SIGAR

Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction

INFORMATION ON USAID'S STABILITY IN KEY AREAS PROGRAM – SOUTHERN REGION, AFGHANISTAN

June 4, 2018

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Since 2003, USAID has spent at least $2.3 billion on stabilization programs intended to extend the reach of the Afghan government to unstable areas, provide income generation opportunities, build trust between citizens and their government, and encourage local populations to take an active role in community development.[1] USAID's Stability in Key Areas (SIKA) South program was one such effort. SIKA-South was intended to reduce the impact of the insurgency in southern Afghanistan by promoting good governance in unstable and high-threat districts and increasing the Afghan public's confidence in the Afghan government to lead the country after the security transition. The SIKA-South program was one of four regional SIKA programs implemented by USAID between July 2012 and July 2015. In April 2012, USAID awarded AECOM International Development, Inc. (AECOM) a $58.8 million, 18-month cost-plus-fixed-fee contract to implement projects in the SIKA-South region. Over the course of the program, USAID spent approximately $79.3 million to implement SIKA-South.

In June 2017, SIGAR sent an inquiry letter to USAID requesting that the agency provide a complete list of SIKA projects by title, type of project, location, project status, and cost.[2] SIGAR used this information to categorize SIKA projects and determine the types of projects undertaken, project location, completion status, and the overall scope of SIKA operations in SIKA-South.

This report is the second in a series that documents SIKA's reach throughout Afghanistan, and provides details about USAID's initiatives for the SIKA South program. This fact sheet provides valuable information on the different types of projects conducted for stabilization operations in five provinces in southern Afghanistan. In conjunction with other assessments on stabilization activities, this information can assist decision-makers and government officials in better understanding U.S. efforts and expenditures intended to help stabilize Afghan communities.

We provided a draft of this fact sheet to USAID on May 10, 2018. We received comments from USAID on May 22, 2018. In its comments, USAID reported that beginning in 2006 it worked in coordination with the Department of Defense and the Afghan Government to create stabilization programs to establish basic linkages between provincial government institutions and local communities. Since USAID's stabilization programs ended in 2015, USAID reported that it has gradually shifted towards long-term capacity building to provide the technical guidance needed to help the Afghan Government deliver essential services to the people of Afghanistan. USAID's written comments are reproduced in appendix II. We also received technical comments from USAID, which we incorporated as appropriate.

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[1] In our January 2016, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress,* we reported that USAID had "no plans to continue stabilization activities, and that they have not received resources from Congress for peace and security programing for FY 2015." USAID's stabilization programming ended in August 2016.

[2] SIGAR, *Inquiry Letter: Stability in Key Areas,* SIGAR 17-49-SP, June 28, 2017. USAID provided SIGAR with a total list of 6,277 SIKA projects that were implemented in the four SIKA regions between March 2012 and September 2015.

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Sincerely,

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From September 2003 through December 2015, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) spent more than $2.3 billion on stabilization activities and programs in Afghanistan.[3] The programs were intended to solidify the U.S. military's gains in insecure areas by working with and supporting at-risk populations, extending the Afghan government's reach to unstable areas, providing job opportunities, building trust between citizens and their government, and encouraging local populations to take an active role in their development.[4] One of these programs was the Stability in Key Areas (SIKA)-South program, which was intended to be a way to assist district and provincial level Afghan government officials in southern Afghanistan implement community-based projects to support institutions, processes, and projects that help foster stable political economic, and social development. Unlike other stabilization programs which focused on building the capacity of local communities to resist the influence of the Taliban, SIKA-South focused specifically on strengthening the capacity of district and provincial governments to target aspects of local instability.[5] Between April 2012 and July 2015, SIKA-South supported provincial and district government bodies with goals of implementing Afghan-led community-based projects, and helping to build trust and legitimacy in local governments to deliver basic services and increase local economic capacity.

SIGAR has previously examined various aspects of the SIKA programs and found that they faced many challenges.[6] For example, we reported in July 2013 that SIKA programs had not met their essential objectives because USAID had not awarded grants on a timely basis or established a formal working agreement with the Afghan government for project implementation. USAID contracted with Management Systems International Inc. (MSI) in 2012 to conduct the Measuring Impacts of Stabilization Initiatives (MISTI) program, which was designed "to measure and map stabilization trends and impacts in areas such as security, rule of law, and economic activity; build a community of practice for rigorous monitoring and evaluation of Afghan reconstruction programs; and communicate lessons learned for the transition to Afghan-led sustainable development."[7] In its mid-term performance evaluation of SIKA-South program issued in October 2014, MISTI found that SIKA-South's performance management indicators were limited in their ability to accurately measure the results of SIKA projects implemented in the region, and SIKA-South could not accurately assess whether this programming had achieved its intended outcomes.[8] Furthermore, in its mid-term performance evaluation, MISTI found that delays in the project approval process had the effect of undermining communities' perception of local government. When evaluating the overall success of the SIKA program, MISTI's final performance evaluation issued in September 2015 found that SIKA program efforts were unsuccessful in reducing instability in Afghanistan, but helped to improve perceptions of community cohesion and resilience.

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[3] In our January 2016, *Quarterly Report to the United States Congress,* we reported that USAID had "no plans to continue stabilization activities, and that they have not received resources from Congress for peace and security programing for FY 2015." USAID's stabilization programming ended in August 2016.

[4] In February 2010, USAID/Afghanistan formed the Stabilization Unit to unite all U.S. government stabilization planning and programs under one office. The unit's responsibilities were managing, coordinating, and monitoring and evaluating USAID's stabilization programs. In addition to SIKA, USAID's other stabilization programs in Afghanistan included the Quick Impact Projects, which concluded in 2007; the Local Governance and Community Development program, which concluded in 2011; the Community Based Stabilization Grants Program and Afghanistan Stabilization Initiative, which concluded in 2012; and the Community Development Programs, which concluded in 2013.

