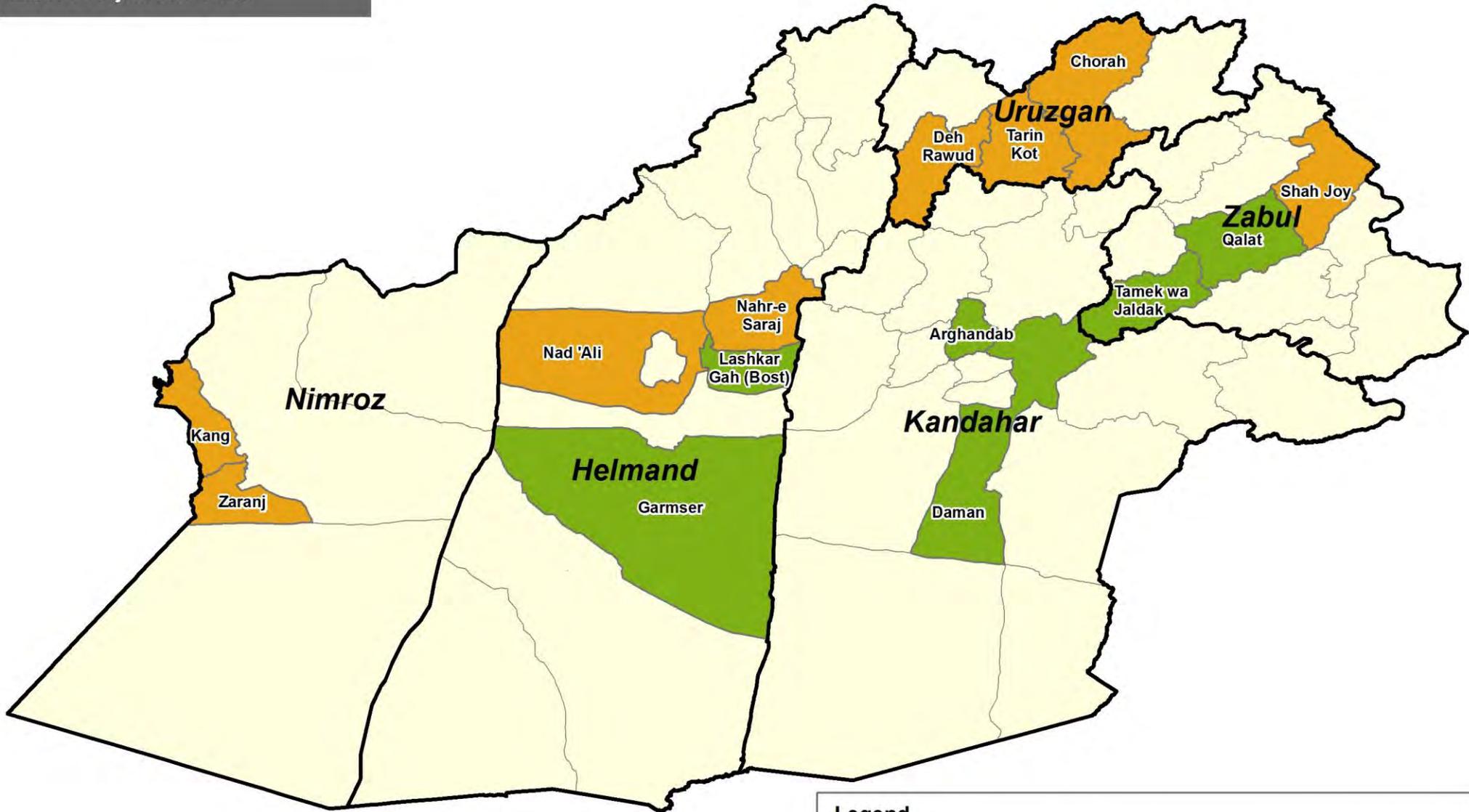
MISTI conducted the mid-term performance evaluation in six districts, with the caveat that two selected districts (Qalat and Garmser) did not have sufficient evaluable performance during the evaluation period. While Qalat and Garmser had the most grants awarded and COR approved activities awarded, neither had completed projects or sufficient evaluable performance data to be evaluated between the period of performance (April 2012 to March 2014). Turnover of USAID personnel, SIKA Staff, and Afghan government staff also made it difficult to conduct interviews where institutional knowledge was limited.

**TABLE I: EVALUATION TIMELINE**

<b>ITEMS</b>	<b>SCHEDULE</b>
Receipt of Finalized SOW	May 8, 2014
Work Plan Approved by USAID	May 14, 2014
Desk Review	May 17, 2014 to Mid-June 2014
Kabul Based Interviews	June 4, 2014 to August 2014
First (Province) Site Visit	Kandahar: June 2-18 2014, Helmand: June 1-19 2014, Zabul: June 22-26, 2014
Province Data Collection	June to July 2014
Second (Province) Site Visit	Kandahar: July 20-21 2014, Helmand: July 16-23 2014, Zabul: June 22-24, 2014
Final Exit Briefing	August 18, 2014

# SIKA SOUTH DISTRICTS

MISTI's Project Site Visits



## Legend

- Provincial Border
- Visited
- Not Visited
- SIKA South Provinces

**Source:** USAID MISTI Project  
**Date:** Sunday August 17, 2014  
**Projection:** WGS84  
**Contact:** [mistigis@msi-afghan.com](mailto:mistigis@msi-afghan.com)



Data Disclaimer: All boundaries and map features are approximate and should not be considered authorities. No endorsement of the US Government or any other organization is implied.

# FINDINGS

## **THEORY OF CHANGE:** *Are the assumptions and logic built into SIKASouth’s theory of change still valid and consistent with the evaluation findings?*

SIKASouth did not have a well-defined theory of change articulated in either its PMP or work plan during the period of performance. Per ADS 201<sup>6</sup>, a theory of change is necessary to show the causal relationships between activities and intended outcomes.<sup>7</sup> Recurrent and periodic impact assessments of select grant/activities, and informal discussions with stakeholders and beneficiaries fail to provide SIKASouth or USAID with precise and adequate data on the impact of its programming. The M&E Unit should be used to assess the impact of SIKASouth’s programming, but in practice appears to be used mostly for reporting purposes.

### INTRODUCING THEORIES OF CHANGE

According to ADS 201, a theory of change is a specific and measurable description of a social (behavior) change program that forms the basis for planning, decision-making, and evaluation of a program’s outcomes. Theories of change require programs to demonstrate the following<sup>8</sup>:

- **An Articulate Hypothesis:** Articulate a hypothesis about why SIKASouth activities will cause certain outcomes, with justifications that these outcomes were achieved because of SIKASouth activities. An example of this can be illustrated as follows, “*if we do this, then that will happen*”; “*this can only succeed if...*”, “*because we did this, the following happened...*”, etc.
- **A Direct Causal Pathway:** Demonstrate a causal pathway from the start of programming to a determined endpoint, showing what specifically is needed in order for objectives to be achieved. By way of analogy, “*if SIKASouth creates a Service Providers Catalogue in Kandahar Province, distributes it to the people, and explains how to use it, Kandahar Province residents will understand what government services are available to them*).
- **Rethink Output to Outcomes:** Measuring proper outcomes can influence management thinking away from what is being done to what needs to be achieved (*Away from outputs, e.g., ‘number of*

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<sup>6</sup> The development hypothesis describes the theory of change, logic, and causal relationship between the building blocks needed to achieve a long-term goal. The development hypothesis is a short narrative that explains the relationship between each layer of results (see ADS 201 Partial Revision Sept. 30, 2013; Section 201.3.3.2 (Section Effective Date: July 2, 2013) p. 12). The completed assessments and evaluations provide the evidence and information needed to establish a development hypothesis that describes the *causal linkages* between the development objectives, IRs, and sub-IRs to the intended outcomes (see ADS Section 201.3.4.2(1), p. 27).

<sup>7</sup> The PMP and the Work Plan are primary responsibilities of the implementing partner. While MISTI assists in measuring the broader impact of stabilization programs generally, the onus to assess the impact of specific activities lies with the implementing partner. During the period of performance the implementing partner should have determined outcome indicators linking activities to intended outcomes.

<sup>8</sup> The examples cited here are illustrative, and have been reported in past evaluations. MISTI feels they are particularly relevant, given the similar misunderstanding that exists throughout most of the SIKASouth’s PMP and work plans.

*people using the Service Providers Catalogue’ and ‘number of training workshops held in Service Providers Catalogue usage’, to outcomes, e.g., ‘the population now understands how to access services using the Service Providers Catalogue’).*

A theory of change is a practical and essential part of any successful social transformation program, and allows projects to measure progress towards intended results.

## OUTPUT INDICATORS MISLABELED AS OUTCOMES

In order to assess the assumptions and logic built into its theory of change, SIKA-South conducted internal impact assessments and internal monitoring of its activities.<sup>9</sup> These were used to adjust its implementation methods and deal with challenges on the ground. These assessments, however, are only based on output measurements and anecdotal observations. Indeed, during the period of performance the PMP and work plan mislabeled output indicators as outcome indicators. This limited the ability of SIKA-South to measure how its activities have impacted targeted communities.<sup>10</sup> This gap is particularly important since SIKA-South has undergone significant changes in its programming since August 2013 as part of its program acceleration.<sup>11</sup> A couple of examples in the approved September 2013 PMP can be highlighted to illustrate this point:

- **IR3 Indicator 3.1—*Number of regular meetings held between Provincial Authorities and District Entities:*** Impact assessments are limited to asking the staff of provincial authorities and District Entities questions, rather than conducting a more thorough assessment using a cross section of beneficiaries and facilitators. Counting the number of “meetings held” does not account for the nature or quality of the meetings, explain to what degree these meetings were productive, or attribute subsequent actions taken by the Provincial Authorities and District Entities to those meetings.
- **IR3 Indicator 5.3—*Percentage change in the proportion of residents reporting to receive information of available services provided by Provincial and District Government:*** This particular indicator does not tell us whether or not those receiving information actually understood what they received and found it useful. Focus groups or in-depth interviews with recipients would better serve to assess linkages between these outreach activities and intended outcomes.

While output indicators are appropriate during the initial stages of programming, a Results Framework

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<sup>9</sup> Each development hypothesis should have a number of IRs and sub-IRs that describe the results necessary to achieve the intended outcomes at the development objective and IR levels. The development objectives should be part of the development hypothesis that articulates relating each IR causally to its associated development objective. See ADS 201.3.3.3 (b) Results Framework, p. 14.

<sup>10</sup> See SIKA-South Approved PMP, Table 3: SIKA-South Indicators and Targets pg.10-12. A review of the Work Plan was also reviewed also revealed similar deficiencies—however for the purpose of this evaluation, indicators from the PMP were used in light of SIKA-South contractual obligations.

<sup>11</sup> See Figure 2: SAM Trainings, Community Forums, and Start Dates during the Period of Performance. Figure 2 shows a steady increase in activity in a contracted period which indicates that grants/activities have been implemented in a reasonable time despite of the previous previous months. Full discussions and implications are further explored under “*Addressing the Sources of Instability*” of this evaluation.

that only uses output indicators is unable to measure progress towards intended results or link activities to changes in perceptions or behaviors. Adjusting its PMP and Work Plan to include outcome measures is thus essential to understanding whether or not an intervention is having its intended impact. The lack of outcome indicators in SIKASouth's PMP needs to be addressed as without them SIKASouth is unable to meaningfully inform USAID about progress towards intended results and the overarching stability objective.

## M&E UNIT FOCUSED ON OUTPUTS NOT OUTCOMES

It is the responsibility of SIKASouth's M&E Unit to measure the specific causal relationships between SIKASouth's program interventions and intended outcomes. SIKASouth's PMP requires that impact studies/assessments be conducted after an intervention in order to extract lessons-learned on how to improve project activities. MISTI's review of SIKASouth documents<sup>12</sup> did not reveal any attempt by the M&E Unit to perform a comprehensive impact assessment of programming. While SIKASouth did perform several surveys, these did not capture the outcome data required to perform a meaningful impact assessment. Most efforts by the M&E Unit appear aimed at satisfying quarterly and monthly reporting requirements to USAID, and as such are mostly focused on reporting outputs.

## **SOURCES OF INSTABILITY:** *To what extent did program activities and grants address sources of instability?*

SIKASouth activities and grants did by and large address identified SOIs. This was largely due to efforts by the IR1 Governance and Stability Team, and the successful application of the SAM trainings at Community Forums. Unfortunately, Zabul and Helmand districts did not start the Community Forums until August and September of 2013 respectively, and many of the program grants activities did not start until March of 2014 (see Figure 4), which is right at the end of this evaluation's period of performance (PoP). Indeed, SIKASouth was only able to complete or close out 19 project activities that addressed identified SOIs during the PoP. These 20 activities were completed in only two districts of Kandahar Province (Daman and Arghandab districts). Given the lack of completed activities it is too early for MISTI to conclude whether SIKASouth programming had any long-term impacts on stability.

Notwithstanding the above, MISTI is able to provide some of the results from Waves 1-3 of the MISTI Stabilization Trends Survey<sup>13</sup> conducted between September 2012 and January 2014. The trends identified by the survey, while unable to be attributed to SIKASouth programming, do provide insights

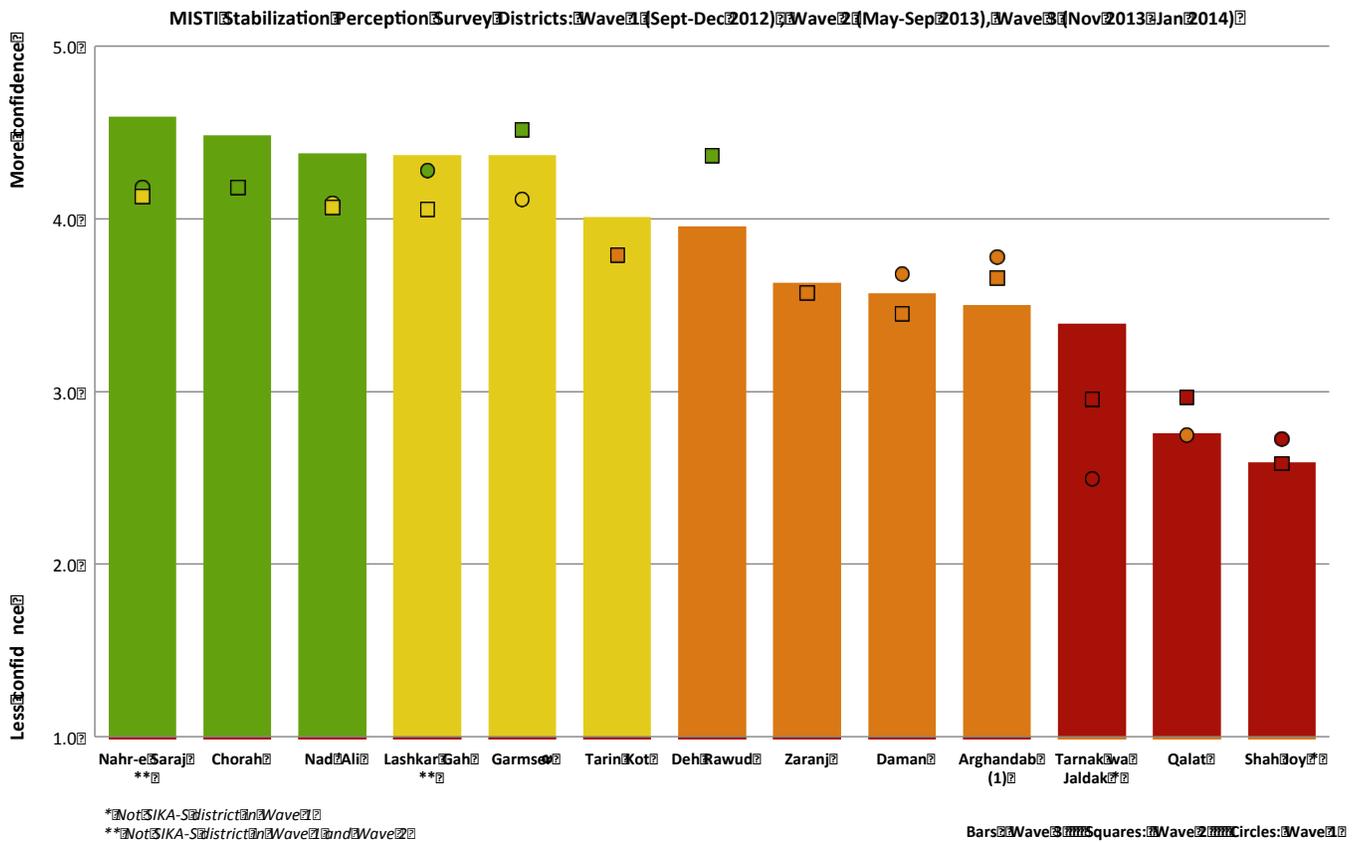
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<sup>12</sup> MISTI Evaluation Team Lead was given access to the SIKASouth database. This is comprehensive database that SIKASouth Management cleared for accuracy before it is made available to its intended users. MISTI primarily used this account to review SIKASouth published documents. In addition, MISTI made additional request during course of the evaluation period for the M&E data to which only excerpts were given from its USAID report. This is particularly problematic since it does not account for causal changes, and most of reporting, in our opinion was anecdotal.

<sup>13</sup> MISTI conducts semiannual surveys in SIKASouth districts on a range of security, governance, and service delivery questions, and uses the data to conduct quasi-experimental impact evaluations, measure specific program performance, and compile a trends analysis on key indicators.

into how peoples’ perceptions across several dimensions of stability were changing in SIKA-South’s districts at the time. For example, results from the MISTI Survey reveal slight decreases in respondents’ confidence in local government in both Daman and Arghandab districts (see Figure 2).

