

STABILIZATION IN KEY AREAS – WEST PROGRAM (SIKA-WEST)

WEEKLY UPDATES: May 18, 2012 – May 24, 2012

PROGRAM

- On May 22nd, the SIKA- West program team met the Provincial Manager for the DRRD Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Program (AREDP) in Herat to discuss collaboration between AREDP and SIKA-West. AREDP is interested in collaborating with SIKA-West in order to build DRRD capacity and stabilization efforts in the districts. AREDP is currently working in three districts in Herat Province and has plans to expand to the other districts and provinces in western Afghanistan. SIKA-West will discuss convening a coordination meeting between the DRRD programs with the Director of Herat PRRD.
- On May 23rd, IR4 and IR2 introduced their components of the SIKA-West program to the Regional Manager of NABDP and requested information related to NABDP’s ongoing activities. The Regional Manager appointed the Community Development Program Head and the Head of Engineering Department to collaborate with the SIKA team.
- On May 21st, the IR3 team met with NABDP Herat and the Herat DRRD director to discuss introductory communications training. Training will be developed within the next fortnight.
- IR1 is developing stability training, orientation and roll out materials. A Training Facility Guideline is being developed and the team is conducting practice training sessions.
- On May 20th SIKA-West participated in a USAID briefing on SIKA-West to ISAF (Italian and Spanish contingent). USAID gave an overview of SIKA-West and its role in the stabilization process and its districts of operation. There was discussion on the Strategic Zones of Influence (SZOIs) and in parallel ISAF shared information on its areas of operation.
- On May 21st USAID met with SIKA-West to reiterate the stabilization overview. As there is many new staff who have joined SIKA-West staff gave a brief introduction of themselves and their roles and responsibilities. USAID then thanked the team for their active participation and went on to speak of the challenges ahead, the most immediate being the mobilization into Bala Baluk.
- The Base Line Survey RFQ has been prepared however; it is on hold pending additional guidance from USAID on the collaboration with MISTI.
- Development of an initial Gender presentation is underway. This serves as an introduction to gender mainstreaming. Initial contacts have been made with female employees of the Herat PRRD and female shuras within Herat to learn about their current gender mainstreaming activities.

ADMINISTRATION

Recruitment - HQ

- To date 45 employees (16 female, 29 male) have been hired and 25 positions including PSTs are under process including document collection, reference check and salary verification.

SIKA-West Recruitment				
Staff	Herat Office	Herat Province	Farah Province	Badghis Province
Hired	45	0	0	0
In process	20	8	9	9
Females hired	16	0	0	0
Males hired	29	0	0	0

PROCUREMENT:

- Equipment was transported from the Nazary Hotel to the new offices and all items in the compound were tagged and registered.
- The required disposition paper work and approvals were completed from USAID for two Generators from Care International in Kabul.

IT:

- Bid Evaluation for the network cabling/ducting completed, a contractor selected and the cabling will be complete May 23rd in the new offices. VSAT internet was connected 20th May.

SECURITY:

- The Farah Governor's compound was attacked by insurgents on May 17th. There was a four hour battle and seven ANP were killed. In Bala Baluk District ten Taliban were killed and seven arrested by the ANSF on May 19th.
- SIKA-West conducted the move successfully from the Nazary hotel to the new villa on May 19th. All APPF/Access Controller/Watch Keepers were on staff May 17th.
- Security upgrades at the new compound are ongoing.

Next Week Activities May 25-31:

- SIKA-West team will travel to Farah to prepare for implementation in Bala Baluk
- Preparations for PST office space will continue
- Preparations will continue for the orientation training for PST teams and PRRD counterpart staff scheduled for June 10th
- Capacity assessment and workshop at Herat DRRD on communications will be undertaken