[5] USAID believed that weak and ineffective local government structures fueled the insurgency and created instability, and that the lack of focused governance threatened to erode the legitimacy of provincial governments and their ability to deliver basic services. To help address instability at the local level in SIKA-North, SIKA-North's programming included programs to address factional influence, disparity in government capacity, absence of perceived legitimacy, lack of capacity and basic equipment, and problems with communication, access, and security.

[6] See, e.g., SIGAR, *Stability in Key Areas (SIKA) Programs: After 16 Months and $47 Million Spent, USAID Had Not Met Essential Program Objectives*, SIGAR 13-16-AR, July 29, 2013; and SIGAR, *USAID's Measuring Impact of Stabilization Initiative: Audit of Costs Incurred by Management Systems International*, SIGAR 15-53-FA, April 21, 2015.

[7] SIGAR, *USAID's Measuring Impacts of Stabilization Initiatives: Program Generally Achieved Its Objectives, but USAID's Lack of a Geospatial Data Policy and Standards Affected Its Implementation*, SIGAR Audit 17-10, October 26, 2016.

[8] MSI, *Stability in Key Areas – South Mid-Term Performance Evaluation*, October 2014.

This report is the second in a series that documents SIKA's reach throughout Afghanistan, and provides details about USAID's initiatives for the SIKA South program.[9] In June 2017, SIGAR sent an inquiry letter to USAID requesting that the agency provide a complete list of SIKA projects by title, type, location, completion status, and cost.[10] In response to our inquiry, USAID provided SIGAR with an excel spreadsheet documenting all the SIKA projects implemented in the four SIKA regions between December 2011 and September 2015, including 1,055 projects in the SIKA-South region.[11] The information USAID provided concerning SIKA was generated from historical data contained in Afghan Info, the official system of record for the SIKA program.[12] SIGAR used the information in Afghan Info to categorize SIKA projects to determine the types of projects that were conducted, project location, completion status, and the overall scope of SIKA operations throughout Afghanistan. USAID was unable to provide information about expenditures for individual SIKA projects, because it did not require its implementing partners to report such information in Afghan Info.[13]

This fact sheet provides valuable information on the different types of projects conducted for stabilization operations in five provinces in southern Afghanistan. In conjunction with other assessments on stabilization activities, this information can assist decision-makers and government officials in better understanding U.S. efforts and expenditures intended to help stabilize Afghan communities.

BACKGROUND

The SIKA program comprised four regional programs—East, West, South, and North—which supported USAID's stabilization efforts across Afghanistan. SIKA programs were implemented in a total of 17 provinces across Afghanistan. USAID created the four regional SIKA programs through separate contracts costing the U.S. government over $306 million upon contract completion.[14] See figure 1 for the location of each of the four SIKA regions.

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[9] In May 2018, we released our lessons learned report on U.S. stabilization efforts in Afghanistan. Our analysis found, among other things, that the U.S. government greatly overestimated its ability to build and reform government institutions in Afghanistan as part of its stabilization strategy, and successes in stabilizing Afghan districts rarely lasted longer than the physical presence of coalition troops and civilians. See SIGAR, *Stabilization: Lessons Learned from the U.S. Experience in Afghanistan*, SIGAR-18-48-LL, May 24, 2018.

[10] SIGAR 17-49-SP.

[11] The period of performance for SIKA-South began in April 2012. SIKA-North started in March 2012; SIKA-East began in December 2011; and SIKA-West began in January 2012. USAID reported a total of 1,055 projects reported for SIKA-South, 2,554 projects reported for SIKA-East, 1,843 projects reported for SIKA-West, and 825 projects reported for SIKA-North.

[12] According to USAID, Afghan Info allowed USAID to track the location of projects to the nearest geospatial coordinate, monitor the performance of development projects, and meet the Afghan government's requirement that USAID provide information to the Afghan Ministry of Finance in order to track ongoing and completed donor-sponsored development activities. USAID required that implementing partners record SIKA program information in Afghan Info on a quarterly basis.

[13] In 2015, SIGAR received project data from USAID on SIKA-South project implementation. The data we received in 2015 included contractor-reported data on the total obligated and disbursed amounts spent on 853 SIKA-South projects, as well as individual project start and completion dates. The contractor data we received reported a total cost of around $12 million for these projects. Afghan Info, the system of record for the SIKA programs, does not account for spending at the subnational level.

[14] AECOM International Development, Inc. received the contracts for SIKA-East, SIKA-West, and SIKA-South, and DAI received the contract for SIKA-North. Each of the contracts had an 18- month base period of performance with additional 18-month option periods.

Figure 1 - Location of SIKA Program Regions

Source: SIGAR Audit 13-16/Stability in Key Areas.

In April 2012, USAID awarded AECOM International Development, Inc. (AECOM) a $58.8 million, 18-month cost-plus-fixed-fee contract to implement projects in the SIKA-South region. USAID signed a new contract for $60.2 million with AECOM for an additional 18-months in March 2013.[15] Over the course of the contract, USAID spent approximately $79.3 million to implement SIKA-South.

During the three years of the SIKA-South program, USAID and AECOM implemented SIKA projects in five provinces in the SIKA-South area of responsibility. These provinces were selected for SIKA activities because they contained Key Terrain Districts (KTDs), which were insecure and unstable areas identified by U.S. military commanders to be the most critical to the success of the U.S. counterinsurgency mission.[16] SIKA-South projects were implemented in KTDs to support the U.S. military's counterinsurgency strategy.[17] See figure 2 for the location of SIKA-South program operations.