**FIGURE 2: CONFIDENCE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

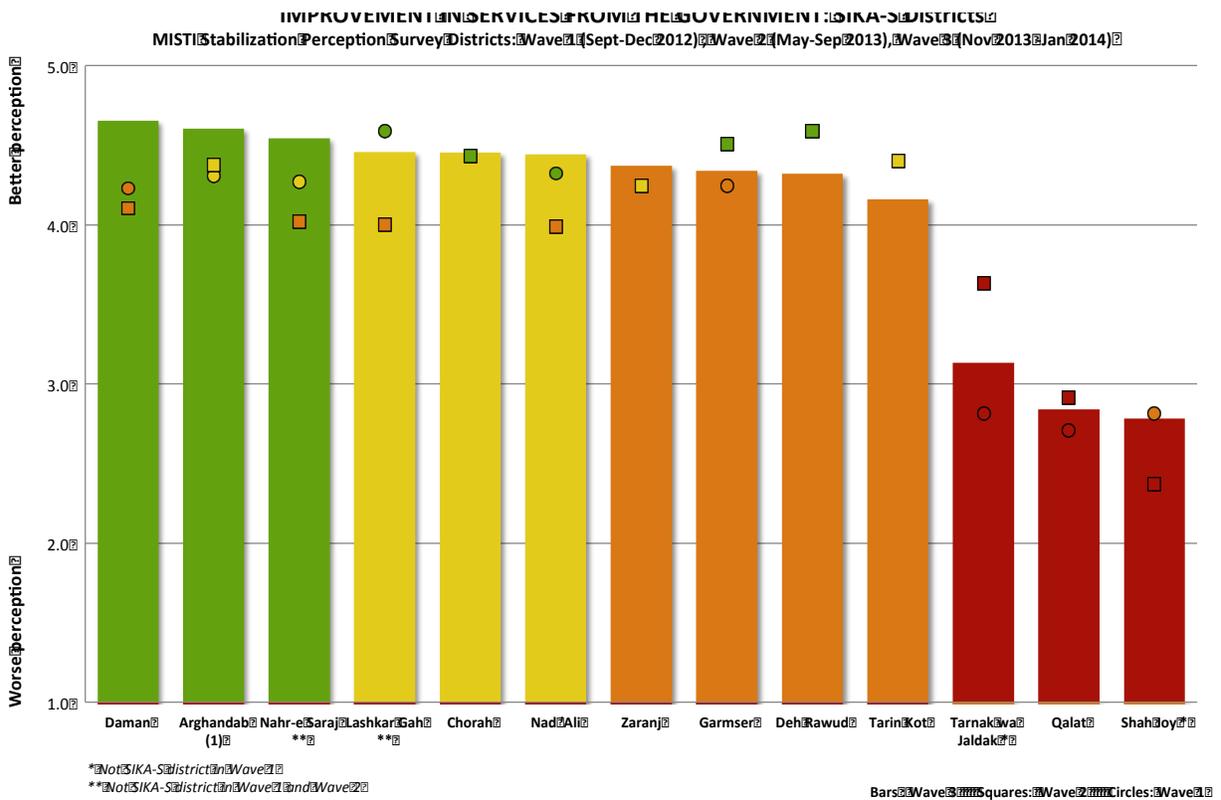


**Figure 2:** Confidence in local government improved in Nahr-e Saraj, Chorah, Nad'Ali, Lashkar Gah, Tarin Kot, Daman, and Tarnak wa Jaldak. It decreased in Garmse, Deh Rawud, Arghandab, Qalat, and Shah Joy.

Another one of SIKA-South’s intended results is to increase perceptions of government through improved delivery of public services. Perceptions of public service delivery improved over baseline levels across all SIKA-South districts with the exceptions of Shah Joy (Zabul province), Tarin Kot (Uruzgan province) and Lashkar Gah (Helmand province) (see Figure 3).

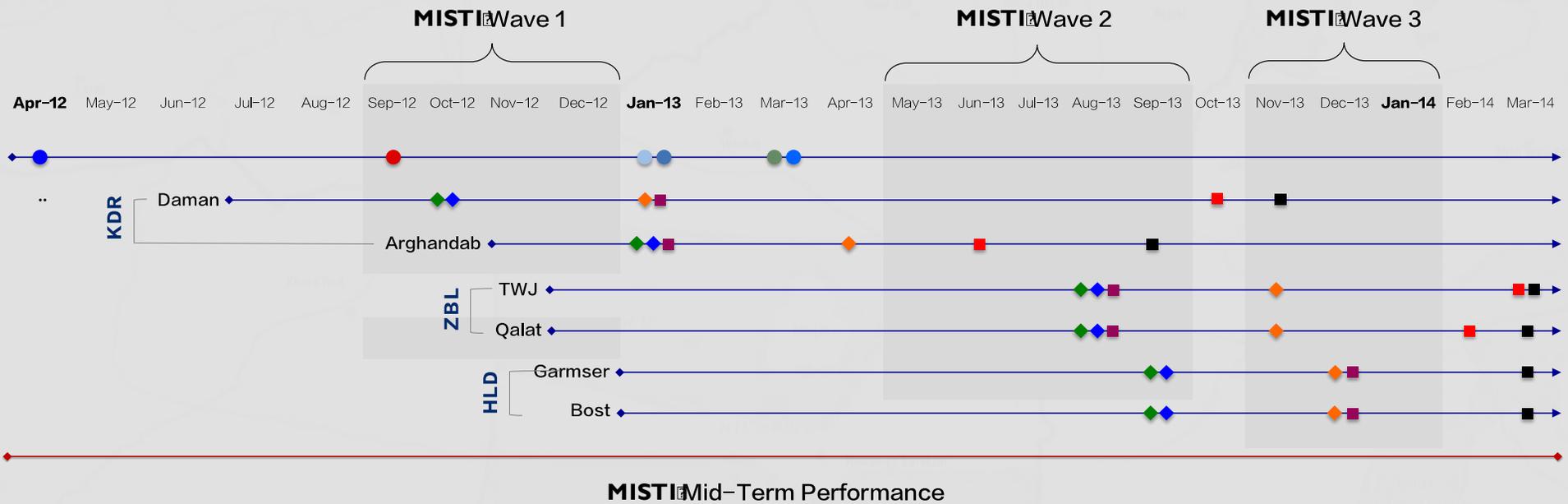
The MISTI Survey results reveal that perceptions of public service delivery improved in both Arghandab and Daman districts (Kandahar province) during the PoP, with both districts improving their scores and quartile rankings. In Zabul province, the districts surveyed (Tarnak wa Jaldak, Qalat and Shah Joy) consistently ranked in the lowest quartile (red). After showing significant decreases in Wave 2, all four districts surveyed in Helmand province (Lashkar Gah, Garmser, Nahr-e Saraj and Nad Ali) returned towards baseline levels and quartile rankings in Wave 3. Nahr-e Saraj district improved over its baseline level and quartile ranking (yellow to green). In Uruzgan province, all three districts surveyed (Chorah, Tarin Kot and Deh Rawud) significantly decreased levels and/or quartile rankings between Waves 2 and 3. (see Figure 3)

**FIGURES 3: IMPROVEMENT IN GOVERNMENT SERVICES**



**Figure 3:** Perceptions of improvements in services from the government have been mixed, with Kandahar and Nahr-e Sharaj showing improved scores, Helmand showing a return to baseline scores, Uruzgan showing a decrease in scores, and Zabul in the lowest quartile.

**FIGURE 4: SAM TRAININGS, COMMUNITY FORUMS, AND START DATES DURING THE EVALUATION PERIOD**



**Figure 4:** This timeline shows the progression of SIKASouth’s activities overlaid over MISTI’s semiannual stabilization perception survey waves. The colored squares for hard projects, soft FOGs/outreach, and capacity building show the first instance of this particular activity occurring in each district. While SIKASouth conducted numerous outreach activities, this timeline only presents outreach activities that required a FOG. The MISTI Evaluation Team has noted significant grants/activities following August 2013,

**KEYS**

- Initial Contract Award
- Work Plan Approved
- SAM Training
- Community Forums
- PMP Approved
- USAID/GIROA IL
- DPP Signed by PRRD
- Hard Projects
- Training/Hiring URZ/ZAB/HIL
- SIKA-S Successor Contract
- Soft FOG/ Outreach
- Capacity Building
- MISTI Evaluation
- SIKA-S Program

## **GENDER APPROACH:** *Was The Approach To Women Inclusion Appropriate And Effective In Terms Of Empowering And Increasing Women Participation In Decision Making In SIKA-South Activities?*

Cultural and religious norms in Afghanistan pose major challenges to women’s participation in DEs, provincial entities (PEs), and DDAs. Traditionally, women play a limited role in decision-making concerning community development. Nevertheless, USAID’s gender policy requires implementing partners to ensure gender equality, female empowerment, and gender integration in all aspects of programming as part of USAID’s strategy on human rights and effective and sustainable development outcomes.

Apart from the development of a Gender Action Plan in September 2013, the effort to hire a Gender Specialist in the same month, and the establishment of two Women’s Advisory Committees, very little appears to have been done to empower and increase women’s participation in decision-making.<sup>14</sup> Field research and careful review of the documents does not reveal any progress in terms of actual grant-generation, or evidence of projects that have a meaningful gender component. While informal meetings and seminars with women were conducted during the period of performance, these did not originate from the WACs or Community Forums, were not listed on the DPPs, and cannot count as gender programming initiated by SIKA-South.

While the evaluation recognizes the immense challenges faced by SIKA-South in integrating a gender component within its programming, gender was not thoroughly addressed during the period of performance.<sup>15</sup>

### **WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS AND CONSULTATIONS**

During the period of performance SIKA-South had a Gender Team responsible for, among other things, including women in the facilitation of gender-mainstreaming sessions for district entities, and organizing capacity building programs for women and DDA members on women’s participation. According to SIKA-South’s Soft Activities Tracker from April 2014, women did participate in Community Forums during which informal meetings were held to discuss women’s issues.<sup>16</sup> The women who attended the Community Forums however, were not DDA members and could not be identified for interview by MISTI’s advisors. The April 2014 tracker only listed the organization that attendees belonged to and not the names of the attendees themselves. Consequently, MISTI was not able to verify if these women attended the Community Forums, and if they did, if they were included in informal meetings to discuss

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<sup>14</sup> This evaluation was limited only to sampling six districts as per USAID’s Statement of Work. The evaluation team, which included a female qualitative researcher, visited these six districts. With regards to the remaining two provinces, anecdotal signs of interest were reported in Nimroz Province and are mentioned here for the purposes of providing a comprehensive overview for this section.

<sup>15</sup> The grants and activities tracker review for this evaluation includes the initial wave of data collection after the approval of the Statement of Work on late April 2014. MISTI had made a second request of the grants activity tracker was collected on late June 2014. Where appropriate, the evaluation team has included activities outside the reporting period which we find it relevant to this section of the report.

<sup>16</sup> These informal meetings are mentioned in several SIKA-South Monthly and Quarterly Reports.

women's issues. What is certain is that no gender programming or follow-on actions resulted from these meetings.

## WOMEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEES

While SIKA-South did not implement any gender activities in the South during the period of performance it did make several attempts to implement activities in Arghandab and Qalat districts where Women's Advisory Committees were established in conjunction with the Department of Women's Affairs (DoWA). Unfortunately, the selection of members to these committees appears to have been *ad hoc*, involving the selection of cleaning staff at the district government centers rather than a considered approach to membership. As a result, many of the WAC members were uneducated and illiterate, and unable to perform the organizational and administrative tasks required for the WACs to be successful.

While a couple of grant activities were put forward in the form of Project Concept Notes, none of these proposed grant activities made it through the approval process. WAC members expressed in interviews their frustration with the lack of gender-related stabilization activities and felt this was largely due to a lack of guidance from both the DoWA and/or SIKA-South.

## **KANDAHAR MODEL:** *How did SIKA-South integrate key steps in the Kandahar Model into the identification of projects and the execution and management of grants?*

SIKA-South is contractually obligated to follow the Kandahar Model under the NABDP guidelines, which includes working within the NABDP's existing framework and methodology. The Kandahar Model features a combined strategy of decentralized procurement, specific financial procedures, a commitment to the quick delivery of activities and projects, and community contracting as a way to instill local ownership at the community level.<sup>17</sup> To date, SIKA-South has integrated most of the requirements in the Kandahar Model; it has, however, fallen short of the quick-delivery requirement. Delivery continues to be slow and problematic, particularly with regards to the vetting of vendors and contractors, leading to frustration among residents. These issues are largely due to how the approval process was handled at the national level, and particularly the lack of efficient coordination between the field and national offices.

## SIKA-SOUTH ADAPTATION OF THE KANDAHAR MODEL

Community contracting ensures that the CDCs and DDAs gain hands-on experience in project planning, execution, and management of finances. Under the NABDP guidelines, the MRRD strongly encourages projects that can be managed by the CDCs and DDAs without private contractors. This in turn enables

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<sup>17</sup> Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development National Area Based Development Programme, *The Kandahar Model*, p.1

the local communities to take more appropriate localized decisions based on available resources with decidedly quick delivery.<sup>18</sup>

When the NSP and NABDP established CDCs and DDAs, they were meant to serve as a platform for strengthening sub-national governance through direct community participation that fed into the district planning and budgeting framework, making decision making more transparent, accountable, and centered on community grievances.

As outlined in the MRRD's Kandahar Model brochure, the implementation of the model follows a three-step process that ensures decentralization of development work and quick delivery:<sup>19</sup>

1. **Community Participation:** CDCs and DDAs are involved in the following phases of project implementation:
  - a. Identification of individual community needs and localized prioritization of projects (mitigation activities).
  - b. Implementation of prioritized and funded projects.
  - c. Monitoring of projects by the CDC (in addition to PRRD and central monitors from MRRD).
2. **Reduction of "Red Tape" and Quick Delivery:** This includes the goal of faster decision-making process, quick delivery, and a reduction of "red tape".
3. **Local Labor and Resources:** This requires that local labor and resources instead of external contracting, which leads to rapid implementation.

SIKA-South adapted the Kandahar Model in separate phases that mirror the above three-step process. During the identification phase, project concepts are brought from the CDC to the DDAs for approval. A master list of priority projects is prepared by the DDA, which results in the preparation of a project concept notes document. Once the PCN has been formalized, the PCN is shared with the District Governor (DG) and PRRD. The high-priority projects are endorsed by the DDA and DG, and are then sent to the provincial line departments for approval. Once the grant application is approved by the PRRD, SIKA-South reviews the documents for USAID approval. During the project implementation, DDA members are trained and involved in monitoring, evaluating and publicizing progress.

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<sup>18</sup> The Implementation Letter stipulates that USAID and its IP must support the objective of the National Solidarity Program, and the National Area-Based Development (see USAID-GIRoA/MRRD/IDLG agreement dated September 3, 2012, p.3). The implementation clearly states that the IR4 will ensure that SIKA is a quick delivery program. It further states that the "quick delivery" projects are projects that initiated quickly, but has a long-term result, such as community infrastructure projects (see Implementation Letter, Annex 1). While the SIKA-South September 2013 PMP does not explicitly use the words "quick delivery," the Implementation Letter supersedes the SIKA-South PMP and Work Plan, and thus the contractual and controlling instrument.

<sup>19</sup> The Kandahar Model set out three preconditions: (a) a community participation; (b) a faster decision making process, and the "reduction of red-tape;" and, (c) a regionalized project management cycle. See MRRD UNDP National Area Based Development Program, Kandahar Model p.2.

## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION EFFORTS

**Identification of Community Needs:** SIKA-South successfully identified community needs via its Community Forum process. In practice, the Community Forum was widely seen as a positive consultative process, requiring inputs from the community level all the way to the District Entities and the Provincial Authorities. Many of the CDC and DDA members expressed strong support for this process since its members were constantly consulted during the identification phase. This consultation was carried out in close coordination with district engineers, DDAs and PRRD social workers and engineers, and relevant district government offices. The strength of the Community Forum process lies within the community cluster system, in which many of the surrounding communities come together to identify and prioritize activities according to the needs of their areas.

**Implementation of Prioritized Projects:** While many of the projects were still in the early stages of implementation, the milestone payments appear to have been slow and cumbersome. Many of the CDC-grantees expressed frustration with milestone payments, due to the delays they experienced in receiving their payments, despite having met the minimum criteria for further payments. This is understandable given the level of procedures, which among other things, requires district engineers, DDAs, and PRRD social workers and engineers approval before payment. Despite some implementation of prioritized projects, this cumbersome and lengthy process presented a hurdle to efficient implementation and completion of projects.

**Community Joint Monitoring:** Training of CDCs and DDAs for monitoring is a time consuming process, and SIKA-South went to great lengths to do this and include the DDAs. SIKA-South had good internal monitoring processes that included detailed documentation and photos of infrastructure projects' progress. The results of these joint monitoring efforts were then reported to USAID. These joint monitoring exercises provided the district entities with greater exposure to their constituents, served as a good practice in accountability, and were consistent with the requirements of the Kandahar Model.

## REDUCTION OF “RED TAPE” AND QUICK DELIVERY

**Quick Delivery:** All of SIKA-South's stabilization programming was identified through SAM Trainings held at the Community Forums. This process was done at the local level, and all projects were implemented entirely by the beneficiary community through direct funding paid into pre-existing CDC bank accounts already established by the NSP or bank accounts set up with SIKA-South's assistance.

