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STABILIZATION IN KEY AREAS (SIKA) – WEST

WEEKLY REPORT (AUGUST 16–22, 2012)

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STABILIZATION IN KEY AREAS (SIKA) – WEST

WEEKLY REPORT

Submitted to:

USAID | Afghanistan

Prepared by:

AECOM International Development

DISCLAIMER:

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

BACKGROUND

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

KEY PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

SUMMARY OF WEEKLY REPORT

Afghan national staff recognized the end of the Ramadan fasting period with a three-day public holiday over *Eid-ul-Fitr* from August 19-21, which was extended by President Karzai from August 22-23. Expatriate leads took this opportunity to catch up on producing documents such as the Bala Baluk Engagement Plan and the Quarterly Report and reviewing deliverable documents.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WEEK INCLUDE:

INTERMEDIATE RESULT 1

- Preparations were made for the next Bala Baluk District Stabilization Committee (DSC) meeting scheduled for August 26 in the District Governor's office. IR1 plans to send a Stability Program Officer (SPO) to the Farah DRRD in order to assist the Provincial Support Team (PST) and the Bala Baluk District Support Team (DST) with arrangements for the meeting. The main points of the DSC meeting agenda will include Stabilization Analysis Mechanism (SAM) Training and a discussion on Bala Baluk District Sources of Instability (SOIs), root causes, and potential mitigation activities. The training and discussions will be conducted in Pashto by the PST Manager and the Farah IR1 Stability Officer with the assistance of the HQ SPO. The SOIs, root causes, and mitigation activities determined by the DSC members will be recorded in the District Stabilization Matrix (DSM) for further analysis, planning and implementation of mitigation activities.
- On August 22, the Farah Provincial Support Team (PST) Manager spoke with the Bala Baluk District Governor (DG) to discuss arrangements for the District Stabilization Committee (DSC) meeting scheduled for August 26. The DG reported that approximately 40 to 50 Taliban insurgents had entered the village of Shewan the previous night, and many of the local residents had evacuated to either the nearby villages or the provincial center. According to the DG, the Shewan people are expecting an Afghan National Army (ANA) offensive in the next few days and want to be out of harm's way. The DG believes the expected military engagement in Shewan, would be potentially located approximately three kilometers from the Bala Baluk District Center, may have an effect on the holding of the DSC meeting. The DG said he is determined to hold the meeting as planned and will do everything possible to make it happen. He also reiterated his full support and cooperation with the DRRD/SIKA-West program.
- On August 16, a Stability Program Officer presented the IR1 stability program orientation and training overview to new SIKA-West employees.
- IR1 stability program training was conducted for the two new Stability Program Officers.

INTERMEDIATE RESULT 2

- NTR – the IR2 lead is an Afghan national staff member.

INTERMEDIATE RESULT 3

- NTR – the Acting IR2 lead is an Afghan national staff member.

INTERMEDIATE RESULT 4

- NTR – the IR4 lead was on leave during the *Eid* period

DETAILED PROVINCIAL/DISTRICT ACTIVITIES

- NTR – all staff were on public holiday during the *Eid* period

GENDER AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Gender Component

- The CBD team continued developing Gender Mainstreaming materials for the upcoming PST/DST training.
- The CBD had issued a number of RFPs two weeks prior and is currently waiting on responses to the Gender Literacy Training, Gender Health & Nutrition Training, and Gender Vocational Training RFPs for the Bala Baluk District. The Acting COP requested that the CBD lead modify and add information into the RFPs.

CBD Headquarters Component

- Forty Training Modules covering IR1-IR4/M&E and Gender were completed and translated into Dari and Pashto and shared with the SIKA West program. This week IR4 – Community Stabilization Practices and CBD – Gender Mainstreaming Part II were developed.
- The training calendar for September was updated and sent to all relevant staff. The calendar coordinates all IR/M&E and Gender training activities in the field for the month of September.
- The CBD team worked with IR1, IR3 and IR4 to develop training materials which will enable them to train RRD counterparts and district entities in the field.
- No CBD trainings were conducted during the week due to the *Eid* break.

CBD Farah Component

- The Farah DRRD Capacity Needs Assessment data was received and is currently being reviewed to plan upcoming capacity building training sessions for the DRRD. Current needs have been identified and incorporated into the CBD six-month engagement plan. Material requests have also been identified and are being sourced through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process.
- The Bala Baluk District Governor Capacity Building Needs Assessment is underway, and the Bala Baluk DSC Needs Assessment is scheduled to begin on August 26.
- The Farah DRRD and Farah PST/DST integration plan is in progress. They will match counterparts who can support the continued development of Farah DRRD.
- CBD is waiting on responses for the following RFPs:
 1. Computer Programming RFP for Farah DRRD/PST
 2. Language Training RFP for Farah DRRD/PST
 3. Technical Engineering Training RFP for Farah DRRD/PST/DST/DEs
- The CBD lead revised the six month Bala Baluk Engagement Plan following feedback from the M&E Lead.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- The M&E lead produced a draft of the Quarterly Report (April 1 – July 31, 2012)
- The M&E lead produced a draft Bala Baluk Engagement Plan and sent it out to all IR leads for modification.

HR & RECRUITMENT

- To date, 78 employees (27 female, 51 male) have been hired and 17 positions are in process. Due to the *Eid* break there were no changes to the SIKA-West Recruitment table from the previous week.

SIKA-West Recruitment				
Staff	Herat Office	Herat Province	Farah Province	Badghis Province
Hired	56	6	11	5
In process	10	2	1	4
Females hired	22	2	2	1
Males hired	34	4	9	4

- During the *Eid* period from August 16-26 the Operations Manager was the Acting COP.

DELIVERABLES

- NTR

SECURITY OPERATIONS

- During the *Eid* period all remaining expatriate staff were on compound lockdown in Herat, following warnings of a *Fatwa* against all US/European personnel in Afghanistan.

LOOKING AHEAD/NEXT WEEK'S ACTIVITIES

- IR1 staff will facilitate the Bala Baluk DSC meeting on August 26, supported by other relevant departments.
- IR1 staff will follow up on the Bala Baluk District Stabilization Committee Meeting and collect feedback.
- IR1 staff will prepare the Bala Baluk District Stabilization Matrix.
- IR1 staff will organize a meeting of the HQ program staff to discuss the Bala Baluk District Stabilization Matrix as part of the Strategic Stabilization Cycle.