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[15] According to the SIKA South Contracting Officer's Representative, following a bid protest, USAID issued a new contract for SIKA-South to AECOM in March 2013 in the amount of $60,241,053.

[16] KTDs were developed by the International Security Assistance Force and the government of Afghanistan in 2010. KTDs were areas where the bulk of the population was concentrated, and that contain centers of economic productivity, key infrastructure, and key commerce routes connecting such areas to each other and to the outside world. These districts roughly follow the line of the three major highways in Afghanistan through the most densely populated portions of the country. ISAF and the Afghan government identified a total of 80 KTDs, and an additional 41 area of interest districts in Afghanistan.

[17] USAID required that AECOM use community-based contracting, known as the Kandahar Model, when implementing projects in SIKA-South. The Kandahar Model emphasized (1) the use of local labor, (2) avoidance of red tape, and (3) less reliance on sub-contractors to enable the quick delivery of services. This approach was designed to help local government bodies gain experience with project prioritization, implementation, and monitoring, as well as financial management.
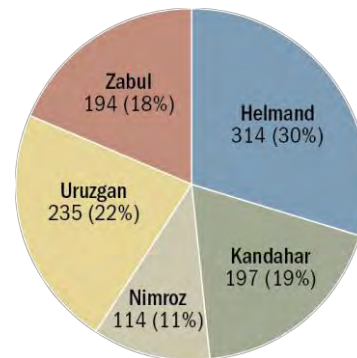
Figure 2 - Location of SIKA-South Program Operations

Source: SIGAR Audit 13-16/Stability in Key Areas.

USAID implemented 1,055 projects in 20 districts across Kandahar, Helmand, Nimroz, Uruzgan, and Zabul provinces over the course of three years. Of the 1,055 projects, approximately 30 percent, or 314, were located in Helmand. The remaining 70 percent were relatively evenly distributed between Uruzgan, Kandahar, Zabul, and Nimroz. According to USAID data when SIKA-South programming ended in the summer of 2015, 828 projects, or 78 percent were complete. The remaining 227 projects were incomplete.[18] USAID's Afghan Info data, provided after the SIKA project ended, did not contain any additional information detailing why projects were left incomplete or identifying a plan for completion by the community or another interested party, such as the community, district, or provincial development councils. See figure 3 for the total number of SIKA projects implemented in SIKA-South.

Figure 3 – Total Projects by Province in SIKA-South
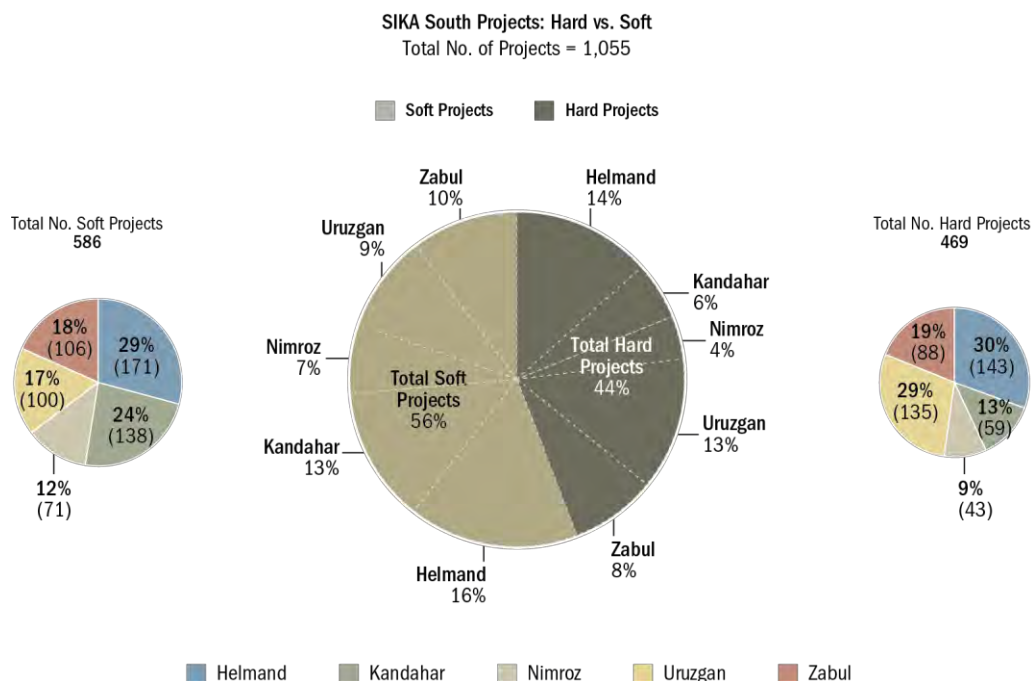

Source: SIGAR analysis of USAID's SIKA data.

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[18] Based on data provided by USAID, we categorized projects as complete or incomplete. We categorized incomplete projects into four different categories based on the information provided in project completion description —less than 25 percent completed (4 projects), 25-49 percent completed (107 projects), 50-74 percent completed (42 projects), and 75-99 percent completed (67 projects). We could not determine the completion status of two projects.

SIKA-SOUTH PROJECTS

We grouped SIKA-South projects into two main categories—"hard projects" and "soft projects," using project descriptions provided within USAID's SIKA data. We used this terminology to be consistent with the way in which USAID categorized SIKA projects over the course of the program. Hard projects consisted of infrastructure-focused activities, such as the construction of roads, culverts, and playgrounds.[19] Soft projects consisted of capacity-building activities, such as vocational training, teacher training, education, and conflict resolution, and focused on reducing instability by building trust in local government bodies.[20]

We found that approximately 56 percent of the projects implemented in SIKA-South (587 projects) were soft projects, and approximately 44 percent of the projects implemented in SIKA-South were hard projects (468 projects). See Figure 4 for a description of the types of SIKA projects implemented in SIKA-South.