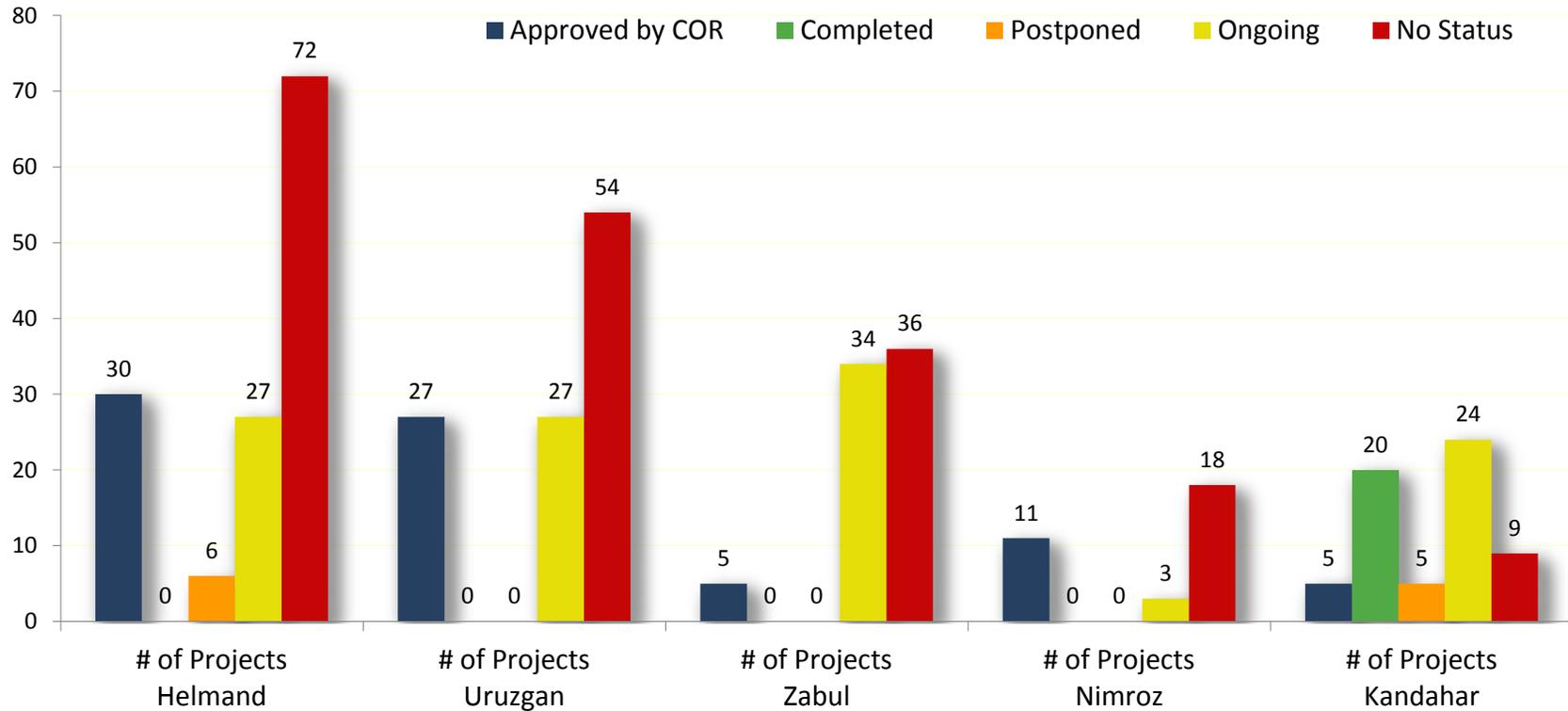
SIKA-South managers stated that stabilization is not a quick development program and requires numerous consensus-building meetings before a grant/activity can be implemented. Managers also noted how the long approval process, requiring multiple layers of compliance and the sign-off of several organizations and institutions, caused delays. This was further exacerbated by the lack of a Grants Manager and challenges in the remote coordination of field staff during the PoP. Figure 5 illustrates how a large proportion of proposed activities appear to have become bogged down in the approval process once the PCNs had been relayed back to SIKA-South by the PRRDs. These bogged down activities are listed in Figure 5 as having “no status”.

Key senior staff interviewed for this evaluation reiterated that the *governance process* approach requires building the capacity of the CDCs and the DDAs in order achieve a long-term stabilization effect. While

this may be true, careful inspection of the DPP revealed wider issues related to delays in progress. Many of the delays centered on the USAID Vetting Support Unit (VSU), which legally must vet fixed obligation grant (FOG) amounts over \$25,000. A sampling of the DPP from all six provinces revealed that a plurality of projects exceeded \$25,000. This appears to have placed considerable strain on the VSU as it could take several months for the VSU to approve/deny vendors. This delayed many of the projects proposed in mid-2013, and ran counter to the Kandahar Model's quick delivery approach, which the MRRD views as an essential stabilizing component.

While improving good governance and building the capacities of CDCs and DDAs are important, stabilization does not hinder exclusively on the capacity/ability of CDCs/DDAs. Per USAID's Stabilization Unit PMP and guidelines, as well as MRRD inputs, quick delivery is a fundamental step in stabilization programming. Governance processes generally come after initial quick delivery efforts. Other SIKAs conducted quick delivery through inexpensive programming under the \$25,000 vetting threshold in order to get the stabilization process moving while they conducted capacity building activities and waited for USAID's Vetting Unit to approve larger grants. Instead, SIKA-South adopted the governance process approach at the expense of a more nuanced approach that could have included quick delivery and improved governance among its goals. The delays caused by this governance process approach resulted in reduced performance.

**FIGURE 5: PROJECT STATUS BY PROVINCE**



**Figure 5:** The colored bars represent the number of projects closed, completed, postponed, and with milestone disbursements (1-3). The April Grants/Activities Tracker (sent in May 2014) was compared with the June Master Grant/Activity Tracker received during the beginning of July 2014 to ensure all projects were incorporated in this evaluation. The red bars represent project concepts listed in Community Forum Project Concept Notes (PCN) and has no status during the period of performance. These PCNs were also signed by the district and provincial entities and delivered to SIKA-South for approval by SIKA-South and USAID, after which it becomes part of the District Project Portfolio (DPP). The MISTI evaluation team had visited closed, completed, and ongoing project in Kandahar, Zabul, and Helmand Province in early June and July.

## **SERVICE DELIVERY AS GIROA LED:** *To what extent has SIKASouth activities been successfully presented as government activities, connecting people to resources (both government and non-government) or service delivery?*

Generally, the evaluation found that SIKASouth had successfully presented activities as Afghan-led in its branding efforts, outreach materials and media activities, connecting the community to resources that would otherwise have not been known by the community.

In all districts sampled for this evaluation, SIKASouth managed to successfully present the activities as MRRD or NSP managed under the name “Subat” (Stabilization). Under the Subat Program, PRRD officials introduced SIKASouth District Development Officers (DDOs) to the CDCs, DDOs and other available line department personnel. All activities flowing from the CDCs and DDAs were branded under the MRRD logo in brochures and other related outreach materials. During project opening and closing ceremonies, the provincial government line departments and district entities were present, putting an Afghan government face on every stabilization activity. Afghan government entities were also involved in the monitoring of large infrastructure projects and the branding and logos at SIKASouth-sponsored events is of the Afghan government, not USAID or SIKASouth. In addition, SIKASouth’s focus on publicizing activities through traditional media (radio) gave government officials increased exposure.

The evaluation team found that few beneficiaries knew there was an international donor behind activities, and instead assumed the Afghan government, or more specifically the MRRD, was funding activities. Likewise, while more educated beneficiaries often understood there was an international donor behind the activities, they still credited the Afghan government for connecting people to resources and for service delivery.

## **CONSULTATIVE PROCESS**

Compared with previous MRRD projects, the CDCs and DDAs noted a positive shift in the degree of community consultation and ownership with SIKASouth projects. The district entities also explained that they understood this consultative approach, unlike previous projects which were selected by the government without understanding the needs of the community. Interestingly, many of the respondents also stated that due to local implementation, the quality of the projects appeared to be better than past efforts which were conducted by contractors from outside the communities. This change is due in large part to the fact that many of the projects sampled are carefully monitored by the communities themselves, or alternatively are monitored by the DDAs with resources and assistance from SIKASouth.

Most SIKASouth residents have not experienced such a community-driven analytical development process before. Their government has not been known for consulting residents about stabilization or development programming. This new experience has drawn many beneficiaries closer to their district and provincial governments, exposing them to a government.

A core strength of project selection in this program comes from the Cluster system, which looks to build consensus among communities from an area regarding which projects should be implemented, where they should go, and in what order they should be prioritized. Often this involved selecting projects that benefitted multiple communities, e.g., linear road projects that may benefit several communities situated

along the road's route. This consultative process also improved inter-community cohesion and mitigated against the potentially destabilizing effects of envy.

**BOTTOM-UP COMMUNICATION:** *How effectively was bottom-up communication process promoted linked MRRD-developed CDC and DDAs to the overall district and provincial development planning processes?*

Shortly after the NSP had established several thousand CDCs, the NABDP created DDAs as a means to bridge the gap between village-level and provincial-level governance institutions. This step in turn paved the way for a bottom-up framework for development, which was to be accomplished through DDPs. These DDPs were meant to outline the projects DDA members hoped to implement in their districts. In order to develop these DDPs, the DDAs were tasked with collecting all their CDCs' prioritization lists and summarizing them in a Community Development Plan (CDP) for sign-off by district and provincial officials.

## MAINTAINING COMMUNITY STRUCTURE

SIKA-South follows the same development framework by enlisting the CDCs and the DDAs as part of its programming efforts. SIKA-South organized communities into clusters to form the CDCs, an achievement that made the process more inclusive. In doing so, SIKA-South encouraged communities to come together in order to plan, monitor, and execute their project activities. Within the NABDP framework, SIKA-South was able to fully integrate the district and provincial development planning processes. By following the NABDP framework, which is an inherently bottom-up approach, SIKA-South made progress in improving effective communication between existing community decision-making processes and the relevant government entities.

Through the Community Forums, community and district entity members, in particular the DDAs, were able to revive efficient and effective channels of communication with relevant line ministries and be engaged in the development planning process. This process allowed traditional community leaders to have input into the district and provincial level development processes, bolstering their ability to get things accomplished for their communities and enhancing their reputations at the community level. While it is still too early to know whether these Community Forums will have long-term impacts, or survive beyond the SIKA program, for the present they provide useful linkages between informal and formal structures.

## **CAPACITY BUILDING ON DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS:** *How effective were capacity building initiatives aimed at teaching district entities how to plan, design, implement, and monitor various types of development projects?*

SIKA-South conducted five capacity building trainings<sup>20</sup> in Kandahar and Zabul which involved the DDAs, other District Entities, and PRRDs. The capacity building trainings were generally perceived as satisfactory, particularly by the district line departments which expressed enthusiasm for future trainings. The PRRD, however, leveled some criticisms regarding the training content, which they felt was often irrelevant, too remedial, and poorly tailored to their professional needs. In sum, all parties acknowledged they require capacity building exercises to improve their performance, and that while useful, capacity-building trainings required further refinement.

SIKA-South capacity building includes project management cycles for infrastructure projects, with a focus on milestone payment training.<sup>21</sup> While the training for district line departments was considered useful for participants, most could not retain the information taught. Factors contributing to this included the wide variance in literacy levels of participants, and the fact that training sessions often repeated subject matter and failed to run their full hours. The program curriculum relied on continuity and follow-up attendance from participants, as it was based on a cumulative program combining theory with practical exercises. It was therefore difficult for participants who only attended intermittent sessions to catch-up on the subject matter, although the practical exercises appeared to work in catching participants up with previous sessions.

Actual curriculum content, when properly taught, was valuable, helping to ensure that the recipients understood how the SIKA-South payment scheme works, and that each of the DDAs and district entities are able to properly procure the necessary items for construction.<sup>22</sup> Topics covered during trainings included, amongst other things, planning, designing, financial management, and monitoring of projects. SIKA-South also conducted trainings on project documentation, which included guidance on document control and management, filing systems, and other related tasks relevant to running a project. Line departments in Helmand stated that the trainings did not suit their professional needs because they were too rudimentary. They would have preferred trainings that were more tailored to their specific managerial and technical needs.

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<sup>20</sup> The capacity building trainings were conducted through the Capacity Building Unit, and serve as a cross-section between IR1-IR4. Building the capacity of the local institution is part of the mandate of the SIKA Programs, which is a fundamental to maintaining a robust and sustainable governance and development project. The term “capacity building” refer to this evaluation is the training of participants during the program cycles in order to inform the participants with the tools, knowledge, and skills required for the satisfactory performance of planning, designing, implementing, and monitoring development projects.

<sup>21</sup> As of this writing, the new PMP has introduced in May 2014. It includes an introduction of a Capacity Building (IR5), which falls outside the period of performance for this evaluation. According to numerous interviews with SIKA-South management, the justification of the IR5 is to focus on capturing the proper measurement for reporting purposes, and to build governance component at the provincial, district, and community level.

<sup>22</sup> Survey of the SIKA-South database reveals that it has conducted a capacity assessment of each individual organization in great detail which outlines the challenges, lessons learned, recommendations and index score for the corresponding entities as early March 2013 through March 2014. Since many of the projects are still in the early stages and awaiting approval, many of the district entities have not the requisite training as part of its curriculum. Bost District Entities has not started capacity building engagement as of this writing.

## DELIVERY OF TRAINING

Trainings were conducted in five districts in both Kandahar and Zabul provinces during the period of performance. SIKA-South conducted capacity building engagements, each over the course of five days, with the district line personnel in these five districts.

The curriculum for the district entities included basic administration, leadership, time management, conflict resolution, filing, reporting, planning, budgeting, and civil service law. The second phase included practical exercises and on the job training. For CDC/DDA members, SIKA-South conducted capacity building training on topics including leadership, project monitoring, procurements, and milestone payment processes. This training was to some extent less technical than that of the district entities. There was no training conducted for PRRD in Kandahar, Helmand or Zabul during the period of this performance.

While the modules were informative and detailed, many of the SIKA-South facilitators did not spend enough time with the DDA members to ensure that there was sufficient retention of information. This was further exacerbated by poor motivation among some participants, absenteeism, and low literacy levels among the participants which hampered their ability to digest and retain the information. In many cases, planners should have afforded participants more time to properly integrate the subject matter. The evaluation team interviewed a number of district entity representatives that participated in these trainings. The interviews were conducted several months after the trainings. They found that while most participants remembered having done the training, few could recall exactly what was taught or explain how they are using the new skills in their day-to-day work.

While SIKA-South conducted the capacity assessments performed to identify the DE and line departments' staff training needs, it only assessed needs at an organizational level, and failed to adequately take into account the diverse range of educational and literacy levels among potential trainees.

While SIKA-South made a good-faith effort to comply with USAID contractual requirements regarding capacity building, significant problems remained which prevented this evaluation from assessing its performance as more than satisfactory. At this stage it is still too early to assess what the long-term effects of the trainings will be.

### **VALUED COMPONENT BY DISTRICT & PROVINCE ENTITIES:** *What components of SIKA-South were most and least valued by district and provincial entities?*

In order to evaluate the most and least valued components of SIKA-South, the evaluation team asked 410 beneficiaries to rank aspects of the SIKA-South program. Below, the evaluation team presents a brief summary of several of the most and least valued components described. This list is illustrative and not exhaustive, results are not presented in any hierarchy of importance, and these results should not be understood as an endorsement of one activity over another, or as an assessment of their effects and impact on stability. Overall, it appears that “hard” (e.g., infrastructure) projects are valued by beneficiaries more highly than “soft” (e.g., trainings) projects.

## MOST VALUED COMPONENT

COMPONENT	LOCATION	REASON
Road & Culvert construction	Kandahar & Zabul	<p>Respondents explained that their main source of income is agricultural, and during the civil war most of the roads and culverts were destroyed in their community. Farmers faced many problems during the harvest, including the high cost of transportation which prevented them from bringing their products to the market for sale. As a result, most of the farmers were forced to sell their yields at below-market prices.</p> <p>Through SIKA-South intervention and SAM processes, villagers proposed road and culvert for their communities. Through this commonwealth projects, they were able to obtain access to roads, and now note that they easily able to sell their agriculture products to the local or provincial markets, in turn increasing their household income households.</p>
Irrigation canal	Kandahar & Zabul	<p>Farmers in Kandahar and Zabul complained of insufficient irrigation systems in their districts. Lack of water led to serious agricultural problems and often forced them to seek alternative, higher-risk income-generating strategies, including the need to outside the country to Iran or Pakistan, or enter the black market. After SIKA intervention in several districts (Arghandab, Daman, Tarnak wa Jaldak Qalat and Shajoie), farmers selected an irrigation canal project to address their SOI. Through its implementation, water access was increased, which respondents explained will lead to higher incomes and less pressures to enter risky or illegal coping strategies. They also noted that greater contentment among farmers is expected to decreases anti-government support in all targeted area.</p>
Water supply network Improvement (Drinking water)	Kandahar & Zabul	<p>This project covers about 4km of surrounding villages in the Murghan Kicha and Akhter Muhammad Kalacha area of Daman district. Installation of pipes for drinking water has provided access to clean drinking water. As the interviewee noted, this represents the first time that people have access to potable water at their houses. They credit this project with increasing community cohesion and unity and trust between community and government has been improved.</p>

COMPONENT	LOCATION	REASON
Water Reservoir	Tarnak wa Jaldak-Zabul	During cultivation, interviewees complained they had no sufficient water, but through the implementation of these water reservoirs they now feel they have enough water for cultivation of their crop-lands, and by extension, higher incomes.
School rehabilitation	Daman Kandahar	Interviewees (DDA members and community elders) in Tarnak wa Jaldak noted that, in the meeting with the line departments' directors (access to GIRoA -IR2), they identified poor education resources in their district as a major issue. One chief complaint was the need for school rehabilitation. This project helped us construct boundary wall and refurbish schools for their children. Interviewees plan on sending their children to school and look forward to their increased access to education.
Flood protection wall	Kandahar	The DG, DDAs and beneficiaries expressed their past concerns regarding river flooding; every year they lose pieces of land. They credit the construction of a flood prevention wall as having solved the problem.
Communication outreach meeting with line department directors	Kandahar & Zabul	One well-regarded SIKASouth component was community outreach and access to GIRoA. Community representatives and government line departments in all the selected area acknowledged the positive impact of communication outreach efforts with advancing a clear message to the community that government is working for the people and people are part of government. As part of this dialogue, a number of projects were advanced, including school refurbishment in Daman, Tarnak wa Jaldak, approval of a bridge in Arghandab, education of 8 health workers and nurses in Daman and joint monitoring of all project of SIKASouth committee.
Empowering the district entities by CB training	Kandahar & Zabul	Based on the interview with the DE in 5 districts Kandahar and Zabul, one additional highly-valued activity was the CBI for the DE. This training was conducted for line departments' representatives in the district center, and covered issues related to planning, management, filling, communication and monitoring of projects. One of the physically change in the district center as a result of this training was an improved filling system.

