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# USAID/VIETNAM LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH PROGRAM

FINAL REPORT

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FINAL REPORT

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The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States government.



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Institute for Legislative Studies (ILS) was established in 2008 to serve as the leading center for legislative information and analysis for the National Assembly of Vietnam. The ILS conducts research on theoretical and practical issues related to the organization and operation of the National Assembly and provides information, research, and analytical services to support the activities of the National Assembly Standing Committee (NASC), the Ethnic Council, nine legislative committees, and members and staff of the National Assembly.

In 2010, the ILS sought USAID's support to strengthen its technical capacity and improve the quality and delivery of its services. USAID responded by creating the Vietnam Legislative Research Program (LRP), an 18-month project (September 2011 through March 2013) to build the skills, capacity, and expertise of ILS staff while improving the institute's overall organization, administration, and management. Funded through a task order under the USAID Building Recovery and Reform through Democratic Governance indefinite quantity contract, Vietnam LRP had four components:

- *Component 1: Assist the ILS in creating a five-year strategic plan.* Activities under Component 1 assisted the ILS in developing a strategic framework to increase its technical capacity to serve NASC committees and members, and improve the quality of its work products. With ILS support, the project team met with key National Assembly members and staff and conducted an ILS client survey and a human and institutional capacity development (HICD) assessment to obtain input on the needs of the users of ILS services. The team then assisted the ILS with a strategic planning workshop and produced a report with detailed recommendations for restructuring and strengthening the institute, laying the groundwork for its five-year strategic plan.
- *Component 2: Improve the quality, relevance, and timeliness of the information, research, and analytical skills provided by the ILS.* Activities under Component 2 were aimed at improving the work products that the ILS provides the National Assembly and developing outreach tools to help it better connect with users of its services. Vietnam LRP employed a combination of seminars, workshops, surveys, and consultancies to achieve the objectives of this component. Activities focused primarily on technical assistance to strengthen the relationship between the ILS and committees, creating ILS feedback mechanisms, and developing an ILS communication strategy. Training focused on responding professionally to member requests and improving ILS products and services.
- *Component 3: Build the skills, capacity, and expertise of the staff of the ILS to provide high-quality legislative research and policy analysis.* Activities under Component 3 were designed to create opportunities for ILS, National Assembly members, and staff of the National Assembly to improve their knowledge and

skills by providing broad-based, ongoing training and other learning opportunities related to key legislative issues and their daily work. The results of the HICD assessment informed the project's support for training sessions, curricula, and issue symposia and workshops, in consultation with USAID and ILS leadership. In the 18-month project period, the ILS and Vietnam LRP held six regional symposia, 14 institutional strengthening seminars, and six skills-building workshops. Component 3 training sessions and symposia were often led or co-facilitated by Vietnam experts to ensure that information presented was relevant to the Vietnamese context. Other major activities of this component included a five-day course on Policy Analysis and Legislative Research, four months of English language training for ILS managers and staff, and a five-day study tour of the Polish Sejm's Bureau of Legislative Research.

- *Component 4: Improve the organization and management of the ILS.* Activities under this component strengthened the internal organization and management of the ILS. The Vietnam LRP team completed a comprehensive review of the rules, procedures, and organizational structure of the ILS and provided recommendations for the development of a legislative library. The project team also provided infrastructural support to the ILS to help improve staff productivity.

At the project's closing ceremony with USAID on March 19, 2013, ILS President Dinh Xuan Thao credited Vietnam LRP's training and technical assistance activities with having achieved its objective of enhancing ILS capacity. Dr. Thao praised USAID for providing insight into organizational strategies and noted that the NASC will be considering the reorganization of the National Assembly and elevating the position of the ILS as an official agency.

## CHAPTER ONE

# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Vietnam LRP assisted the ILS to address a broad range of institutional needs and to organize 28 training and other activities for National Assembly members and staff.

Under Component 1, the project team assisted the ILS in laying the groundwork for a five-year strategic plan for institutional development, beginning with a two-day workshop in March 2012. The ILS will use information from the HICD assessment and ILS client survey and incorporate international best practices as it completes its strategic plan. The strategic plan will be heavily influenced by and dependent on constitutional reforms that will restructure the National Assembly and its support organizations, expected in May 2013.

Under Component 2, Vietnam LRP assisted the ILS to improve the quality, relevance, and timeliness of its products and services, comparing ILS methodologies for information gathering, research, and analysis with those of the U.S.

Congressional Research Service (CRS) and other international legislative research organizations. To measure ILS progress, the project team surveyed ILS clients’

perceptions of ILS products and services in 2012 and 2013 and used the results to guide the project activities.