Figure 4 - Types of SIKA Projects in SIKA-South

Source: SIGAR analysis of USAID's SIKA data.

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[19] According to the USAID-procured MISTI final SIKA performance evaluation issued in September 2015, projects to build or rehabilitate roads were greatly valued by the community, improved access to government offices, and improved access to medical facilities, schools, and farms. Infrastructure projects, such as the building of protective walls or providing solar panels and drinking water were also valued by the community, as they provided protection over farm lands and enhanced local community services.
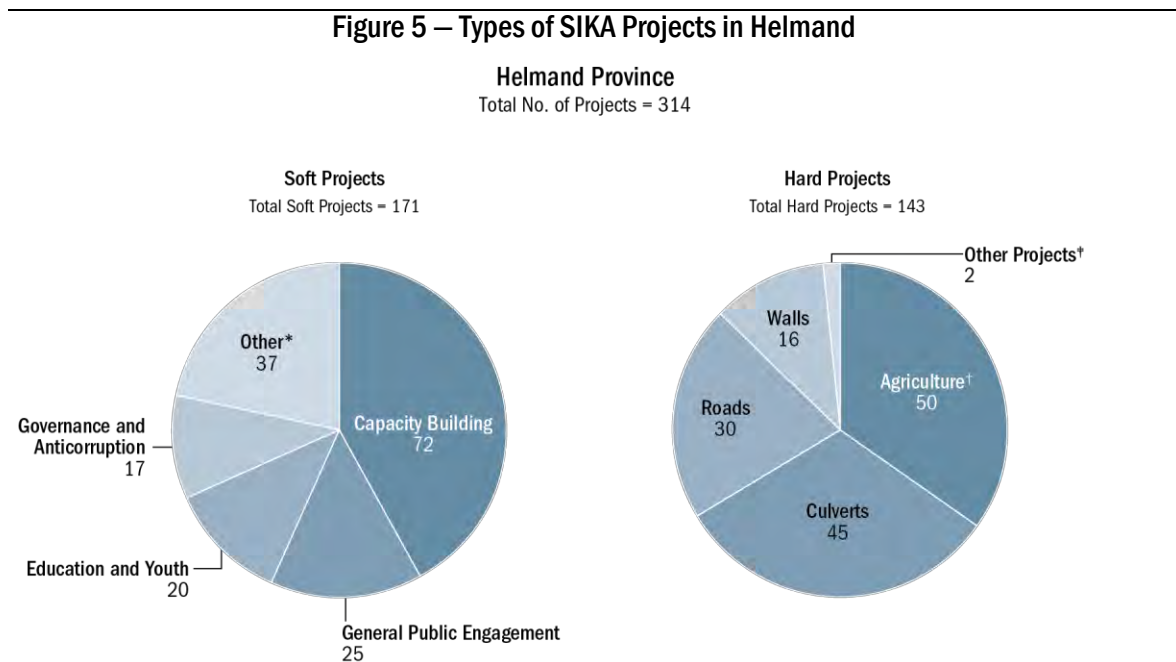
[20] According to the September 2015 USAID-procured MISTI evaluation, SIKA South had the most difficulty in ensuring female participation. This was partially due to the South's conservative Pashtun culture. It was also SIKA-South's failure to include gender in different phases of its programming.

SIKA-South Projects by Subcategory

Using our professional judgment, we independently grouped soft projects into 11 project subcategories based on our analysis of the project descriptions provided in the SIKA-South data. The 11 project subcategories include: agriculture, capacity building, conflict resolution, education and youth, election-related, gender and human rights, general public engagement, governance and anti-corruption, sports promotion and development, non-specific infrastructure, and other. We categorized hard projects in the infrastructure category into five subcategories. These include: walls, roads, culverts, mixed projects, which consist of more than one infrastructure project, and other. We assigned each individual SIKA project to one subcategory. For an example of the types of projects that we placed into each subcategory, see appendix I.

SIKA-South Projects in Helmand

We found that of the 314 SIKA projects implemented in Helmand, approximately, 55 percent (171 projects) were soft projects, and 45 percent (143 projects), were hard projects. The majority of soft projects (72) implemented in Helmand were intended to improve the capacity of the local government to support local needs through training, grant writing, procurement and management, basic government administration and financial management.[21] The majority of hard projects (91) in Helmand consisted of constructing culverts, road rehabilitation and wall construction. Ninety projects were incomplete. See figure 5 for the types of projects implemented in Helmand.

Figure 5 — Types of SIKA Projects in Helmand

Helmand Province
Total No. of Projects = 314

Soft Projects
Total Soft Projects = 171

Hard Projects
Total Hard Projects = 143

Source: SIGAR analysis of USAID's SIKA data.

Note: The 'other' category for Soft Projects includes the following categories: conflict resolution, counter-narcotics, election-related, gender and human rights, non-agricultural or gender specific vocational training, specific infrastructure, sports promotion and development and other projects that could not be identified.