## LEAST VALUED COMPONENT

COMPONENT	LOCATION	REASON
Project delivery processes and approval	All SIKA targeted Area	Deputy Provincial governors in both provinces with the line departments' directors, DG, DE and beneficiaries complained about delays in the approval of projects. In Arghandab community requested a canal rehabilitation project on February, but the approval process was only completed several months later, by which time the river level had risen too high and the project was forced to be postponed until June.
Lack of Women Participation	Arghandab (Kandahar) Qalat (Zabul) Bost (Helmand)	Most of the interviewees from the government and community side were not satisfied with what they felt to be a notable lack of female participation. DoWA supported SIKA-South in introducing 10 women from its department for Arghandab and Qalat district. This group of women convened the DDP for their community; unfortunately due to long process of project approval and limitation of vertical structure of by USAID, delays and turn-over of membership prevented them from advancing their agenda
Payment of millstone during life of the projects	All the Hard project in SIKA-South	The other least valued component was the millstone payment. Based on the beneficiaries' statement and our physically observation, projects which were completed the first or second round of their millstone were still often forced to wait several additional weeks to receive another payment. Interviewees saw this process as negatively impacting community interest in these projects.
Capacity Building	Kandahar, Zabul, and Helmand. <b>Note:</b> Only PRRD capacity building exercises were conducted Helmand.	Capacity Building (while local government workers and others would like to see more capacity building activities, these needs to be more effectively tailored to needs and implemented by qualified facilitators). DDAs and District government officials expressed interest and high regards, however PRRD official stated many, more often than not, the curriculum was remedial and did not meet the technical requirements to effectively perform their duties.

## **ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTING TO STABILIZATION:** *Which activities undertaken by SIKA-South have the most or least contribution to stabilization objectives?*

Stabilization efforts in Afghanistan work to reduce insurgency, increase the legitimacy, reach, and capacity of the Afghan Government, and bolster the resilience of communities to resist external threats and solve local problems. To this end, stabilization programming needs to be highly responsive to local sources of instability and grievances against the local government. In order to measure specific instances in which efforts have improved such perceptions, the evaluation team utilized a modified assessment approach that sampled a cross-section of SIKA-South’s mitigation activities (hard/infrastructural projects) completed during the PoP, alongside a sample of completed and ongoing outreach, capacity building, and soft projects in Kandahar, Zabul, and Helmand provinces.

SIKA-South facilitated a series of workshops and SAM training sessions for elected DDA members. During these events, participants were asked to prioritize which projects and activities they valued as having contributed to stabilization, including outcomes such as:

1. Increased support for the Afghan Government;
2. Decreased support for Anti-Government Elements (AGEs);
3. Improved normal functioning of society.

The evaluation team found that, through the implementation of the 43 “hard projects” and 39 “soft projects” sampled for this performance evaluation, SIKA-South consistently contributed to all three stabilization objectives. However, several outstanding projects exhibited issues that merit further discussion below.

### **PROJECT/ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTING TO STABILIZATION OBJECTIVES**

**Hard Projects:** As in many other communities in Afghanistan, beneficiaries stated that road projects improved access to government offices, medical facilities, schools, farms, and between communities, including those of different ethnic and tribal groups. Significantly, these projects also increased the ability of district entities to work with their constituents to plan, implement, and jointly monitor the projects, affording local government with opportunities to demonstrate increased visibility and accountability with citizens. As such, these projects provided an ideal apparatus to showcase government interactions with the local community, and served as a public relations platform for greater government exposure.

Infrastructure projects such as road rehabilitation employ local laborers, providing short-term cash assistance to communities – one of the fundamental elements of the Kandahar Model. Protection walls and water gates provide protection against soil erosion and flooding, which many Afghan farmers identified as a major source of instability. Much like road rehabilitation projects, protection walls were built with direct district entity involvement, improving recipient community support for the government.

It is common among all recipient communities to express keen interest in hard infrastructure projects such as road rehabilitation, culverts, protection walls, and water projects. These projects serve as the basis for societal functions and provide a catalyst for long-term development of the community, as well as fostering important relationships with neighboring communities. Hard infrastructure projects also serve

as an important catalyst for economic growth.

**Soft Projects:** The Community Forums, facilitated by SIKA-South has provided a platform to manage expectations, justify the relevance of stability projects to the community, and work with citizens to identify sources of instability in their areas and propose project concepts. Community Forums were highly valued when the projects were timely completed and tangible results could be seen. Such activities and projects improved people's perceptions of their district governments' ability to provide needed services, bringing them closer to the government and indirectly reducing support for AGEs. At the same time, they also improved the normal functioning of society through the provision of long term quality of life enhancements, and through conflict resolutions led by district and provincial government officials. The cluster-system CDC meetings also served as useful reconciliation opportunities, and were particularly effective at reconciling longstanding disputes. The Stability Technical Sessions, however, were not as well received by the DDAs.

## ACTIVITIES LEAST CONTRIBUTING TO STABILIZATION OBJECTIVES

Capacity building is an essential tool for good governance. It is, however, is an intensive, long-drawn out, and expensive enterprise. It also requires a lot of human capital, sufficient engagement, and proper facilitation. While many participants from district line departments in Helmand showed great interest in doing more capacity building activities, they noted that the capacity building exercises they had already attended were often poorly suited for their professional function.<sup>23</sup>

A lack of gender programming also meant that this type of programming did not have any effect on stability in SIKA-South's districts. Apart from limited participation in the Community Forums there were no other real opportunities for women to interact with local government.

Unlike the Community Forums, Stability Technical Assistance Sessions, intended to facilitate further discussion on stability issues, did not contribute much to stability. District entities appeared uninterested in these events and were often absent. The DDAs also expressed frustration with these events because they did not create or discuss actual project work and were sometimes viewed as a waste of time.

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<sup>23</sup> See full discussion under Capacity Building section. Capacity building initiatives had not started for DDAs in Helmand. Only the PRRD received some capacity building training in Helmand.

**EMPOWERMENT:** *How effective did SIKA-South work through Afghan government structures and within Afghan government processes to empower the community leaders and district government in decision-making and community engagement under existing district level interventions?*

SIKA-South did particularly well at empowering district and provincial development planning processes. However, there were several programmatic issues which prevented the development process from being as effective as it may have been, and which are worth noting.

SIKA-South did well utilizing the existing structure of the MRRD, IDLG and Afghan government processes. The IR2 team did an especially good job connecting local communities to their local governments. This resulted in the district government gaining local population support. Although many capacity building engagements were not well received, SIKA-South did effectively make use of existing empowerment mechanisms through the Community Forums and informal CDC *jirgas*.

For the purpose of this report, the evaluation team has conducted analysis based on the roles and responsibilities of the following government officials and entities:

- ***District Governor:*** The District Governor is responsible for district engagements, conflict resolution, responding to community needs, service delivery, monitoring activities, and coordinating with line departments working in the district.
- ***Line Departments:*** the office of the District Rural Rehabilitation and Development (DRRD) is responsible for ensuring an active and responsive DDA, as well as coordinating, implementing, and monitoring MRRD-funded projects. The DoWA is responsible for women's affairs. Various other line departments work on their specific ministry's agenda.
- ***DDA:*** Elected district representatives in charge of selecting development activities, ensuring their implementation, and monitoring their progress. SIKA-South included DDAs in their joint monitoring activities where funding and resources were available. DDAs are the main conduit between communities and the district government.

## OBSERVABLE RESULTS

- ***Community Forums:*** The Community Forums provided DEs with considerable exposure to their local communities and local government officials. Community Forums included clusters of communities, giving the DDAs a wider geographical reach than if they were to operate on a one-community-at-a-time basis. Community Forums provided a venue for DEs, communities and local government representatives to discuss stabilization concerns and develop follow-up actions.
- ***Participation:*** Community Forums provided DDAs and other participating DEs with opportunities to systematically identify sources of instability affecting their communities and propose appropriate mitigating activities. The traditional Afghan structure also provided a good forum for conflict resolution, which was usually undertaken by the district and provincial

government officials present.

- **Adherence to the NABDP Guidelines:** SIKA-South's operating procedures were consistent with the NABDP's operational guidelines and satisfied most of the Kandahar Model requirements. Quick-delivery however, was still a problem. That said, SIKA-South did well to build the DDAs, promote their interaction with local government, and bridge communities' needs with corresponding stabilization projects.
- **Local Ownership:** Local ownership was best demonstrated through the joint monitoring of activities by the DEs and SIKA-South M&E staff. Such joint monitoring activities provided opportunities for the DEs to demonstrate accountability and transparency. This bolstered DEs legitimacy among their communities and further empowered their ability to get things done.
- **Media Coverage:** Activities and projects received significant media coverage, and public ceremonies (e.g. opening ceremonies) provided opportunities to familiarize DEs with their constituents.

## INSUFFICIENT RESULTS IN KEY AREAS

- **Gender Participation and Approach:** Gender programming was mostly absent from SIKA-South activity before July 2013. Attempts were started to change this situation in July 2013. A Gender Action Plan was prepared in September 2013 and a Gender Specialist throughout late 2013 and early 2014. Two ineffective WACs were formed in Kandahar and Tarnak wa Jaldak districts and several grants and activities were proposed but none were approved due to poorly developed proposals that either did not address a gender issue or were outside the scope of allowable projects. This problem could be attributed to two main causes: 1) WAC members were selected for convenience (e.g. cleaning staff present at the governance center) and not because they were qualified for the task; and, 2) poor guidance and mentoring by SIKA-South facilitators.
- **Capacity Building:** IDLG guidelines for capacity building were followed, however there were several issues with the capacity building activities due to a lack of attention to detail by the SIKA-South Capacity Building Unit and some of the facilitators hired to provide the trainings. Capacity building engagements were not well received by the PRRD due to the poor fit between curriculum and what the participants believed they needed. Participants often felt that what they received was too general and not tailored to their professional functions. In addition, many participants complained that the trainers hired were not of a good standard.
- **Delays in Approval Process:** A common complaint of participants centered on the fact that most PCNs had not been approved during the period of performance. This caused delays and considerable frustration with DDA members and local citizens. It also ran afoul of the quick-delivery element of the Kandahar Model.

## **LESSONS LEARNED:** *What lessons learned from the SIKA-South Program implementation can inform future USAID Programming?*

Based on the above findings, the evaluation teams offer the following lessons learned to inform future USAID Programming. Lessons are ordered by the typology of the evaluation questions as follows:

### OVERARCHING PROGRAM STRATEGIES

- ***Theory of Change and the Performance Management Plan:*** The PMP is limited to measuring output indicators and mislabeled outcomes. Although this issue is not unique to SIKA-South, it is nonetheless a serious one, and stems from the lack of a defined theory of change and a Results Framework built to measure causality. This gap hinders effective M&E, and fails to generate data capable of informing USAID with the lessons learned on how to better contribute to the stabilization process. PMPs should contain clear theories of change, logical Results Frameworks, and appropriate output and outcome indicators before they receive USAID approval.
- ***Addressing the Sources of Instability:*** MISTI has found through previous research that efforts to adequately address SOIs work best when more communities are involved, rather than just individual CDCs. SIKA-South has successfully sought this approach by including CDC clusters in the majority of its programming. For example, road-gravelling projects often involved four or more CDCs in one continuous project, thereby inking the communities together and strengthening cohesion. Stabilization activities should achieve quick delivery and bring communities closer to their local governments. During the period of performance governance processes often delayed project start times by as much as four months, and undermined the communities' perceptions of their local governments. It's important to understand that stabilization programming is about long-term goals, but quick solutions. Should USAID conduct stabilization programming again, it should focus on ensuring quick delivery and a reduction of "red-tape". While these have been built into the contract and are expected of SIKA-South under the Kandahar Model, too many lengthy processes hinder performance.
- ***Gender Approach:*** Notwithstanding the immense challenges faced performing gender programming in Southern Afghanistan, the component was not adequately addressed by SIKA-South during the period of performance. USAID's gender policy requires implementing partners to ensure gender equality, female empowerment, and gender integration in all aspects of programming as part of USAID's strategy on human rights and effective and sustainable development outcomes. It is important for the USAID COR and the USAID Gender Team to ensure adequate gender programming in line with the contract through continuous monitoring of the IP's programming.
- ***The Kandahar Model:*** SIKA-South appears to be following the spirit of the Kandahar Model as best it can in a stabilization/local governance context given limited USAID and MRRD guidance and process efficiency. The Kandahar Model is a platform that encourages community driven and led development which includes quick delivery as required under the NABDP framework. Long delays in the approval process are not in line with the Kandahar Model. If SIKA-South worked on enhancing the approval mechanism, the quick-delivery element would have been satisfied. It is important for USAID to understand that the SAM process and the Kandahar Model are not entirely

compatible. SAM is a lengthy consultative process while the Kandahar Model is about quick delivery. Future USAID programming should reconcile such disparities in the contract.

## INTERMEDIATE ACTIVITIES UNDER THE PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- ***Service Delivery and Branding as GIROA Led:*** SIKA-South has performed well by using the Community Forums to bridge the gap between government officials and communities. Public ceremonies and media activities are an effective way of associating projects with the Afghan government. Good governance hinders on effectively empowering government officials to showcase improved capacity and new service delivery. USAID should encourage more of these outreach efforts as part of their governance programming.
- ***Bottom-Up Communications:*** Informal Afghan institutions are a far more effective channel to use in communicating the needs of the community system. Community Forums, although a revised traditional communications mechanism, allow community leaders to voice their concerns through government channels via a shura mechanism already commonly practiced in Afghanistan and represent a positive SIKA-South approach. USAID should try to avoid creating new mechanisms/processes if traditional ones already exist and can accomplish the same objectives.
- ***Capacity Building Generally:*** Capacity building initiatives were appropriate for CDCs and DDAs given the type of programming SIKA-South conducts. Capacity building trainings for district entities will be better suited if individuals are first properly assessed to gauge competency levels. While the capacity assessments are generally informative, they do not provide otherwise-pertinent information that addresses the specific capabilities of individuals who make up the organization. Moreover, PRRD and district entities have different functions and competency levels and require a different curriculum. Only testing individual competency can determine these needs. USAID can learn from this and demand that all capacity building trainings meet the actual needs and competencies of those receiving the trainings.

## SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES UNDER THE PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- ***Valued Component PEs and DEs:*** Infrastructure and water-related projects are most valued by district and provincial entities because they represent tangible results and can be implemented relatively easily through community participation. Such projects create short-term *cash-for-work* and provide people access to basic needs and services. SAM Trainings and Community Forums provide communities the opportunity to be consulted and voice their concerns. The community cluster based approach is a way of getting a number of communities together to resolve conflicts and provide local solutions. Long delays, coupled with the confusion over milestone payments, demonstrate a lack of progress or improvement in services to community members.
- ***Empowerment:*** Community Forums are empowering as they increase exposure of the public to district officials and reinforce the notion that they are part of the governance process. Inclusions in the monitoring exercises create a sense of ownership and transparency and can be used as an evaluative tool. Given the success of such empowerment activities, USAID could benefit from encouraging their continued use in other programming.

## OTHER INTERRATLED LESSONS

- **Implementation Letter:** As in previous evaluations, Implementation Letters should clearly outline what ministry (and specifically what department within the ministry) is responsible for overseeing programming, and what are the particular responsibilities, deliverables, communication channels, and necessary coordination activities. Program implementation and start dates suffered considerably in SIKA-South due to the lack of a clear Implementation Letter.
- **Timing & Delays Negatively Affect Perception of Afghan Government Performance:** Stabilization activities should be quick delivery and, among other things, bring communities closer to their local governments. During the performance period, “process” often delayed project start times by as much as four months, undermining the communities’ perceptions of their local governments. While outside the control of SIKA-South, hold-ups in the vetting of contractors and vendors resulted in frustrating programming delays. The USAID Vetting Unit has been a hindrance to SIKA-South’s effective performance.
- **Remote Management:** There was a decline in productivity in the period after SIKA-South expat staff moved from Kandahar to Kabul. Major reorganizations like this will require redefining the roles and responsibilities of local staff members, and ensuring that they have the technical skills needed to accomplish their deliverables without direct expat supervision. Remote management of Afghans in key offices is not particularly effective. USAID should rethink programming funding if remote management is left as the only option for continuing program operations.

## OBSERVATIONS

Based on MISTI field research, the evaluation teams offer the following observations to provide context in support of this report’s findings:

- Remote Monitoring is problematic, particularly in insecure environments. While SIKA-South management made several attempts to adjust to the change, there was a period where productivity and performance had dropped. Quality controls, monitoring, and evaluations of remote-managed projects remain challenging, and SIKA-South lacks a shared understanding of what mechanisms are most effective for ensuring quality and accountability for the local staff. The grants/activities approval process, communications between senior provincial and national offices have seen considerable dips in productivity due to lack of adequate guidance from the national team in Kabul.
- Project Concept Notes that came from the existing DPPs have seen quicker approval times from the district level since many of the District and Provincial Entities were already familiar with process. Many of the district line offices and DDA Community Forum venues were in close physical proximity of one another—thus creating a better line of communication and exposure to one another.
- Female inclusion is difficult at the community level and was not adequately addressed during the start-up phases of SIKA-South’s programming. The participation of female DDA members and other

interested women in SIKA-South's Community Forums could not be corroborated. What the evaluation team did discover is that none of the gender programming activities proposed during the PoP were successfully managed through the approvals process. The lack of urgency in making gender programming a priority delayed female inclusion in decision-making processes until mid-2013.