“[Vietnam LRP] helps increase capacity for members, as well as staff. All the experts ... are leaders in their field. They are inspiring and really passionate about what they do. They have encouraged the staff to be more dynamic, innovative, and professional in their work on behalf of the National Assembly.”

— ILS President Dinh Xuan Thao, 2013

The team also worked with the ILS to devise an outreach strategy. A review of the critical path of member requests — from the time the ILS receives them until they are answered — provided information to help streamline the institute’s process and incorporate quality control measures. Results from a follow-up survey revealed that unanswered member requests for documents fell dramatically, from 19 percent in 2011 to less than 5 percent in 2012. Member perceptions that ILS services were highly relevant averaged 81 percent in both 2011 and 2012; however, perceptions of overall quality fell by about 10 percent in 2012, indicating a need for more work in these areas.

Vietnam LRP’s work under Component 3 improved ILS staff skills and technical capacity while creating opportunities for National Assembly members and staff to examine policy issues with national and international experts. In 12 months, the team helped the ILS organize six regional symposia on topics ranging from national budgeting to decentralization, conducted 14 institutional strengthening seminars on subjects such as “How to Conduct Public Hearings” and “Managing Legislative Research,” and held six skills-building workshops on handling member requests, navigating the Internet for

research, effective communication, presentations, meeting facilitation, and work planning.

Other major activities included four months of English training for ILS managers, a five-day course on policy analysis and legislative research, and a study tour to the Polish Sejm's Bureau of Legislative Research, which is internationally recognized as a successful and relatively inexpensive parliamentary research organization.

Under Component 4, Vietnam LRP assisted the ILS with internal management and infrastructure improvements. The project team developed a legislative research manual; reviewed ILS rules, procedures, and organizational structure; and helped fill information technology (IT) and equipment needs, procuring 20 desktop computers, three high-speed printers, and three high-volume photocopiers. At the closing ceremony, ILS President Thao expressed his appreciation for USAID's support, citing the procurement of this equipment as an example of "the flexibility of the program to respond to our needs." Overall, Vietnam LRP activities strengthened the internal organization and management of the ILS and improve its ability to deliver services to the National Assembly.



# SNAPSHOT

## Better Capacity Breeds Consensus

### A USAID program supports productive dialogue in advance of Vietnam's constitutional reforms



Symposium participants in Nam Dinh province, northern Vietnam

Photo: LRP/Chemonics International

*USAID's Legislative Research Program provided technical assistance, training, and other support to strengthen the ability of the ILS to provide relevant, timely, and high-quality support to the National Assembly's Standing Committee, portfolio committees, and National Assembly members.*

#### Telling Our Story

U.S. Agency for International Development  
Washington, DC 20523-1000  
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

In 2013, Vietnam's National Assembly will consider major constitutional reforms for the first time in 20 years. One of the many issues under consideration is that of decentralization — devolving responsibilities of the central government to provinces and cities, with the aim of improving citizen services and promoting socioeconomic development.

To assist in this effort, the Institute of Legislative Studies (ILS) is providing technical support to the National Commission on Constitutional Reform and members of the National Assembly. To gather information and understand the perspectives from people around Vietnam about decentralization and local governance, the ILS sought assistance from USAID's Legislative Research Program to organize two symposia on local governance, one in northern Vietnam and another in the southern part of the country.

The symposia, held in January 2013, featured local governance expert Franz Xavier Barrios-Suvelza; the former dean of the Vietnam's National Academy on Public Administration, Vo Kim Son; and five current and former National Assembly members. Both events generated fruitful discussions among the 168 participants, who included 25 National Assembly members and representatives from the Provincial People's Council, People's Committee, Department of Justice, Department of Home Affairs, and various research institutes.

Speaker after speaker described the need to delineate of national and local roles and responsibilities and more clearly distinguish the model of local governance in rural and urban areas. Nguyen Thanh Tam, a National Assembly member and deputy head of the Tay Ninh Provincial Assembly delegation, commented afterward that the Can Tho event was useful in informing him about key issues, adding, "Consensus was reached among members thanks to the vigorous discussions and exchanges during the workshop ... I will use these ideas for the National Assembly discussions in May on the draft Constitution."

ILS President and National Assembly Member Dinh Xuan Thao called the symposia "very useful and timely, especially at this period when the National Assembly is restructuring its organization to improve performance."