Note: The 'other' category for Hard Projects includes a variety of infrastructure projects, such as installing wells, providing electricity, installing community complaint boxes, and rehabilitating schools.
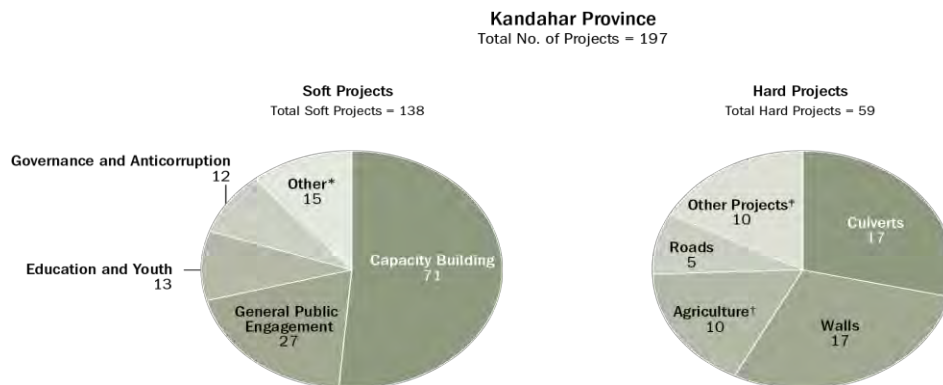
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[21] According to the September 2015 USAID-procured MISTI evaluation, most of the trainings in SIKA-South were basic-level modules designed for largely illiterate officials. MISTI reported that these trainings were mostly effective but designed at a much lower level than trainings for the other SIKAs.

Twenty-three projects related to general public engagement were designed to publicize on-going and completed infrastructure projects through radio/television broadcasts, town hall meetings and theater events. The goal of these projects was to allow local government officials "to apply [their] newly acquired knowledge and skills in communication and outreach activities."[22] For example, one project in the village of Lashkar Gar Eighteen aired "three radio broadcasts during community forums" to generate support for local community projects. All of the projects in the other subcategory were focused on either providing training on "the role of men and women in society" or on human rights. The majority of projects implemented to support education and youth, focused on PLAY! Programming. According to the USAID-procured MISTI evaluation, "PLAY! was a program designed to empower young men and women (under 30 years old) and strengthen their representation, participation, and leadership in subnational development and governance through sports and fitness activities." The majority of hard projects (50) in Helmand consisted of initiatives to help the agricultural infrastructure including construction of water gates and irrigation development.[23]

SIKA Projects in Kandahar

We found that of the 197 projects implemented in Kandahar, 70 percent (138 projects) were soft projects, and 30 percent (59 projects), were hard projects.[24] The majority of soft projects (71) implemented in Kandahar were designed to build local government capacity through offering training on basic communications, lobbying, and writing grants. The majority of hard projects (39) supported infrastructure projects, including the construction of protective walls around schools and farmlands, construction of culverts, and rehabilitation of roads. Twenty projects were incomplete, and we were unable to determine the status of two projects. See Figure 6 for the different types of projects implemented in Kandahar.

Figure 6— Types of SIKA Projects in Kandahar

Source: SIGAR analysis of USAID's SIKA data.

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[22] According to the September 2015 USAID-procured MISTI evaluation, SIKA-South encouraged participation in radio dramas and call in shows. These popular engagements supported local government and were intended to increase awareness of service delivery in local communities.

[23] One concern raised by the September 2015 USAID-procured MISTI evaluation, was that a large number of small-scale infrastructure development projects were conducted in SIKA-South in highly insecure areas without sufficient oversight and monitoring.

[24] According to the September 2015 USAID-procured MISTI evaluation, SIKA-South's program management was originally based in Kandahar, but, due to security issues, had to relocate all staff to Kabul halfway into the contract. SIKA South's productivity and oversight suffered when its staff left Kandahar.

Note: The 'other' category for Soft Projects includes the following categories: conflict resolution, counter-narcotics, election-related, gender and human rights, non-agricultural or gender specific vocational training, specific infrastructure, sports promotion and development and other projects that could not be identified.
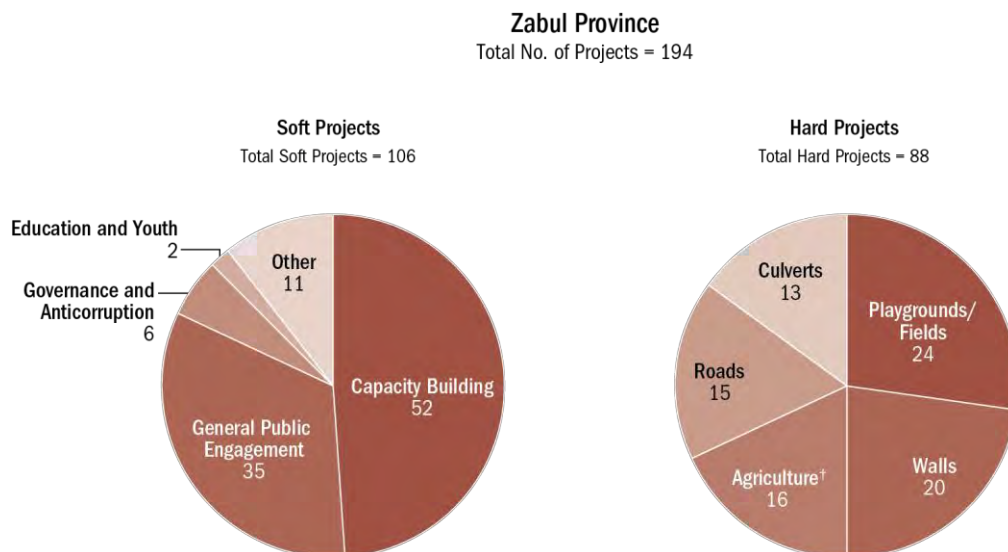
Note: The 'other' category for Hard Projects includes a variety of infrastructure projects, such as installing wells, providing electricity, installing community complaint boxes, and rehabilitating schools.

The majority (17) of projects related to general public engagement sought to increase the awareness of local government services, including 14 projects that used radio broadcasting to promote SIKA projects by interviewing beneficiaries of grants and project participants. All education and youth projects revolved around the PLAY! program. Programs in the governance and anti-corruption category focused on holding public "fairs to disseminate information and increase awareness of services available."[25] In the other category, four projects focused on gender and human rights, of which two provided training on the "role of men and women in society" and two provided training on human rights. Two projects in this subcategory were designed to train local officials on "conflict resolution and decision making." Hard projects in the other category supported the improvement of irrigation canals and canal intake rehabilitation, as well as the construction of siphons and an intake gate, and the rehabilitation of three schools in the Daman District.