- SIKA-South successfully identified community needs through its Community Forum process. Many of the CDC and DDA members expressed strong support for this process since its members were constantly consulted during the identification phase. The joint monitoring exercises provided the district entities with greater exposure to their constituents, served as a good practice in accountability, and were consistent with the requirements of the Kandahar Model. However, SIKA-South has only partially integrated the key steps in the Kandahar Model and has fallen short of the quick-delivery requirement. During the reporting period, a substantial portion of the PCNs still had no status in the June 2014 grant/activities tracker.
- SIKA-South organized communities into clusters to form the CDCs, an achievement that made the process more inclusive. Consequently, SIKA-South encouraged communities to come together in order to plan, monitor, and execute their project activities. By following the NABDP framework, which is an inherently bottom-up approach, SIKA-South made progress in improving effective communication between existing community decision-making processes and the relevant government entities. This process allowed traditional community leaders to have input into the district and provincial level development processes, bolstering their ability to get things accomplished for their constituents.
- The capacity building trainings were generally perceived as satisfactory, particularly by the district line departments, which expressed enthusiasm for future engagements. The PRRD, however, leveled some criticisms regarding the training content which they felt was often irrelevant, too remedial, and poorly tailored to their professional needs. All parties acknowledged they require capacity building exercises to improve their performance and, that while useful, capacity-building trainings required further refinement. The modules were informative and detailed; however many of the SIKA-South facilitators did not spend enough time with the DDA members to ensure that there was sufficient retention of information.
- District (inclusive of the DDAs) and Provincial entities most valued hard projects because of the tangible results they yield. Water and irrigation projects are most valued due to the inherent local agricultural needs. Road projects are favored due to the efficiency and access to the district centers which may encourage a better pathway to district entities. Lack of gender specific projects is a highly disfavored component among the females interviewed for this evaluation.
- Hard infrastructure projects also serve as an important catalyst for economic growth. The cluster-system CDC meetings also served as useful reconciliation opportunities and were particularly effective at reconciling longstanding disputes. The Stability Technical Sessions, however, were not as well received by the District Entities and required *carrot funding* to keep the participants engaged in the process.
- SIKA-South did well in utilizing the existing structure of the MRRD, IDLG, and Afghan government processes. The IR2 team did an especially good job connecting local communities to their local

governments. This resulted in the district government gaining local population support. Although many capacity building engagements were not well received, SIKA-South did effectively make use of existing empowerment mechanisms through the Community Forums and informal CDC *jirgas*.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above evaluation question findings, the evaluation team offers the following recommendations, and where appropriate, lists the respective IR teams in the recommendations. The recommendations are listed in order of priority below:

1. SIKA-South's theory of change does not clearly delineate a clear causal pathway between activities and intended outcomes. A new theory of change could be separated into two separate but distinct measurable theories; one focused on development projects and aligned with the MRRD, and the other affiliated with governance activities associated with the IDLG. To this end, the M&E Unit should make a comprehensive review of the current PMP, match the IRs to specific theory/ies of change, and create measurable indicators that address the IRs. The M&E Unit should also perform its duties independently and should not be used for the primary purpose of reporting.
2. The PMP indicators are limited in their ability to accurately measure inputs and outputs. A majority of the Results Framework is based on output and no outcome indicators, denying the ability to clearly identify causal relationships between activities and the intended outcomes and results. While it may be appropriate during the early stages of programming, the current PMP should also include outcomes indicators at the Intermediate Results-level in order to inform whether programs have had a measurable effect on the treatment communities. For instance, rather than tallying the number of meetings held, SIKA-South should focus on progress towards the IR's objective.
3. Gender programs have only been marginally attempted and should be accelerated in several provinces. The evaluation team noted considerable female interest in gender programming in Bost and Nad-e-Ali and Nahr-e-Siraj districts (Helmand). According to the SIKA-South Gender Team, capable WAC members exist in these two districts that can identify, plan, implement, and monitor gender-related projects. The SIKA-South Gender Team should mentor and work with the WAC members to accelerate projects and better capitalize on opportunities. While low literacy rates do not preclude women's participation in WACs, careful consideration should be given to the selection of WAC members to ensure they have the skills needed to perform their gender-related tasks as required by the committee mandate. The Gender Team along with the M&E Team should coordinate with the IR1 Team to include gender participation in all its trainings and Stability Technical Assistance Sessions. The Gender Team should select strong partner organizations with technical expertise in gender mainstreaming. This will require the Gender Team to identify other gender-related non-governmental organizations. The IR4 team should identify gender-related projects and give careful consideration to gender-related activities to maintain and to capitalized on the synergy of the WACs in Helmand.

4. SIKASouth has made considerable efforts regarding the *governance process approach*. The IR teams have applied many of the elements of the Kandahar Model. However, delays in the approval process of proposed projects on the DPP directly contravene MRRD guidelines, which require a reduction in red tape and quick delivery. There is also a misunderstanding by senior management of the programmatic differences between stabilization programming and governance programming with a stabilization component. More should have been done to accelerate programming under the vetting threshold to ensure quick delivery of stabilization programming that did not require significant capacity building or governance processes. Too much focus was given to the governance process from the very beginning at the expense of more effective stabilization. The IR1 and the IR4 teams should work closely together to coordinate field teams and track the timeline between receiving requests and approval. The IR1 team should use this information to better manage DDA members and beneficiary expectations regarding the status of project activities. They should also coordinate with the IR4 team through the Stability Technical Assistance Session Forums to keep communities and DDAs actively involved in the development process.
5. The evaluation team found that depending on the beneficiaries interviewed, feedback on capacity building activities ranged from useful to inappropriate. While the district entities have shown considerable enthusiasm, the PRRD and other line departments noted that many of the capacity building engagements were not relevant to their needs and functions. The capacity assessments conducted by SIKASouth dated March 2013 and March 2014, while useful for assessing the general needs of the overall organization, were not sufficiently detailed to capture the specific needs in each of the line departments. Many provincial level officials interviewed expressed this concern, stating that the curriculum was either not relevant, or in some instances too basic for them to make use of. The SIKASouth Capacity Building Unit and the M&E team should reassess the capacity building needs of each department so that trainings are tailored to fit district and provincial line department functional requirements.
6. The community joint monitoring program brings the DDAs, line departments and other interested parties together to monitor project progress. Performed by district entities, such monitoring activities increase the government's profile in communities. Under SIKASouth's guidance, these monitoring activities appear to be working well. Moreover, they align with a key element of the Kandahar Model requiring community participation and ownership. However, these activities are unsustainable without the support of SIKASouth staff and resources (e.g. transportation). The MRRD should consider how these district entities can continue to fund these monitoring activities following SIKASouth's closeout.
7. The major issue identified with the project approval process involved delays in project concept approvals. Many projects listed in the Community Forum Project Concept Notes had no status because the IR4 team in Kabul had not timely determined whether to give the proposed concepts a formal status or to reject them. This had the effect of disappointing community expectations and undermined communities' perceptions of local government. Delays in the project approval process in some instances also undermined the STAS Forum activities because communities saw no reason to continue with these meetings when nothing tangible appeared to be resulting from their efforts. The IR1 Team should coordinate with the IR4 Team and their MRRD counterparts to identify grants that have been unduly delayed, determine the cause/s of these delays, and ways to fix them.

8. Community Forums and STAS are only effective if properly organized and funded. The organization and funding of these events is currently dependent on SIKA-South. At present, the Community Forums or follow-up STAS sessions do not appear to be sustainable beyond the life of SIKA-South. The district entities (CDCs, DDAs) that participate in these forums are widely valued by their communities. In addition to their stabilization function, CDCs and DDAs have also proven effective intermediaries for conflict resolution and other issues affecting local communities. In order to maintain them, and to continue the forums and mitigation activities performed by these DEs, the Afghan government will have to organize and fund these events and activities once SIKA-South has departed. In the interim, SIKA-South should continue to support these DEs and begin discussions with the IDLG and MRRD on how to transition the coordination and funding of these DEs and activities to the Afghan government.
9. MISTI survey findings on governance perceptions have yielded mixed results in regards to government services delivery. SIKA-South has done well under the Subat Program (the MRRD's title for the SIKA program) to improve service delivery in several districts. While some community members may understand foreign funding has been used to facilitate Subat activities, the community members also recognize that the Afghan government is central to delivering those services. The success of Subat going forward will depend on the ability of the Afghan government to continue to deliver these services and, in some districts, expand on them. IR1 should work with IR4 to build Afghan government capacity in service delivery while the IR3 team communicates service delivery project status and successes to the public.
10. Branding of infrastructure activities should include MRRD (or Afghan government) signboards. This will encourage people to further support the government and give them greater ownership of government-sponsored projects. During the period of performance, IR3 did a good job of communicating the Subat program's activities and successes to the Afghan public using radio adverts. The IR3 team should also consider using traditional word-of-mouth channels, including local elders, religious leaders, and tribal leaders to further promote the Subat program at not only the provincial level but also at the district and CDC levels. Radio and word-of-mouth mechanisms also avoid issues with literacy levels. Most residents in southern Afghanistan are unable to read printed materials or make use of the internet.
11. Infrastructure and water related-projects are most valued because they provide tangible results and can be implemented with high levels of community participation. Such projects create short-term *cash-for-work* opportunities and provide people with access to basic services. Further, infrastructure and water projects protect communities against the ill effects of natural disasters that in some areas can have a massive destabilizing effect. SAM Trainings and Community Forums are also valued because they provide communities with opportunities to voice their concerns, be consulted by DEs, and to participate in decision-making processes that affect their areas. The clustering of CDCs to tackle issues that cut across communities (e.g. conflict resolution) is also valued. These improve inter-community cohesion and mitigate against the destabilizing effect of project envy.

# CONCLUSION

SIKA-South did not have a clear theory of change or development hypothesis articulated in either its PMP or Work Plan. This is required under USAID ADS 201. Without a causal pathway it is difficult to develop a results framework supported by relevant indicators that address program outputs and more importantly, intended outcomes. Many of SIKA-South's output indicators were improperly labeled as outcome indicators and did not inform USAID of the IP's progress towards its intended results.

It was still too early to assess whether any of SIKA-South's prioritized activities had any long term impact in the target communities as too few projects were completed during the period of performance for MISTI to assess impact. Only two districts in Kandahar province had completed what one could describe as an evaluable body of projects. That said, it was apparent that SIKA-South had made a good-faith effort to integrate the Kandahar Model in its programming. A major component of the Kandahar Model was lacking however, the quick delivery element, which was hampered by the need to adhere to a *governance process approach* that required multiple approvals of project activities by Afghan Government and United States Government entities including USAID's Vetting Support Unit. This resulted in many projects languishing for as many as four to five months in the approval and vetting processes.<sup>24</sup> Another program element that was ineffective was the gender programming. This was due to a lack of care by the DoWA in selecting suitable women for the decision-making and empowerment process and ensuring that the women who were selected to be on Women's Advisory Committees (WACs) were trained and provided adequate guidance.

SIKA-South activities were successfully presented as government-led activities connecting people to resources under a local name, Subat (Stabilization) Program. Additionally, since SIKA-South worked through existing MRRD-linked CDCs and DDAs, bottom-up communication appears to have worked well, linking both the district and provincial development processes. Capacity building initiatives were somewhat effective among certain groups such as the CDCs/DDAs and other district line departments, however needed to be better tailored towards the trainees' professional functions and duties.

Many of the respondents interviewed for this evaluation stated that hard projects were most valued, however they expressed frustration with delays in the grant approval and milestone payments processes. Many of the infrastructure activities undertaken by SIKA-South appear to have had a stabilizing effects on their communities. SIKA-South has successfully worked through government structures to empower community leaders and district governments. This has, in turn, improved their effectiveness and legitimacy with communities. Key issues such as gender inclusion and delays in the grants approvals/denials process are the biggest hurdles for SIKA-South to overcome.

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<sup>24</sup> At the time of this writing, SIKA-South has made significant strides in accelerating project activity approvals and delivery, especially hard infrastructure project activities. These necessitate time to complete past the contractual period, and can be delayed due to seasonality, security, and other factors that contribute to delays of project implementation. SIKA-South may require more time to efficiently closeout its programs.

# ANNEXES

## **ANNEX I: EVALUATION STATEMENT OF WORK**



### **OFFICE DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE (ODG) / OFFICE OF PROGRAM AND PROJECT DEVELOPMENT (OPPD)**

#### **STATEMENT OF WORK: PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

**SUPPORT TO STABILITY IN KEY AREAS - SOUTH, CONTRACT No.: AID-306-C-13-00003**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **STABILITY IN KEY AREAS SOUTH**

USAID’s evaluation policy encourages independent external evaluation to increase accountability and learning to improve effectiveness and inform those who develop programs and strategies to refine designs and introduce improvements into future efforts. In keeping with that aim, this evaluation will be conducted to review and evaluate the performance of the USAID-funded SIKA-South implemented by AECOM International Development, INC. (“AECOM”).

The objective of SIKA-South is to promote stabilization in key areas by supporting the Afghan government to implement community led development and governance initiatives that respond to the population’s needs and concerns. SIKA-South helps district entities to identify and respond to challenges to stability with an aim to build confidence in local government and increase the provision of basic services. SIKA-South’s work focuses on key districts prioritized by the United States Government Regional Platform-South (RP-S), MRRD, IDLG, and is aligned with other district priorities as determined by the relevant provincial governments.

## **II. BACKGROUND CONTEXT**

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) oversees a number of stability programs throughout Afghanistan aimed at improving security and extending the reach and legitimacy of the Afghan Government to unstable communities. These programs are aimed at addressing Sources of Instability (SOIs) and establishing an environment for sustained social and economic development. This is being accomplished through the engagement of communities in key districts, the implementation of projects aimed at extending the reach of the Afghan

Government to unstable areas, provision of social and economic assistance as well as income generating opportunities, the building of trust between local citizens and their governments, and by encouraging local populations to play an active role in their own development.

USAID designed the SIKa programs to address two particular weaknesses at the district level: (1) lack of development, and (2) lack of good governance. SIKa was designed to deliver community developed and implemented projects in close partnership with the Afghan government in order to build confidence in the Afghan government and increase stability by addressing the two main weaknesses at the district level. In close cooperation with the Afghan government, SIKa-South partnered with the MRRD.

MRRD's approach to stabilization is to empower people, build unity within communities, and instill grassroots' level participation in decision making while maintaining the ultimate goal of building the population's confidence towards Afghan institutions. These approaches to stability have been used by MRRD since 2002 through the National Area Based Development Program (NABDP) and, since 2003, through the National Solidarity Program (NSP). The NABDP is MRRD's primary stabilization initiative at the district level. Its goals are the sustainable reduction of poverty and an improvement in the livelihoods in rural Afghanistan. NABDP uses District Development Assemblies (DDAs)<sup>25</sup> to create District Development Plans (DDPs) which link community priorities to the Afghan government's agricultural and rural development strategy. It also strengthens the DDAs as the primary conduit for stabilization initiatives as well as social and economic development planning at the district level. The NSP was created to help local communities identify, plan, manage, and monitor their own development projects largely through the formation of Community Development Councils (CDCs), which serve as the focal points for all village-level rural development in Afghanistan. Both programs complement each other at promoting a stabilizing influence at the district level.

However, MRRD realized that sporadic rural development was due mainly to insecurity and that without development, security would not improve. To improve development through successful project implementation in insecure areas, MRRD developed the Kandahar Model which decentralized the procurement and financial procedures essential to community contracting. The model also provided a platform for direct community participation in project planning, budgeting and decision-making through established CDCs and DDAs, thereby increasing the population's confidence in their district level government entities. The Kandahar Model is essentially a bottom up methodology that allows the local population the opportunity to develop projects based on their needs while at the same time coordinating with the district and provincial line ministries. The local communities (through CDCs and DDAs) are involved in the following three phases of project implementation process:

- a) Identification of needs and prioritization of projects;
- b) Implementation of projects:

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<sup>25</sup> DDAs are comprised of representatives of clustered CDCs.

- c) Monitoring of projects (implemented by CDCs or in those districts where the security does not allow for external monitors to visit the sites), including taking pictures and short videos.

SIKA-South works closely with the Independent Directorate for Local Governance (IDLG). IDLG is responsible for the District Delivery Program (DDP), an initiative designed to establish or improve the presence of the Afghan government by supporting district government efforts to respond to the needs of their constituents by building government's capacity to deliver basic services. The DDP builds on MRRD's stabilization and development efforts to create a foundation for economic stability and sustainable infrastructure.

Closely working with MRRD and IDLG, SIKA-South's strategic objective is for Afghans to have increased confidence in their district government, leading to the expansion of authority and legitimacy of Afghan provincial government to the districts and to unstable communities. Since the Afghan government has been unable to meet the challenges of addressing its population's various needs, SIKA-South's strategy is to assist district entities to better understand their operating environment and the challenges to stability they are faced with. SIKA-South enables them to develop a localized methodology aimed at addressing sources of instability and to implement activities that addresses these sources of instability.

USAID has identified four intermediate results required to achieve the strategic objectives:

1. Provincial and district entities increasingly address sources of instability and take measures to respond to the population's development and governance concerns;
2. Provincial and district entities understand what organizations and provincial line departments work within their geographic areas, what kind of services they provide, and how the population can access those services;
3. Provincial authorities improve their ability to communicate with district entities to help them better understand their population's needs and prioritize basic service delivery interventions; and
4. Provincial authorities improve basic service delivery by using the Afghan government, Community Development Councils (CDCs), District Development Assemblies (DDAs), Afghanistan Social Outreach Program District Community Councils (DCCs) to plan, design, implement and monitor projects and focus on labor-intensive projects or productive infrastructure.