## CHAPTER TWO

# PROGRESS BY COMPONENT

### **Component 1: Assist the ILS in Creating a Five-Year Strategic Development Plan**

To assist the ILS in laying the groundwork for a five-year strategic plan, the Vietnam LRP team undertook a thorough review of the principal documents that led to the creation and development of the ILS, conducted a series of interviews with key members and staff, and organized a strategic planning conference featuring the results of an ILS client survey and an HICD evaluation organized by the Vietnam LRP.

#### **Summary of ILS Founding Documents**

The ILS was created in May 2005, through Resolution 48 of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, to improve the operational effectiveness of the National Assembly as part of a broader “strategy of building and improving the legal system by 2020.” Three years later, on April 29, 2008, the ILS came into effect under NASC Resolution 614.

In May 2009, the NASC directed the ILS to take on the functions and tasks of the National Assembly’s Center for Information, Library, and Research Services (CILRES) in delivering “all information services” to members of the National Assembly. That month, ILS President Dinh Xuan Thao requested USAID support for the development of a program to strengthen the institute’s technical capacity and improve its delivery of services to members.

USAID initially responded through its Enhancing Government Effectiveness (EGE) project, which carried out an assessment of the effectiveness of the ILS. Dr. Thao endorsed the assessment, requesting that the CRS be considered a model for the ILS. The EGE assessment, completed in February 2010, identified the following major factors hindering the institute’s performance:

- Insufficient legislative research and information skills to meet client needs
- Inadequate organizational structure and IT infrastructure
- Poor access to and limited use of legislative library resources
- Lack of clarity and duplication of effort regarding roles and responsibilities both within the ILS and between the ILS and the CILRES

The EGE assessment report recommended that the ILS strengthen its technical capacity in the following ways:

- Hire nine senior information and research specialists
- Develop a customized training program for its staff
- Organize study tours to observe the structure and operations of other successful legislative research organizations

- Improve its IT systems and databases

The report also recommended four actions for the National Assembly:

- Provide the ILS with a more competitive compensation package to enable it to attract and retain legislative information and research specialists
- Change the organizational structure of the ILS to make it more responsive to the needs of members and committees
- Move the legislative library from the Office of the National Assembly to the ILS, incorporating library staff into the ILS
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the ILS and other units of the National Assembly, particularly those of CILRES and the Department of Committees

Based on the results of the EGE assessment, USAID designed Vietnam LRP to strengthen the capacity of the ILS to respond to the requests for technical assistance from members and committees.

The EGE assessment is important in the short history of the ILS, because its findings and recommendations served as the foundation for USAID's scope of work for the Vietnam LRP, and for the subsequent project work plan. The assessment's findings and recommendations also were the starting point for the development of the institute's five-year strategic plan.

### **Discussions with ILS Leaders, Members, and Staff**

Following the document review, Vietnam LRP held discussions with key ILS leaders, members, and staff to ask whether the needs of each group were being met and how each one thought the ILS could improve its services. The meetings were intended to gather information and ideas for the March 2012 strategic planning workshop.

In December 2011, Vietnam LRP organized a seminar for ILS staff to discuss and compare the organization, operations, and services of the U.S. Congressional Research Service with those of the ILS (see Component 2 for more detail on the seminar). The featured speaker, former CRS policy analyst Clay Wellborn, told the group that his goal for the presentation had been to offer a glimpse of what the ILS could become. He reminded the audience that the CRS began in 1914 with eight library researchers and an office in the basement of the Library of Congress, and that it had taken nearly a century to become the institution it is today. In contrast, he noted, the ILS was just three years old.

The seminar had the effect of focusing the ILS staff on where they might go, setting the stage for the strategic planning workshop in March 2012. Mr. Wellborn described several developments in the history of the CRS that also appeared as recommendations in the EGE assessment of the ILS, and would later appear in ILS's strategic plan; for example, organizationally and physically integrating information specialists with research specialists to promote communication and collaboration and prevent "stove-piping,"

which many ILS staff said was a problem in the current Scientific Research Center and Scientific Information Center arrangement.

### **Functions of the Three Divisions of the ILS**

The **Scientific Research Center** provides all of the in-depth research and analytical services on issues related to the organization and operation of the National Assembly and on issues related to public policy and national legislation. In 2011, however, the NASC asked the Scientific Research Center to conduct a comprehensive review of Vietnam's 1992 Constitution in preparation for the 2013 constitutional reforms. When that work was completed, the NASC asked the Scientific Research Center to provide technical support for the country's National Constitutional Reform Commission, while assisting members and providing technical support for the NASC legislative studies fund for out-sourcing research administered by the ILS. The Scientific Research Center has a professional staff of 17. Ten hold master's degrees and three hold Ph.D.s.