SIKA Projects in Zabul

We found that of the 194 projects implemented in Zabul, 55 percent (106 projects) were soft projects, and 45 percent (88 projects), were hard projects. About half of the soft projects (52) implemented in Zabul were designed to support capacity building efforts to train local officials on, among other things, basic communications, media relations, and advocacy and lobbying. Eleven of these programs were designed to assist local government leaders manage community concerns by helping local government officials "identify gaps that may be filled via SIKA-South Training" and "identify strengths and weaknesses primarily centered on SIKA-related functions and tasks." Approximately half of all hard projects (48) implemented in Zabul were for the construction of protective walls, road rehabilitation, and culvert construction. Forty-two projects were incomplete at the time SIKA-South programming ended in the summer of 2015. See Figure 7 for the different types of projects implemented in Zabul.

Figure 7— Types of SIKA Projects in Zabul

Zabul Province
Total No. of Projects = 194

Source: SIGAR analysis of USAID's SIKA data.

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[25] According to the September 2015 USAID-procured MISTI evaluation, In the South, service provider fairs were a new and valued method for linking government and business services to the people.

Note: The 'other' category for Soft Projects includes the following categories: conflict resolution, counter-narcotics, election-related, gender and human rights, non-agricultural or gender specific vocational training, specific infrastructure, sports promotion and development and other projects that could not be identified.
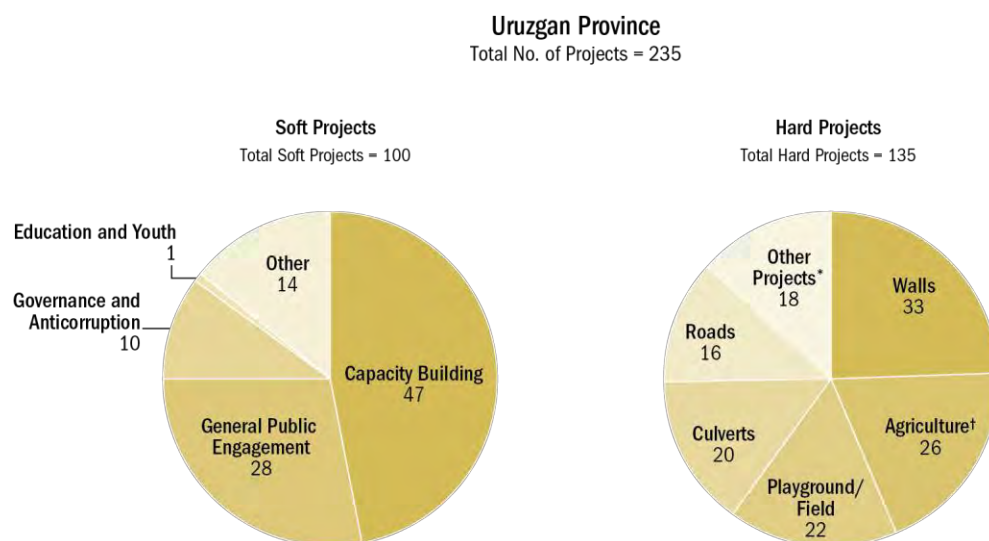
Note: The 'other' category for Hard Projects includes a variety of infrastructure projects, such as installing wells, providing electricity, installing community complaint boxes, and rehabilitating schools.

Projects related to general public engagement were designed to increase awareness of local government services. For example, 19 town halls and community forums and 15 radio broadcasts were carried out. The majority (7) of projects in the other category supported vocational training on a variety of subjects including carpentry, handicraft, electrical solar, and computer training. Twenty-four hard projects implemented in Zabul sought to increase stability in the region through youth and sports promotion efforts. Under this effort, 12 playgrounds were constructed in the Qalat and Tarnak Wa Jaldak districts and 12 volleyball and football sports fields constructed in the Qalat and Shahjoy districts. Agricultural projects supported the construction of canals and water reservoirs.

SIKA Projects in Uruzgan

We found that of the 235 projects implemented in Uruzgan, 43 percent (100 projects) were soft projects, and 57 percent (135 projects), were hard projects. The majority of capacity building projects (39) were designed to train local government leaders on basic governance skills, including administration and project management, leadership, time management, basic procurement and financial management, among others.[26] Approximately half of all hard projects (69) implemented in Uruzgan were for the construction of protective walls, culverts, and road rehabilitation. Fifty-two projects were incomplete. See Figure 8 for the different types of projects implemented in Uruzgan.

Figure 8— Types of SIKA Projects in Uruzgan

Source: SIGAR analysis of USAID's SIKA data.

Note: The 'other' category for Soft Projects includes the following categories: conflict resolution, counter-narcotics, election-related, gender and human rights, non-agricultural or gender specific vocational training, specific infrastructure, sports promotion and development and other projects that could not be identified.