USAID designed SIKA to function as an Afghan government program that works within the structures already established by the Afghan government. As such, SIKA works with MRRD and IDLG at the provincial and district levels to enhance the capacity of the Afghan government to plan and implement stabilization programming, and to improve governance and service delivery in strategic districts by working within the existing framework of the NABDP and the Kandahar Model.

Practically speaking, the Program identifies and implements projects to remove or mitigate sources of instability and build the resiliency of government. Key components of the project cycle include:

- Work with district entities to identify sources of instability using Stability Analysis Methodology (SAM) and to form a portfolio of projects – the SIKA District Project Portfolio (DPP) -- to address the sources of instability.
- Provision of technical assistance, capacity building, and grants to help district entities and community groups implement projects from their Portfolio.
- Assisting district entities to better understand and access services available from GIRoA line directorates and other service providers.
- Communication and outreach activities to increase citizens' access to government and promote the achievements of government to strengthen the trust and bonds between GIRoA and the people.

### III. SIKA-SOUTH PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**SIKA-South Theory of Change:** If Provincial and District entities are more effective at addressing the root causes of instability then the process of development will be more sustainable. To effectively address root causes of instability, sub-national entities must be capable of identifying sources of instability (SOIs) among the priority grievances and unmet needs of location communities, as well as identifying local sources of resilience that may be engaged to enhance stability. Sub-national entities must also be capable of planning, implementing, and monitoring solutions that deliver the key services needed to mitigate identified SOIs, and to increase local resilience to destabilizing events. By building or strengthening systematic processes of key service delivery from Provincial Authorities, through District Entities to local community members, larger number of Afghans will benefit from the services delivered by a more responsive government. As the capacity of sub-national entities to plan and implement stabilization increases, the popular legitimacy of the Afghan government will increase.

The primary objective of the SIKA-South program is to promote good governance and service delivery in targeted districts with the intended effects of promoting stability and, through capacity building with Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD). SIKA-South programming will therefore encompass a wide range of activities that address stability conditions ranging from local grievances, freedom of movement, economic opportunity and responsive, transparent governance and rule of law. As a result, the PMP utilizes a broad array of standard and custom performance indicators to track the progress of individual program components and assess the impact of SIKA-South programming. In addition to tracking a range of stability indicators, SIKA-South will track a set of indicators more traditionally associated with democracy and governance, economic growth, environment, and other sectors in order to account for the full range of activities envisioned.

The Stability in Key Areas (SIKA) Program aims to promote stabilization in key areas by assisting provincial authorities and district-level government entities in improving government

performance and providing priority basic services to improve citizen confidence in and support for Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA).

To achieve this objective, the SIKA-South team, in close cooperation with MRRD, will train and assist District Entity (DE) officials and provincial authorities in:

- Empowering a grievance-based collective planning process for district entities to identify and address local conflicts using transparent and accountable processes.
- Linking district planning and local service delivery to the people by strengthening the abilities of provincial, district and community entities to access development resources.
- Designing and implementing communication strategies that improve the relationship between provincial authorities, District Entities and citizens.

The SIKA contract defines District Entities as “*District Governors and GIROA bodies—specifically MRRD and IDLG and their respective CDCs, DDAs, ASOP DCCs, and where none exist, traditional district shuras.*”

**Intermediate Result 1:** Provincial and district entities increasingly address sources of instability and take measures to respond to the population’s development and governance concerns.

**Strategy and Rationale:** Local actors are best positioned to identify drivers of instability specific to their areas and to recommend locally appropriate solutions. IR1 will offer district entities and other local stakeholders opportunities to identify sources of instability (SOI) and resiliencies using simplified stability analysis tools adapted for use in Afghanistan. The stability analysis methodology will take into account the local informational and cultural context. District Entities and MRRD will be trained in, and assisted to use the localized methodology for targeting root causes for the insurgency in their area (or non-support for government), and thus will have a sustainable methodology to address future SOIs if they arise. The foundation of this process will be Governance and Stability Community Forums.

The SIKA-South methodology, approaches and description of community forums are outlined in Table 1 and Annex 6, respectively, of “The Stability Analysis Methodology in Afghanistan: An Evaluation of Best Practices & a Recommended Method” (Oct 2013). What has not been outlined is that over the course of the Program, five core SOIs have been categorized against which problem statements and project solutions are addressed: inadequate water resource management; inadequate access to institutions, services and markets; natural disaster; lack of jobs and job skills; and poorly functioning or non-functioning government.

The following indicators apply to IR1:

- Number of Governance SOI workshop cycles conducted for District Entities
- Number of representatives who participated in district-level planning process
- Number of SIKA-South targeted districts with stabilization programming executed against identified SOIs
- Number of District Entities capable to plan, implement and monitor stability projects

**Intermediate Result 2:** Provincial and district entities understand what organizations and provincial line departments work within their geographic areas, what kind of services they provide, and how the population can access those services.

**Rationale and Strategy:** While the Program proposes to address selected SOIs through IR4 projects, other SOIs may be better addressed by GIRoA. It is therefore of great urgency for District Entities to know what other resources are available in order to be able to choose from the widest range of tools available to come up with Afghan-appropriate solutions. Through this component, provincial and district entities will better understand the services offered by GIRoA – particularly those which may be useful to address SOIs and increase resiliency – and of the policies, priorities and constraints of government in providing services to beneficiaries. The latter will serve to contain expectations within realistic limits to avoid raising unrealistic expectations which could undermine stability and perceptions of effective government service provision. It is imperative to build the capacity of DEs to access available services and understand the Government’s policy and procedures. The team will help provincial entities to develop an inventory of services and resources accessible to district entities.

The following indicators apply for IR2:

- Number of GIRoA Officials (Provincial Line Directorates) trained in aspects of government administration
- Number of targeted Districts receiving training to improve access to basic services

**Intermediate Result 3:** Provincial authorities improve their ability to communicate with district entities in order to help them better understand their population’s needs and prioritize basic service delivery interventions.

A key success factor for this IR is to help District Entities and other stakeholders understand and enhance their own ways of communicating, and to increase access to knowledge that demonstrates GIRoA capabilities and services. Afghan tribal cultures stress consensus and lend themselves to dialogue at both a formal and informal level. Afghan political institutions tend more to be directive in issuing orders that flow down rather than receiving input that come from below. This IR will seek to strengthen and link these communication mechanisms and cultures to increase popular understanding of GIRoA programs and achievements, while increasing GIRoA understanding of the peoples’ needs and concerns.

**Rationale and Strategies:** The IR3 team will develop training strategies and tools to assist district entities in improving their skills in communications management and public outreach. It is important to emphasize that such communications are by no means culturally inappropriate in Afghanistan. Indeed, good inter-communication skills are essential in a largely oral society for successful tribal elders and religious leaders. IR3 staff will keep the Afghan perspective foremost throughout the process of assessment, training program design, and implementation, ensuring that appropriate tools and mechanisms are utilized to impart and internalize the needed skills. For example, while Power Point presentations or Western style “motivational” speakers are unlikely to make sufficient use of the requisite cultural norms and learning patterns to be effective in enhancing good communications, small group workshops, facilitated by an experienced local

trainer might be quite successful. Specific innovative tools will also be assessed and developed, such as radio “town hall” meetings, cell phone-based text and audio messages, radio programs, and Community Theater which will make use of a range of media engagement tools including Afghan civilian radio and print media products.

Successful communications and outreach activities will draw in part upon the steady stream of stability enhancing activities supported by the other Program teams. Successful projects and improved security resulting from higher levels of stability will become focal points for messaging by Afghan government officials and for public outreach.

The following indicators apply for IR3:

- Number of regular meetings held between Provincial Authorities and District Entities
- Number of training events conducted to PEs and DEs to improve communication
- Number of media activities conducted to promote PRRD and District Entities’ activities and events
- Percentage change in the proportion of residents reporting to receive information of available services provided by Provincial and District Government
- Percentage change in the proportion of district residents reporting their District Government is responsive to the needs of local people

**Intermediate Result 4:** Provincial authorities are able to improve basic service delivery by using GIRoA, CDCs, DDAs and ASOP DCCs, which gain capacity to plan, design, implement and monitor projects, with a focus on labor-intensive projects or productive infrastructure.

One of the program’s central goals is to improve the reach of the Afghan government through better delivery of services and productive infrastructure to address sources of instability and thereby improve the lives of citizens. At present, the ability of district governments to meet this challenge is constrained by a lack of resources and by the lack of the necessary skills to manage, implement, and successfully monitor projects.

According to various sources, Afghan citizens have reported the feeling that decisions about projects are being made without considering their concerns. Afghans frequently complain about the absence of services or the alleged corruption of government officials. Yet, there is no absence of work needing to be done. Activities that address a source of instability and that have full “buy-in” from Afghans will be used to build a District Project Portfolio (DPP). It is anticipated that some of these projects will also be found in existing district development plans and community development plans.

**Rationale and Strategies:** The Program has developed a project cycle and corresponding Grants Manual. Two primary challenges in establishing the grants program are the relatively large number of grants requiring administration while both involving and keeping the Afghan Government as the face of the program. MRRD’s Kandahar Model addresses both challenges by placing accountability for successful implementation of grants into the hands of the DDAs and CDCs themselves. Grants will require community in-kind contributions. Risks inherent in administering a grants program in isolated geographic regions will be mitigated by inserting

clear milestones in the life of the grant which must be achieved before payment can be made, and by utilizing direct, in-kind grants when that approach is assessed as more likely to achieve the desired impacts at lower risk. The IR4 district teams will consist of professional staff in each district: three grants officers, a field engineer and community development officer. This team, collaborating with other district officers, will be able to efficiently execute all phases of the grants process—from turning Project Concept Notes into grants applications to grants closeout. IR4 will use a separate compliance arm to conduct spot checks of procurements. Monitoring will also be conducted by Afghan government officials. The Program will provide assistance to District Entities in prioritizing stabilization activities and projects which derive from the analysis conducted under IR1 Stability Workshops. IR4 will make resources available to district entities in cases where instability can be addressed through capacity building/training or productive infrastructure projects. The IR4 team, with assistance from other teams and input from MRRD, will define a project cycle that assists DEs (and provincial authorities) to:

- Use the SOIs as the primary source for identifying projects for each DPP
- Prepare projects suitable for implementation with SIKA resources
- Implement projects in the approved DPPs with SIKA resources such as technical assistance, training, and grants
- Evaluate project results and impacts with reference to the Performance Management Plan (PMP) and indicators

The IR4 team will build upon the Kandahar Model by coordinating with NSP and NABDP at the provincial and district levels to utilize existing best practices and processes to plan, design, develop, implement and monitor grants to District Entities that address sources of instability. The team may also provide technical help in the design and implementation of projects involving Infrastructure or facilities. It may assist District Entities in managing construction projects, while helping District Entities to evaluate different construction options. As local confidence grows, the size and complexity of projects to be undertaken can be increased (though no new vertical construction is allowed under the Contract terms). The IR4 team, including the Engineering Unit, the Grants Unit and the Community Development Unit will also provide capacity building training to District Entities to support their ability to prepare and implement projects, including feasibility studies, the development of project concept notes, including management, finance, and procurement plans ( for example) as relevant, and grantee vetting.

The IR4 team’s Community Development Unit, and especially the Community Development Officer—Gender Specialist, continue to increase women’s awareness of district entities as a forum for addressing their concerns, and will encourage their participation as council members. Additionally, the CDO Gender Specialist will act as a catalyst between the women in the communities and the DEs, insuring that women’s issues are fully represented in the projects that alleviate the SOIs. Communications activities targeted to women, like the “Radio Shuras” activity highlighted in IR3, and regional women’s conferences and training will also be organized in consultation with the MRRD Gender Policy. The Program will also explore and implement projects that are external to the DPP process, so that the most varied and beneficial portfolio of projects can be provided. One example of this is the assessment of O&M requirements and capacity gaps for existing infrastructure in the districts. The Program could

then institute a competitive grants process to identify NGOs that could best provide O&M skills, other needed small-scale rehabilitation projects, and related vocational training.

The following indicators apply for IR4:

- Number of capacity building training events for DEs and PRRDs to manage and monitor projects
- Number of activities approved by DDAs chairman against SOI identified through Governance workshops in targeted districts
- Number of grant projects implemented
- Number of person days of employment created through SIKASouth interventions
- Percentage of community contribution per grant activity
- Number of participants successfully attending and completing training implemented through grants

#### **IV. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION**

The objective of this mid-term performance<sup>26</sup> evaluation is to assess the performance, relevance, and success of the SIKASouth program within the context of stabilization programming to inform management decisions. Specifically, this evaluation is being undertaken to provide information to the senior management of the Stabilization Unit and USAID Mission management on whether stabilization activities implemented by SIKASouth are achieving their desired results by examining the performance of SIKASouth according to its approved program objectives and PMP targets. The secondary objective includes assessing the stabilization impact of the program’s interventions to the extent possible given available data.

This mid-term performance evaluation shall document accomplishments and lessons learned from April 2012 to March 2014 for the use of USAID management, SIKASouth staff, the Implementing Partner (AECOM), and MRRD and IDLG. This mid-term evaluation shall incorporate the results of MISTI’s stability trend analyses evaluation, SAM Evaluation findings, and the status of IR1 programming since the previous evaluation. With these data sources incorporated, this evaluation will serve as a vehicle for extracting key lessons from SIKASouth’s experiences and determining the need for SIKASouth strategy modification.

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<sup>26</sup> USAID reserves the term “impact evaluation” for evaluations that apply rigorous techniques, such as randomized control trials or quasi-experimental designs, which can evaluate the impact of an intervention compared to the counterfactual case of what would have taken place without the intervention. However, performance evaluations may consider questions of impact using techniques such as interviews with beneficiaries and stakeholders. While this approach doesn’t yield quantitative evidence of impact, it can yield useful information for programming.

The evaluation methodology and process will address the questions (not to be considered inclusive), outlined below:

## **V. EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

The following questions will be answered throughout the performance evaluation:

- 1 Are the assumptions and logic built into SIKA-South's theory of change still valid and consistent with the evaluation findings?
- 2 To what extent did program activities and grants address sources of instability?
- 3 Was the approach to women inclusion appropriate and effective in terms of empowering and increasing women participation in decision making in SIKA-South activities?
- 4 How did SIKA-South integrate key steps in the Kandahar Model into the identification of projects and the execution and management of grants?

### **Evaluation of Intermediate Activities Under the Program Objectives**

- 5 To what extent have SIKA activities been successfully presented as government activities, connecting people to resources (both government and non-government) for service delivery?
- 6 How effectively was a bottom-up communications process promoted linked MRRD-developed CDCs and DDAs to the overall district and provincial development planning processes?
- 7 How effective were capacity building initiatives aimed at teaching district entities how to plan, design, implement and monitor various types of development projects?
- 8 What lessons learned from the SIKA-South program implementation can inform future USAID programming?

### **Evaluation of Specific Activities Under the Program Objectives**

- 9 What components of SIKA-South were most and least valued by district and provincial entities?<sup>27</sup>
- 10 Which activities undertaken by SIKA-South had the most or least contribution to stabilization objectives?

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<sup>27</sup> These include soft and hard activities such as grants/projects, capacity building, and other components.

- 11 How effectively did SIKA-South work through Afghan government structures and within Afghan government processes to empower the community leaders and district governments in decision making and community engagements under existing district level interventions?

## **VI. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

The evaluation team will be responsible for developing an evaluation strategy and methodology that includes a mix of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis approaches. The methodology will be presented as part of the draft work plan as outlined in the deliverables below and included in the final report. The evaluation team will have available for their analysis a variety of program implementation documents and reports. Methodology strengths and weaknesses should be identified as well as measures taken to address those weaknesses.

Primary analysis will focus on evaluating the consistency of SIKA-South's planning and performance with program objectives. The team will conduct a desk review of key documents and will conduct field based research. The field research will be comprised mainly of key informant interviews with program staff and stakeholders, including the SIKA-South Chief of Party and local staff managers; USAID representatives; Afghan government representatives at the ministerial, provincial, district, and community levels; DDA, DCC, and CDC members; Provincial Sector Working Group and PDC members; and key stakeholders involved in selected projects.

SIKA-South has programs in fourteen districts in Zabul, Uruzgan, Helmand, Nimroz, and Kandahar provinces. These interviews will likely take place in Kabul, Qalat, Lashkar Gah, Tarin Kowt, Zaranj, and Kandahar, depending on the district selection. Due to the staggered implementation of SIKA programs in these fourteen districts, the evaluation team will choose at least 6 districts where the greatest percentage of IR1, IR2, IR3 and/or IR4 stabilization programming has occurred. MISTI will conduct interviews with government stakeholders, participants of SAM training, and recipients of grants in these districts.

MISTI has conducted interviews in person; individuals who were not available for in-person interviews may be consulted through a phone call questionnaire.

## **VII. EXISTING PERFORMANCE INFORMATION SOURCES**

USAID will provide MISTI with the following documents:

- SIKA-South AECOM /USAID contract and copies of subsequent modifications
- SIKA-South work plan
- SIKA-South PMP and M&E unit reporting
- All monthly and quarterly reports
- Complete activities tracker and current DPPs
- SIKA-South grants manual
- SAM materials, including facilitator's guides and training materials
- Plans/assessments for capacity building and communications

- GIRoA performance data (where available)

## **VIII. EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION**

The evaluation team shall consist of an independent international expert as well as Afghan experts. The international expert should be a mid-level evaluation analyst specialized in areas such as public management with expertise and knowledge of Afghanistan's local governance and political situation. The Afghan experts should have experience with governance programming in Afghanistan and monitoring and evaluation. All International experts must be fluent in English and have strong writing skills. The Afghan experts should also be proficient in English, Dari, and Pashto.

The SIKASouth evaluation team will be comprised of MISTI Evaluation Specialist and two local national MISTI M&E Advisors. The MISTI Specialist will conduct the desk review and information interviews with expat, MRRD Directorates, and local staff managers at the regional head office. The local national M&E Advisors will conduct site visits with locals from SIKASouth selected districts, local leaders, government officials, and beneficiaries.

USAID requires all team members to provide a written disclosure of any possible conflict of interest.

## **IX. EVALUATION SCHEDULE AND LOGISTICS**

This evaluation should begin o/a May 2014 and be completed by August 2014. The estimated level of effort (LOE) is approximately 90 days spent in Afghanistan for the entire evaluation.

A presentation of final findings will be delivered to USAID staff, MRRD, IDLG and other stakeholders once the evaluation is completed and a powerpoint deck will be submitted to USAID for comments the day of the presentation. USAID shall have five days to provide comments to the evaluation team to be incorporated into the draft report.

Desk Review:

A Desk review of SIKASouth performance documents will begin as soon as a work plan is approved and all necessary program documents are delivered to MISTI.

Field Research:

In May 2014, the MISTI Evaluator will visit SIKASouth headquarters in Kabul to conduct interviews with AECOM expat and local staff and to review project documentation. Interviews will also be conducted with the SIKASouth COR, Stabilization Unit (STAB-U) Director, and Kabul-based program directors from MRRD, and IDLG.

The local national MISTI M&E advisor will visit the selected provinces to coordinate interviews and site visits. The advisor will conduct interviews with local SIKASouth staff in field offices, with district governors, community leaders from select CDCs and DDAs who were participants in SIKASouth programming, PRRD local representatives, other government officials, community leaders, and project direct and indirect beneficiaries.

Development of draft and final reports: the draft report should be submitted to USAID o/a mid-August 2014 (roughly two weeks after all field research has been conducted). The final report should be submitted approximately two weeks after the receipt of USAID comments.

## **X. USAID MANAGEMENT**

The evaluation team will officially report to the Office of Program and Project Development (OPPD). From a technical management perspective, the evaluation team will work closely with Zachary Scheid, the Contracting Officer Representative, Abdul Qadir, the Alternate Contracting Officer Representative, and Douglas Blanton, USAID Stabilization Unit Team Leader. In order to maintain objectivity, all final decisions about the evaluation will be made by OPPD's M&E Unit.

## **XI. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND DELIVERABLES**

### **A. DESCRIPTION AND TIMELINE OF DELIVERABLES**

- 1. In-briefing:** The evaluation team will have an in-brief meeting with USAID/Afghanistan's OPPD M&E unit and Stabilization Unit for introductions; presentation of the team's understanding of the assignment, initial assumptions, evaluation questions, public perception survey instrument (if required) discussion of initial work plan; and/or adjust SOW if necessary.
- 2. Evaluation Work Plan:** The evaluation team shall provide a detailed initial work plan to OPPD's M&E unit and the Stabilization Unit, and a revised work plan three days after the in-briefing. USAID will share the revised work plan with GIRoA for comment, as needed, and will revise accordingly. The initial work plan will include (a) the overall evaluation design, including the proposed methodology, data collection and analysis plan, and data collection instruments; (b) a list of the team members indicating their primary contact details while in-country, including the e-mail address and mobile phone number for the team leader; and (c) the team's proposed schedule for the evaluation. The revised work plan shall include the list of potential interviewees, sites to be visited, and evaluation tools.
- 3. Mid-term Briefing and Interim Meetings:** Hold a mid-term briefing with USAID at its discretion on the status of the assessment including potential challenges and emerging opportunities. The team will also provide the Contracting Officer's Representatives for MISTI and SIKA-South with periodic written briefings and feedback on the team's findings. Additionally, a weekly 30 minute phone call, as needed, with OPPD's M&E unit and the Stabilization Unit Team Leader will provide updates on field progress and any problems encountered.

4. **PowerPoint and Final Exit Presentation** to present key findings and recommendations to USAID. To be scheduled as agreed upon during the in-briefing, and at least five days prior to the evaluator's departure from Kabul. A copy of the PowerPoint file will be provided to the OPPD M&E unit prior to the final exit presentation.
5. **Draft Evaluation Report:** Shall be consistent with the guidance provided in Section XII below. Length of the report: not to exceed 50 pages, exclusive of Annexes in English, using Times New Roman 12 point font, 1.15 line spacing, consistent with USAID branding policy. The report will address each of the issues and questions identified in the SOW and any other factors the team considers to have a bearing on the objectives of the evaluation. Any such factors can be included in the report only after consultation with USAID. The draft evaluation report per the below format will be submitted by the evaluation team leader to OPPD's M&E unit two weeks after the final briefing for review and comments by USAID. USAID's M&E and Unit Stabilization unit will have ten calendar days in which to review and comment and OPPD's M&E unit shall submit all comments to the evaluation team leader.
6. **Final Evaluation Report will** incorporate final comments provided by the M&E unit. USAID comments are due within ten days after the receipt of the initial final draft. The final report should be submitted to the OPPD M&E unit within three days of receipt of comments by the evaluation team leader. All project data and records will be submitted in full and shall be in electronic form in easily readable format; organized and fully document for use by those not fully familiar with the project or evaluation; and owned by USAID and made available to the public barring rare exceptions.

#### **B. FINAL REPORT FORMAT**

The evaluation report shall include the following:

1. Title Page
2. Table of Contents (including Table of Figures and Table of Charts, if needed)
3. List of Acronyms
4. Acknowledgements or Preface (optional)
5. Executive Summary (3-5 pages)
6. Introductory Chapter
  - a. A description of the project evaluated, including goals and objectives.
  - b. Brief statement on purpose of the evaluation, including a list of the main evaluation questions.

- c. Brief statement on the methods used in the evaluation such as desk/document review, interviews, site visits, surveys, etc.
  - d. Explanation of any limitations of the evaluation—especially with respect to the methodology (e.g., selection bias, recall bias, unobservable differences between comparator groups, etc.)—and how these limitations affect the findings.
7. **Findings:** This section should describe the findings, focusing on each of the evaluation questions.
  8. **Conclusions:** This section should include value statements drawn from the data gathered during the evaluation process. It should also reference how any limitations affect the conclusions.
  9. **Recommendations:** This section should include actionable statements for ongoing programming. It should also include recommended future objectives and types of activities based on lessons learned.
  10. **Annex (to be submitted as separate documents apart from the evaluation report)**
    - a. Evaluation Statement of Work
    - b. Places visited; list of organizations and people interviewed, including contact details.
    - c. Evaluation design and methodology.
    - d. Copies of all tools such as survey instruments, questionnaires, discussions guides, checklists.
    - e. Bibliography of critical background documents.
    - f. Meeting notes of all key meetings with stakeholders.
    - g. Evaluation Team CVs

### **C. REPORTING GUIDELINES**

- The evaluation report should represent a thoughtful, well-researched and well- organized effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the project over the given time period, what did not, and why.
- Evaluation reports shall address all evaluation questions included in the statement of work.
- The evaluation report should include the statement of work as an annex. All modifications to the statement of work, whether in technical requirements, evaluation

questions, evaluation team composition, methodology, or timeline need to be agreed upon in writing by the OPPD M&E unit.

- Evaluation methodology shall be explained in detail and all tools used in conducting the evaluation such as questionnaires, checklists and discussion guides will be included in an annex in the final report.
- Evaluation findings will assess outcomes and impact on males and females, and data will be disaggregated by gender, age group, and geographic area wherever feasible.
- Limitations to the evaluation shall be disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, unobservable differences between comparator groups, etc.).
- Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence, and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay or the compilation of people's opinions. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by strong quantitative and/or qualitative evidence.
- Sources of information, including any peer-reviewed or grey literature, will be properly identified and listed in an annex.
- Recommendations will be supported by a specific set of findings. They will also be action-oriented, practical, and specific, with defined responsible parties for each action.

## **ANNEX II: USAID ADDENDUM TO MISTI MID-TERM PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF SIKA-SOUTH (AID-306-C-13-0003)**

**Theory of Change.** SIKA South does not see substantial benefit to creating a new theory/theories of change and plans to continue employing the version included in the Performance Management Plan (PMP) approved by USAID in September 2013, as well as the current version approved in June 2014. The development hypothesis demonstrates the progress of stabilization and governance programming and its intended result.

**Performance Monitoring Plan.** From a management perspective, the time and effort required to thoroughly revise the PMP will detract from the design and implementation of evaluations and programming. Though SIKA South agrees that its indicators are limited in measuring outcome, the program is capable of carrying out internal performance and impact evaluations as a supplement to current monitoring and reporting based on the output indicators in the PMP.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit is an independent unit; it reports directly to the Chief of Party. SIKA South agrees that it could have been more fully utilized in the past. However, as the new Team Leader informed the MISTI evaluator in their first meeting, evaluations have been under development and are being implemented.

**Gender Programming.** SIKA South disagrees with the classification of gender programming as “marginally attempted.” The evaluation pays little attention to the extensive efforts required for inclusively developing a Gender Action Plan, setting up/reviving Women Advisory Committees (WACs), and facilitating engagement between male PE/DE staff and their female counterparts. During MISTI evaluation activities, the facilitation of four additional WACs was underway, capacity building assessments were completed, and WACs attended initial trainings. This is not mentioned.

**Kandahar Model.** The reference to SIKA South’s misunderstanding of stabilization programming and governance programming with stabilization components is unsubstantiated. There is no evidence that stabilization would have been more effective had more projects under the vetting threshold been implemented. Doing so would have artificially limited scopes of work, which would have hindered mitigation of the identified sources of instability. In addition, the report does not fully recognize that grants-under-contract constitutes one component of stabilization programming.

SIKA South adapted the Kandahar Model to its unique programmatic context in close coordination with USAID guidance. MISTI strictly interprets the Kandahar model as a prescriptive tool, whereas SIKA South views it as a model to be adapted to its programmatic context. SIKA South emphasizes good governance, transparency and inclusion of stakeholders before quick delivery and quick impact, although it is continuously improving delivery times.

**Capacity Building (Cross-cutting)** SIKA South agrees with MISTI’s recommendation that capacity building could reassess how specific needs/gaps are addressed by the trainings conducted. As such, SIKA South currently is re-evaluating its capacity building assessments, curriculum, and workshop designs based on feedback from district and provincial stakeholders, as well as MISTI’s evaluation. Curriculum based on source material is best suited for district level instruction, but provincial-level material could be enhanced. Nevertheless, MISTI’s recommendation does not incorporate the fact that training curriculum is based on MRRD/NABDP/NSP, IDLG/CSC and other ministerial source material, that the adaptations

to these materials were shared with IDLG and MRRD, or that these adaptations were also based on SIKa South assessments.

***Project Delays.*** SIKa agrees that unintended delays – both internal and external to the project – may have negatively impacted perceptions of the program. SIKa South has already empowered the IR4 team to rapidly assess delays and approve projects. These efforts have resulted in an increase in the value of improved grants over the past two quarters. SIKa South is working closely with provincial and district partners to ensure that PDC and GRC meetings occur more frequently in order to accelerate grant development and implementation.

***Branding (Infrastructure).*** Signboards are included in all grant activities, except when security dictates otherwise. Furthermore, SIKa South engages all possible channels to ensure Afghan ownership of government-sponsored projects. A radio call-in show has aired in all program provinces and hundreds of posters have been distributed, contributing to word-of-mouth and tribal elder-led information sharing. The program also facilitates town hall meetings, live theater and other word-of-mouth strategies that include radio media coverage and interviews.

### ***Context and Timing***

As noted in the evaluation, the review was limited to a period of performance ending in March of 2014; this meant SIKa South had six months from first pilot (receipt of approval to implement) to evaluation. Delays in signing the formal implementation letter and contractual obstacles hindered rapid rollout. Vetting delays slowed IR4 quick impact delivery. USAID is aware that this creates a skewed perspective of both successes/failures. That being said, there are contractual responsibilities of the IP that they were clearly not completely prepared for, especially given the extended time for planning.

### ***Recommendations and Way Forward***

It is recognized that many of the recommendations made are already being implemented, but this will be reflected in subsequent evaluations/reviews. SIKa South is expected to further integrate recommendations and revise documents in an effort to improve programs and systems. As MISTI prepares for a final evaluation it is expected that they will do so over an extended period of time to observe and document various aspects of implementation. SIKa South is also guided to improve internal evaluation methodologies.

USAID will strive to integrate long term, strategic mission policy planning in to new program designs. Additionally, monitoring, evaluation, and impact studies will be incorporated to program rollout. It should be expected that contractors deliver immediate baseline data and technically sound impact designs within the first 60 days.

## **ANNEX III: EVALUATION METHODS AND LIMITATIONS UNDER USAID APPROVED WORK PLAN**

### **EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

This evaluation will answer the 11 questions above through largely qualitative means. This involves conducting interviews with SIKA-South staff, MRRD, IDLG, district and provincial entities, DDAs, CDCs, programming and project beneficiaries, key stakeholders, and USAID staff involved in SIKA design and programming. These key informant interviews will take place in Kandahar Province.

Fieldwork will occur in Arghandab and Daman in Kandahar Province where most of the projects have been implemented and have some measureable performance. In Helmand Province, the evaluation team will visit Bost, and Garmser where most of the projects have been approved and awarded. Likewise in Zabul Province, Tarnak Wa Jaldak will be evaluated based on few activities that have achieved the first milestone of completion. Also in Zabul Province, Qalat was chosen based on the projects awarded and the number of COR approved activities, however it has nominal measureable performance (see discussion under *Limitations* below). In sum, six districts will be evaluated as per the USAID furnished Statement of Work.

Since there are no measureable activities and/or projects occurring in Nahri Sarraj, Zaranj and Kang District, the evaluation team will not be conducting field visits in those districts.

MISTI's M&E specialist will travel at least once to Kandahar to conduct in-depth interviews, dependent on security considerations. Two local national M&E advisors will travel to select SIKA districts in Zabul, Helmand, and Kandahar Provinces. In addition, at least three local evaluators will be hired and trained to conduct beneficiary interviews in select project locations that are inaccessible to MISTI's local staff.

Primary analysis will focus on evaluating the consistency of SIKA-South's planning and performance with program objectives.

### **LIMITATIONS**

This methodology is constrained by security considerations, which may prevent members of the evaluation team from reaching select priority interview sites. Accessibility to project sites far from the main roads may limit the ability of evaluators to reach target sites and conduct interviews. Although gender is an important aspect of this mid-term performance evaluation, access to women is inherently difficult in rural Afghanistan, even with female evaluators. Turnover of USAID, SIKA Staff, and Afghan government staff may make it difficult to conduct all intended interviews where there may be limited institutional knowledge.

While USAID has asked MISTI to conduct the performance evaluation in six districts, MISTI sees only four districts where we can effectively measure performance. These are Arghandab, Daman, Tarnak Wa Jaldak, and Bost. As per USAID's request, MISTI will conduct the mid-term performance evaluation in six districts with the caveat that two selected districts (Qalat and Garmser) did not have sufficient measurable performance during the evaluation period. At the time of this writing, and among the remaining SIKA-South districts, Qalat and Garmser show the most grants awarded and COR approved

activities—however there are no completed projects nor sufficient measurable performance to be evaluated between the period of April 2012 through the end of March 2014.

## EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION

The SIKA-South evaluation team will be comprised of a MISTI M&E Specialist and two local national MISTI M&E Advisors. The MISTI M&E Specialist and Advisors will conduct the desk review and information interviews with MRRD Directorates, District Governors, and local staff managers at the regional head office. The local national M&E Advisors will conduct site visits with locals from SIKA-South selected districts, local leaders, government officials, and beneficiaries.

MISTI will also hire approximately three local national evaluators in select districts where projects have been completed or are almost completed. These evaluators will be hired because of security constraints, which prohibit the Kabul-based staff from reaching and interviewing local beneficiaries in insecure districts.

**TABLE 2: EVALUATION TEAM INFORMATION**

## EVALUATION SCHEDULE

The initial of Statement of Work was received from USAID on April 6, 2014 and was finalized on May 8, 2014. The below table lists the tentative evaluation schedule:

**TABLE 3: EVALUATION TIMELINE**

Items	Schedule
Receipt of Finalized SOW	May 8, 2014
Desk Review	Mid to Late May 2014
Kabul Based Interviews	Late May 2014
First (Province) Site Visit *	Early Jun 2014
Province Data Collection	June—July 2014
Second (Province) Site Visit *	Early July
Draft Report	Mid Aug 2014
Final Report	Late Aug 2014

\* Dates subject to security and logistical considerations.