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[26] According to the September 2015 USAID-procured MISTI evaluation, project management cycle trainings, grants implementation training, communications trainings, and administrative and office management trainings were most effective at increasing government and Community Development Council capacity.
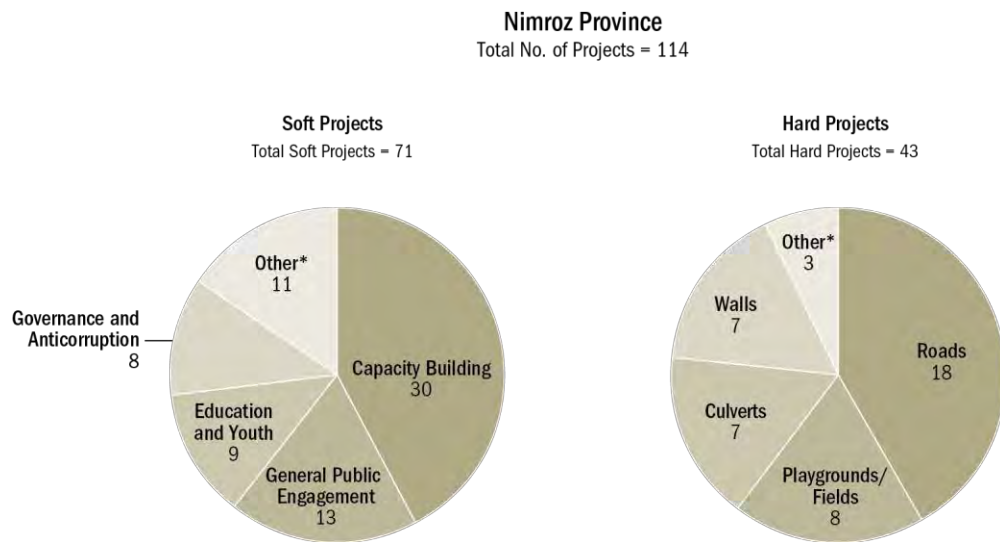
Note: The 'other' category for Hard Projects includes a variety of infrastructure projects, such as installing wells, providing electricity, installing community complaint boxes, and rehabilitating schools.

Eighteen projects related to general public engagement were designed to engage the local community by promoting SIKA projects through radio and television broadcasts of interviews with local government officials. For example, one project held 12 live radio broadcasts in which the community could call in and ask questions to "university professors, ministries representatives (pending on topics of discussion), civil society representatives and others." Half of the projects in the other category were dedicated to gender and human rights training, three of which supported vocational training for women in handicraft and cooking skills. Agriculture hard projects included canal rehabilitation, dam construction, various irrigation projects, and water reservoir construction. The majority (12) of hard projects in the other category were mixed projects that included the construction or rehabilitation of roads and culverts.

SIKA Projects in Nimroz

We found that of the 114 projects implemented in Nimroz, 62 percent (71 projects) were soft projects, and 38 percent (43 projects), were hard projects. All of the capacity building projects implemented in Nimroz were designed to train local government officials in a variety of subjects, including basic management and leadership, reporting and writing, managing meetings, media relations, and advocacy. The majority of hard projects (32) implemented in Nimroz supported infrastructure endeavors included the rehabilitation and construction of roads, boundary walls, and box culverts. Twenty-three projects were incomplete at the time SIKA-South programming ended in the summer of 2015. See Figure 9 for the different types of projects implemented in Nimroz.

Figure 9— Types of SIKA Projects in Nimroz

Source: SIGAR analysis of USAID's SIKA data.

Note: The 'other' category for Soft Projects includes the following categories: conflict resolution, counter-narcotics, election-related, gender and human rights, non-agricultural or gender specific vocational training, specific infrastructure, sports promotion and development and other projects that could not be identified.

Note: The 'other' category for Hard Projects includes a variety of infrastructure projects, such as installing wells, providing electricity, installing community complaint boxes, and rehabilitating schools.

Projects related to general public engagement typically sought to inform the community about SIKA projects through radio/television broadcasts, town hall meetings, photo exhibitions, poster design and a mobile theater live performance. Most (7) of the soft projects intended to support education and youth projects in Nimroz supported the PLAY! program. Six projects in the other subcategory sought to increase stability through gender

and human rights training, including one project designed to train women on carpet weaving. Four of the five remaining projects supported vocational training and the final project was a Conflict Resolution course. Six of the eight hard projects in the sports promotion and development subcategory supported the construction of football fields and the other two supported the construction of multi-sport fields throughout the Zaranj district.

AGENCY COMMENTS

We provided a draft of this fact sheet to USAID on May 10, 2018. We received comments from USAID on May 22, 2018. In its comments, USAID reported that beginning in 2006 it worked in coordination with the Department of Defense and the Afghan Government to create stabilization programs to establish basic linkages between provincial government institutions and local communities. Since USAID's stabilization programs ended in 2015, USAID reported that it has gradually shifted towards long-term capacity building to provide the technical guidance needed to help the Afghan Government deliver essential services to the people of Afghanistan. USAID's written comments are reproduced in appendix II. We also received technical comments from USAID, which we incorporated as appropriate.

APPENDIX I – PROJECT CATEGORIES AND PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

We used our professional judgment to assess SIKA project descriptions, and place each into designated project subcategories. We placed representative examples of SIKA projects in each of the following thirteen subcategories.[27]

Table 1 - Examples of Project Descriptions Assessed and Placed into Each of the SIKA Project Categories

SubCategory	Sample Project Descriptions	
Agriculture	Irrigation Agriculture outreach Fruit and vegetable processing Water dividers Canals Dams	Water reservoir construction Water gates Tractor repair training Crop-specific Training Plant, Pest, and Disease Training
Capacity Building	Training, such as • Inventory asset management • Management and leadership • Financial management • Procurement • Fundraising	District Social Workers (DSW) Program SIKA local program oversight meetings Advocacy and lobby SIKA board member training Monitoring of projects Stability Working Group District Kickoff Meeting Publicize Capacity Building Training** Stability Analysis Stability Technical Assistant Program Stability and Security Meeting
Conflict Resolution	Conflict resolution training Conflict Resolution Committee Peace journalism training Negotiation strategy training	Installation of community complaint boxes Peace meeting Tribal Conflict Resolution Committee Resolve tribal conflict Unity Building Coalition Building
Counter-Narcotics	Anti-poppy Cultivation	Provincial Counter-Narcotics Directorate (CND)
Education and Youth	All school-related activities, including construction of schools and playgrounds Teacher training Playground construction University exam prep Public awareness for education	Provide school equipment Youth English courses Community, teachers, and education dialogue Pashto literacy courses Celebration of teacher day PLAY (Physical Education, Leadership, and Youth Development) Provide Heating for School Youth Council Education Promotion Rehabilitation of Schools Provision of Furniture to Schools Provision of Educational Material

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[27] We added additional project descriptions into the 11 project subcategories since we completed our review of SIKA-North (SIGAR-18-23-SP). We did not alter the number of project subcategories, rather included the projects descriptions to illustrate the varying types of projects completed in this region.