## ANNEX IV: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Evaluation Questions		Documents	Beneficiary Direct/indi	DDA	CDC/Shura	Provincial GiRoA	District GiRoA	SIKA-South District/Pro v	SIKA-South Senior
<b>2. To what extent did program activities and grants address sources of instability?</b>									
A	What is an SOI? How do you define it?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
B	What are the main SOIs in the district	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
C	Who Selected SOI?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
C1	What was the selection process?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
C2	What happens after SOIs are determined?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
D	Who selected projects for these SOI?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
E	How did the projects address these SOIs?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
E1	What were the outcomes of these projects?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
F	What are other SOIs are not addressed by SIKA-South in your district/village and why?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>3. Was the approach to women inclusion appropriate and effective in terms of empowering and increasing women participation in decision making in SIKA-South activities?</b>									
A	What are the activities conducted by SIKA-South which included womens participation?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
B	Who selected these activities?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
C	Who benefited from these activities (certain women or all backgrounds)?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
D	How did these women benefit?								
E	How was coordination with Women Affair's Department?			X		X	X	X	X
F	What are the outcomes of these activities/ training/grants?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>5. To what extent have SIKA-South activities been successfully presented as government activities, connecting people to resources ( both government and non-government) for service delivery?</b>									
A	How do you brand the SIKA-South program in provincial/district/village?			X	X	X	X	X	X
A1	Who brought this project to your district/village?		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
A2	Who funded this project?		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
A3	Who implemented this project?		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
B	What are differences between this and other government projects?		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
B1	What are differences in project selection?		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
B2	What are differences in project implementation?		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
B3	What are differences in beneficiary selection?		X	X	√	X	X	X	X
B4	Which of these do you think are good compared to other government projects? Why?		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
B5	Which of these do you think are bad compared to other government projects? Why?		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
C	Who is contacting and inviting CDCs, DDAs, and other tribal elders to SAM events?			X	X	X	X	X	X
C1	What is the brand and logo in the presentations and training manuals?		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Who participated in the opening day and other days of the training from the government entities?		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
D	Who participated in the project awarding day from the government entities?		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
E	Which government entities were monitoring the project?	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Do provincial and district entities understand what organizations and line departments work in their districts and what services they provide?			X	X	X	X	X	X
F1	Did they learn any of this from SIKA-South? How?			X	X	X	X	X	X
F2	How do these officials view this undertaking?			X	X	X	X	X	X
G	How do beneficiaries view service delivery from the government?		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
G1	Has service delivery improved? How and what specifically?		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Can these government and beneficiary perceptions be tied directly to SIKA-South capacity building of district entities?	X						X	
G2	Do people view these service delivery activities as local government activities? Foreign activities? Or National-level activities (i.e. MRRD)?		X	X	X		X		
<b>6. How effectively was a bottom-up communication process promoted linking MRRD developed DDAs to the overall district and provincial development planning process?</b>									
Are the district government entities including DDAs when preparing district development plans?									
A				X		X	X	X	X
A1	Illustrate this process in detail.			X		X	X	X	X
B	What are the rules and responsibilities of DDAs?			X		X	X	X	X
B1	How are DDA members selected?			X		X	X	X	X
C	How does the DDA communicate with district and provincial levels?			X		X	X	X	X
	How do ideas/plans/decisions/issues/concerns shared by DDA members reach the provincial level?			X		X	X	X	X
D	What has SIKA-South done to promote DDA communication to higher levels?			X		X	X	X	X
D1	How do DDAs view this "promotion of communication" by SIKA-South?			X		X	X	X	X
D2	How does the District Governor view this "promotion of communication"?					X	X	X	X
	What differences do you see when the DDA discusses community needs with GiRoA Officials compared to last year?		X	X		X	X	X	X
<b>7. How effective were capacity building initiatives aimed at teaching district entities how to plan, design, implement and monitor various types of development projects?</b>									
What kinds of trainings/activities has SIKA-South done to improve your and your staff's daily job?									
A		X		X		X	X	X	X
B	Who selected training modules?			X		X	X	X	X
B1	Who conducted a needs assesment and how?	X		X		X	X	X	X
B2	How was the selection process of the participants?			X		X	X	X	X
B3	Who participated in the training?	X		X		X	X	X	X
B4	How long was the training session and for how many days?	X		X		X	X	X	X



## ANNEX V: INTERVIEW LIST & PROJECT SITES VISITED

### NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS

Area	USAID	SIKA South	Afghan Government	District Entities	Beneficiaries	Others	TOTAL
National	3	8	2	--	--	2	15
Kandahar	--	17	09	--	--	--	26
Daman	--	01	03	03	60	--	67
Arghandab	--	02	03	02	110	--	117
Qalat	--	02	06	--	35	--	43
Tarnak wa Jaldak	--	04	01	01	30	--	36
Shah Joy	--	01	--	01	30	--	32
Lashkar Gah	--	14	06	--	--	--	20
Bost	--	03	--	02	100	--	105
Garmser	--	03	01	02	45	--	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>512</b>

## KABUL BASED INTERVIEWS

DATE	INTERVIEWEE	MISTI ASSIGNED EVALUATOR	LOCATION
5 JUN 2014	SIKA-South Chief of Party	M&E Specialist Team Lead	MISTI Villa
25 JUN 2014	Outgoing RP- SDO	M&E Specialist Team Lead	US Embassy
28 JUN 2014	USAID Deputy Sr. Development Officer	M&E Specialist Team Lead	Telephone
30 JUN 2014	Sr. Program Officer MRRD	M&E Specialist Team Lead	MISTI Villa
2 JULY 2014	IDLG Sr. Governance Officer	M&E Specialist Team Lead	MISTI Villa
6 JULY 2014	SIKA-South COP	M&E Specialist Team Lead	MISTI Villa
9 JULY 2014	USAID COR (SIKA-South)	M&E Specialist Team Lead	US Embassy
13 JULY 2014	SIKA-South Capacity Building Team Lead	M&E Specialist and Team Lead, M&E Advisor, and Field Research Officer	SIKA-South Compound
15 JULY 2014	SIKA-South M&E Lead	M&E Specialist Team Lead	MISTI Villa
10 AUG 2014	Exit Interview with COP	M&E Specialist Team Lead M&E Advisor and Field Research Officer	MISTI Villa

DATE	INTERVIEWEE	MISTI ASSIGNED EVALUATOR	LOCATION
11 AUG 2014	UNDP/NADBP Assistant Country Director, UNDP Program Officer	M&E Specialist Team Lead M&E Advisor and Field Research Officer	UNDP Country Office
12 AUG 2014	IRI Team Lead: Grants Manager, Program Manager, M&E Lead,	M&E Specialist Team Lead	SIKA-South Compound

## KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS & FIELD RESEARCH

DATE	INTERVIEWEE	MISTI ASSIGNED EVALUATOR	LOCATION
<b>FIRST FIELD RESEARCH</b>			
03 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Hilmand PMU Head	M&E Field Research Officer:	Lashkar Gah
03 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Hilmand IRI Provincial Team Lead.	M&E Field Research Officer:	Lashkar Gah
03 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Hilmand IR2 Provincial Team Lead.	M&E Field Research Officer:	Lashkar Gah
04 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Hilmand IR3, Provincial Team Lead	M&E Field Research Officer:	Lashkar Gah

04 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Hilmand IR4, Provincial Team Lead	M&E Field Research Officer:	Lashkar Gah
04 JUNE 2014	SIKA- South, Hilmand Provincial Gender Specialist	M&E Field Research Officer:	Lashkar Gah
04 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Hilmand M&E Officer	M&E Field Research Officer:	Lashkar Gah
05 JUNE 2014	Sectorial Service Director	M&E Field Research Officer:	Lashkar Gah
05 JUNE 2014	Provincial Rural Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD), Director	M&E Field Research Officer:	Lashkar Gah
06 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South Hilmand, Bost District Team Leader	M&E Field Research Officer:	Bost, Hilmand
06 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South Hilmand, Bost, District M&E Officer	M&E Field Research Officer:	Bost, Hilmand
06 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South Hilmand, Bost, District Grants Officer	M&E Field Research Officer:	Bost, Hilmand
07 JUNE 2014	Provincial Department of Women Affairs – Acting Director	M&E Field Research Officer:	Lashkar Gah
08 JUNE 2014	Head of Bost DDA	M&E Field Research Officer:	Bost, Hilmand
08 JUNE 2014	Deputy Head of Bost DDA	M&E Field Research Officer:	Bost, Hilmand
09 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South Hilmand, Garmser District	M&E Field Research Officer:	Garmser, Hilmand

	Team Leader.		
09 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South Hilmand, Garmser, District Grants Officer	M&E Field Research Officer:	Gramser, Hilmand
09 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South Hilmand, Garmser, District M&E Officer	M&E Field Research Officer:	Garmser, Hilmand
09 JUNE 2014	District Acting Governor, Garmser	M&E Field Research Officer:	Garmser, Hilmand
09 JUNE 2014	Garmser, DDA Head.	M&E Field Research Officer:	Garmser, Hilmand
09 JUNE 2014	Garmser, DDA Deputy Head	M&E Field Research Officer:	Garmser, Hilmand
04 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar PMU Head	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
04 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar, IR1 Provincial Team Leader	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
04 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar, IR2 Provincial Team Leader	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
04 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar, IR3 Provincial Team Leader	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
04 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar, IR4 Provincial Team Leader	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar

04 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar, Gender Specialist	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
04 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar, Gender Officer	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
04 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar, IR4 Gender Officer	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
04 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar, CBU Provincial Team Leader	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
04 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar, Central Support Unit Head	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
05 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar, M&E Manager	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
05 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar, M&E Officer	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
05 JUNE 2014	Deputy Provincial Governor, Kandahar	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
05 JUNE 2014	Sectorial Services Director, Kandahar	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
05 JUNE 2014	Regional IDLG Coordinator	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
06 JUNE 2014	Arghandab, DDA Head	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Arghandab, Kandahar
06 JUNE 2014	Arghandab, District Governor	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Arghandab, Kandahar

07 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar Daman District Team Leader	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Daman, Kandahar
07 JUNE 2014	Daman District Governor	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Daman, Kandahar
07 JUNE 2014	Daman District Police Chief	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Daman, Kandahar
07 JUNE 2014	Daman DDA Head and two members	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Daman, Kandahar
08 JUNE 2014	Arghandab, DDA Member	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Arghandab, Kandahar
09 JUNE 2014	PRRD Coordinator, Kandahar	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
10 JUNE 2014	Kandahar Provincial Department of Women Affairs, Administration Manager	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
22 JUNE 2014	IDLG Coordinator	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Qalat
23 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Zabul, Tarnak wa Jaldak District Team Leader	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Tarnak wa Jaldak, Zabul
23 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Zabul, Tarnak wa Jaldak M&E Officer	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Tarnak wa Jaldak, Zabul
23 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Zabul, Tarnak wa Jaldak, Stabilization Officer	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Tarnak wa Jaldak, Zabul
23 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Zabul, Tarnak wa Jaldak,	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Tarnak wa Jaldak,

	Engineer (IR4)		Zabul
23 JUNE 2014	Head of Tarnak wa Jaldak DDA	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Tarnak wa Jaldak
23 JUNE 2014	Tarnak wa Jaldak, District Governor	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Tarnak wa Jaldak, Zabul
24 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Zabul PMU Head	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Qalat
24 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South Provincial Stabilization Officer	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Qalat
24 JUNE 2014	Provincial Director of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Zabul	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Qalat
24 JUNE 2014	Deputy Provincial Governor of Zabul	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Qalat
24 JUNE 2014	Sectorial Service Director of Zabul	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Qalat
24 JUNE 2014	NABDP Manager, Zabul	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Qalat
24 JUNE 2014	Provincial Director of Women Affairs Department, Zabul	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Qalat
25 JUNE 2014	SIKA-South, Zabul District Team Leader, Shah Joi	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Shah Joi, Zabul
25 JUNE 2014	PRRD Social Worker	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Shah Joi, Zabul

25 JUNE 2014	Shah Joi, DDA Head	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Shah Joi, Zabul
<b>SECOND FIELD RESEARCH</b>			
17 JULY 2014	SIKA-South, Hilmand PMU Head	M&E Field Research Officer: Abdul	Lashkar Gah
17 JULY 2014	SIKA-South, Hilmand IRI Provincial Officer	M&E Field Research Officer: Abdul	Lashkar Gah
17 JULY 2014	SIKA-South, Hilmand IR2 Provincial Officer	M&E Field Research Officer: Abdul	Lashkar Gah
18 JULY 2014	SIKA-South, Hilmand, Provincial CBU Specialist	M&E Field Research Officer: Abdul	Lashkar Gah
18 JULY 2014	SIKA-South, Hilmand, Provincial Grants Officer	M&E Field Research Officer: Abdul	Lashkar Gah
19 JULY 2014	Deputy Provincial Governor	M&E Field Research Officer, Abdul	Lashkar Gah
20 JULY 2014	Provincial Women Affairs Director	M&E Field Research Officer, Abdul	Lashkar Gah
20 JULY 2014	Provincial Department of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (PRRD) Director	M&E Field Research Officer, Abdul	Lashkar Gah
21 JULY 2014	SIKA-South, Hilmand Gender Officer	M&E Field Research Officer, Abdul	Lashkar Gah

21 JULY 2014	SIKA-South, Hilmand M&E Officer	M&E Field Research Officer, Abdul	Lashkar Gah
20 JULY 2014	SIKA-South, DCoP	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
20 JULY 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar, M&E Specialist	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
20 JULY 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar, M&E Officer	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
20 JULY 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar, Gender Specialist	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
20 JULY 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar, Gender Officer	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
20 JULY 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar IRI Team Leader	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
20 JULY 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar IR2 Team Leader	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
20 JULY 2014	IDLG Provincial Coordinator	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
21 JULY 2014	Deputy Provincial Governor, Kandahar	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
22 JULY 2014	Sectorial Services Director, Kandahar	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
23 JULY 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar Arghandab District Team Leader	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Kandahar
23 JULY 2014	Arghandab District Governor	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Arghandab, Kandahar

23 JULY 2014	DDA Head, Arghandab	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Arghandab, Kandahar
24 JULY 2014	SIKA-South, Kandahar, District Team Leader, Daman	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Daman, Kandahar
24 JULY 2014	Daman District Governor	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Daman, Kandahar
24 JULY 2014	Daman, DDA Head	Sr. M&E Advisor, Mohammad	Daman, Kandahar

## PROJECT SITES VISITED

No	S/N	Project name	District	Sector	Activity Type
1	SSKDAG021	Water Reservoir Repair, Nahre Roza	Arghandab	Irrigation	Hard
2	SSKDAG022	Improving Irrigation Canal, Nahre Roza	Arghandab	Irrigation	Hard
3	SSKDAG024	Construction of Culvert, Charghulba	Arghandab	Infrastructure	Hard
4	SSKDAG028	Construction of Culvert, Shoyanan Olya	Arghandab	Infrastructure	Hard
5	SSKDAG029	Construction of Culvert, Khwaja Mulk	Arghandab	Infrastructure	Hard
6	SSKDAG031	Construction of Culvert, Sardeh Waliya	Arghandab	Infrastructure	Hard
7	SSKDAG032	Improving Drainage, Sarkari Bagh	Arghandab	Irrigation	Hard

8	SSKDAG036	Road Rehabilitation, Hajiano Kala	Arghandab	Infrastructure	Hard
9	SSKDAG038	Construction of Culvert, Loya Minara	Arghandab	Infrastructure	Hard
10	SSKDAG039	Construction of Culvert, Marza-e-Abbas	Arghandab	Infrastructure	Hard
11	SSKDAG040	Construction of Culvert, Nawi Marza	Arghandab	Infrastructure	Hard
12	SSKDDM002	Construction of Gabion, Tawheed Cluster	Daman	Infrastructure	Hard
13	SSKDDM003	Construction of Stone Masonry Retaining Wall, Fitrat Cluster	Daman	Infrastructure	Hard
14	SSKDDM006	Improving Water Supply Network, Ensaf Cluster	Daman	Irrigation	Hard
15	SSKDDM011	Construction of Culvert, Sahibzada Kalacha	Daman	Irrigation	Hard
16	SSKDDM014	Road Graveling, Charband	Daman	Irrigation	Hard
17	SSKDDM016	Rehabilitation of School, Etihad Cluster	Daman	Infrastructure	Hard
18	SSKDDM017	Construction of Protection Wall, Sahibzada Kalacha	Daman	Infrastructure	Hard
19	SSZBTJ127	Construction of Culverts, Haji Nika	Tarnak Wa Jaldak	Infrastructure	Hard
20	SSZBTJ134	Construction of Water Reservoirs, Pamir	Tarnak Wa Jaldak	Irrigation	Hard
21	SSZBTJ136	Construction of Water Reservoirs, Safa Cluster	Tarnak Wa Jaldak	Irrigation	Hard

22	SSZBQA062	Construction of Water Reservoirs, Sher Abad	Qalat	Irrigation	Hard
23	SSZBQA064	Rehabilitation of Canal, Manda Nasaran	Qalat	Irrigation	Hard
24	SSZBQA074	Rehabilitation of Road	Qalat	Infrastructure	Hard
25	SSZBQA337	Construction of Culvert, Qalat	Qalat	Infrastructure	Hard
26	SSZBSJ104	Construction of Culvert, Bara Khel	Shah Joy	Infrastructure	Hard
27	SSZBSJ106	Rehabilitation of Road, Bazergan	Shah Joy	Infrastructure	Hard
28	SSZBSJ111	Construction of Culvert, Kala Khel Nahe I	Shah Joy	Infrastructure	Hard
29	SSHMBO145	Construction of Water Intake Gates, Fasl Babaji	Bost	Irrigation	Hard
30	SSHMBO149	Construction of Water Intake Gates, CharBagh	Bost	Irrigation	Hard
31	SSHMBO153	Construction of Water Intake Gates, Fasl Babaji	Bost	Irrigation	Hard
32	SSHMBO156	Protection Wall Construction, Basharan	Bost	Infrastructure	Hard
33	SSHMBO157	Construction of Water Intake Gates, Sarwari	Bost	Irrigation	Hard
34	SSHMBO161	Construction of Water Intake Gates, Mamor Abdullah	Bost	Irrigation	Hard
35	SSHMBO164	Protection Wall Construction, Bolan	Bost	Infrastructure	Hard

36	SSHMBO169	Protection Wall Construction, Qulfak	Bost	Infrastructure	Hard
37	SSHMBO181	Rehabilitation of Raod, Qalai Bost	Bost	Infrastructure	Hard
38	SSHMBO186	Protection Wall Construction, Imam Agha Pankila	Bost	Infrastructure	Hard
39	SSHMGA211	Construction of School Boundary Wall Abdul Ghani Cluster	Garmser	Infrastructure	Hard
40	SSHMGA212	Protection Wall Construction (Gabion) Abdul Ghani Cluster	Garmser	Infrastructure	Hard
41	SSHMGA227	Construction of Intake Gates in Abdul Sattar Cluster	Garmser	Infrastructure	Hard
42	SSHMGA229	Construction of Culvert	Garmser	Infrastructure	Hard
43	SSHMGA243	Construction of Water Gates in Zikria Cluster	Garmser	Irrigation	Hard

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