		Provision of Basic Educational Supplies
Election-Related	Raise awareness of elections Civic outreach voting for gender	Civic education for elections Election logistics and support
Gender and Human Rights	Gender and Human Rights training Human rights Women's rights Gender mainstreaming Gender Topics Public Outreach	Vocational training for women • in handicraft • bead weaving • tailoring (sewing) • embroidery • public speaking
General Public Engagement	Communications and outreach Project promotion, such as • Radio broadcasts • mobile theater • Posters • Photographs	Public relations Signboard Media affairs Reporting on trends in SIKA projects Hashar (Volunteer coordination) Public Awareness Poetry Reading Poetry Contest Community Trust Notice Board District Information Center Direct Stabilization Committee (DSC) meetings Assess Program Needs Theatre
Governance and Anti-Corruption	Anticorruption training Linking citizens to leaders HR and civil service law Governance and Development Coordinators	Access to GIRoA services Community Based Disaster Risk Disaster and environmental management Strategy and Planning
Non-agricultural or Gender Specific Vocational Training	Vehicle (automobile) Repair Generator Repair Motorcycle Repair Refrigerator Repair Electrical Solar Training Carpentry Training Computer Training Photojournalism Training Video Editing Training	Provide Toolkits for Students to Start Business in Tailoring Technical Training for Projects Sewing Training Electrical Wire Training Handicraft Training Plumbing Training Unspecified Vocational Training
Non-Specific Infrastructure	Walls (retaining wall, protection wall) Culverts (box culverts, slab culverts) Roads Siphons Wells Building rehabilitation Testing of construction materials Provision of water storage containers	Stream construction Gutters Intake gates Supplying electricity Mixed Projects (two or more infrastructure projects funded under one project) Provision of furniture or equipment to schools Infrastructure Project Implementation Providing Infrastructure (except to schools)

		Solar Panels/Electricity Spillway Sanitization Fittings Flood Protection Walls Hand Pump RCC Slabs
Sports Promotion and Development	Cricket field construction Football field construction Sports Program publicity	Volleyball playground construction Sports Program Development Sports Teams Multi-Sport Field
Other	Not Identifiable/Unable to Determine Service Provider's Catalogue	Provide Office Equipment Provision of Furniture

Source: SIGAR analysis of USAID data.

USAID | AFGHANISTAN
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

MEMORANDUM   May 20, 2018

TO: John F. Sopko
                     Special Inspector General for
                     Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR)

FROM: Tamra Halmrast-Sanchez, Acting Mission Director

SUBJECT: Mission Response to Draft SIGAR Fact Sheet titled
                     "Information on USAID's Stability in Key Areas Program
                     – Southern Region, Afghanistan" (SIGAR-18-XX-SP)

REF: SIGAR Transmittal email dated 5/10/2018

USAID thanks SIGAR for the opportunity to comment on this Fact Sheet.
Beginning in 2006 and working in coordination with the Department of
Defense and the Afghan Government, USAID initiated stabilization programs
to establish basic linkages between provincial government institutions and
local communities. Our efforts included training local government officials in
how to manage local projects, producing educational materials that informed
the public about how to tap into government services, and providing support
for small-scale public works projects. We have gradually shifted towards
long-term capacity building, providing the technical guidance needed to help
the Afghan Government deliver essential services to the people of
Afghanistan.

Throughout the course of USAID's stabilization programs in Afghanistan, we
monitored our programs regularly and conducted mid-term evaluations that
led to changes in programming and improved our impact. USAID designed
the Measuring Impacts of Stabilization Initiatives (MISTI) project to ensure
that our stabilization work was subject to extensive monitoring and
evaluation. Thanks to MISTI, USAID was able to adapt our projects as they
were being implemented to make them more effective.

Attachments:
Appendix A – Technical Comments

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Kabul, Afghanistan   http://afghanistan.usaid.gov

cc: Ravi Suaris, Controller, USAID/Afghanistan
Ragip Saritabak, Deputy Controller, USAID/Afghanistan
Joan Simon Bartholomaus, U.S. Embassy/Kabul
OAPA Audit

This project was conducted
under project code SP-184.

SIGAR's Mission

The mission of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) is to enhance oversight of programs for the reconstruction of Afghanistan by conducting independent and objective audits, inspections, and investigations on the use of taxpayer dollars and related funds. SIGAR works to provide accurate and balanced information, evaluations, analysis, and recommendations to help the U.S. Congress, U.S. agencies, and other decision-makers to make informed oversight, policy, and funding decisions to:

- improve effectiveness of the overall reconstruction strategy and its component programs;
- improve management and accountability over funds administered by U.S. and Afghan agencies and their contractors;
- improve contracting and contract management processes;
- prevent fraud, waste, and abuse; and
- advance U.S. interests in reconstructing Afghanistan.

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To help prevent fraud, waste, and abuse by reporting allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement, and reprisal, contact SIGAR's hotline:

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