The **Scientific Information Center** is principally tasked with handling document requests and requests for quick information. 70 percent of the requests that the ILS receives from members are for documents. For two years, as the Scientific Research Center has supported the National Constitutional Reform Commission, the Scientific Information Center has also been handling research requests. At present, the Scientific Information Center has 20 staff members, all professionals. Eight hold master's degrees. The center has four sections: legislative information, social and economic information, database section, and comparative law. The Scientific Information Center is also responsible for developing the ILS website, bulletin, and newsletter and for translating and disseminating information.

The **Department of General Affairs** is responsible for ILS administration and logistics and management of relations with international counterparts and other external agencies. The Department of General Affairs has 18 employees; eight have bachelor's degrees and six hold master's degrees.

Building on this work, in February 2012, the project team interviewed users of ILS services, including the chairs and vice chairs of seven of the National Assembly's nine portfolio committees and key staff from CILRES and the Department of Committees. The discussions focused on whether committees' needs were being met and how to strengthen their relationships with the ILS.

The strategic planning workshop incorporated the information developed during the December 2011 and January 2012 meetings, particularly the project's report to the ILS on establishing a closer link with committees. That report documented many of the same issues that had been identified in the EGE assessment, suggested possible solutions, and set the stage for a substantive and productive strategic planning workshop.

### **Strategic Planning Workshop**

In March 2012, Vietnam LRP joined the ILS in leading a strategic planning workshop that laid the groundwork for the ILS's five-year institutional development plan. Co-chaired by ILS President Thao and Vice President Hoang Van Tu and facilitated by two legislative strengthening experts — William Robinson, a former deputy director of the CRS, and Hugh Finsten, a former director of the Canadian Parliament's Bureau of

Legislative Research — the workshop pulled together the findings from the project’s document review, interviews with members and staff, ILS client survey, and HICD assessment (see Component 3). Vietnam LRP produced a comprehensive report and recommendations on strategic planning based on the workshop discussions and on best practices from legislative research services in other countries.

The strategic planning report included a draft ILS mission statement, a discussion of current and suggested ILS products and services, an assessment of staff training needs, a strategy for becoming the National Assembly’s preeminent research organization, a proposed organizational restructuring and staffing plan, and action-oriented recommendations to:

**Draft ILS Mission Statement**

“The ILS is a professional, objective information, research, and analytical service providing expertise to assist the National Assembly, its committees and members in carrying out their policy, legislative, and oversight functions on behalf of the Vietnamese people.”

- Consolidate the Scientific Research Center and the Scientific Information Center into a single entity, the Scientific Research and Information Center, focused on practical legislative assistance to National Assembly committees and the Ethnic Council.
- Seek approval to employ 10 new senior technical experts to serve as ILS liaisons to the nine committees and the Ethnic Council through a national, merit-based selection process.
- Create a merit-based legislative internship program to support the work of the senior technical experts. In addition to providing valuable support to the committees, the internship program would help prepare a new generation of experienced legislative experts.
- Begin producing a series of legislative reports on key national issues arising in each session of the National Assembly.
- Organize a monthly symposium on legislative issues for members and legislative staff.

The leadership of the ILS agrees with many of the report’s recommendations and will complete the strategic plan once proposed constitutional reforms reorganizing the National Assembly and its support organs have been adopted in May 2013.

**Component 2: Improve the Quality, Relevance, and Timeliness of ILS Products and Services**

In April 2008, NASC Resolution 614 established the ILS “to conduct research on theoretical and practical issues related to the organization and operation of the National Assembly, [and] to organize scientific information to support the exercise of powers and

tasks of the National Assembly.” The information and research services ILS provides to NASC, National Assembly members, and legislative committees fall into four general categories:

- *Documents and publications.* This category includes books, copies of articles, proposed or existing legislation, regulations, and studies.
- *Quick information.* This category refers to relatively brief factual information that takes no more than a few hours to find and deliver.
- *In-depth research.* This category refers to research that requires specialized training and experience in a particular subject and days or weeks to develop and deliver.
- *Analytical services.* This category requires advanced training and experience in specific subject areas and covers analysis of existing laws, proposed legislation, comparison of international law, budget analysis, economic impact studies, and cost-benefit analysis.

Under Component 2, Vietnam LRP provided technical assistance and training to help the ILS to improve these services and better meet the demands and expectations of its clients. Activities under this component familiarized ILS managers and staff with the ways other legislative research organizations ensure the quality, relevance, and timeliness of their services; generated strategies to link the work of the ILS to committees to ensure they receive the support they need; developed a communication strategy to foster demand for ILS services; and created feedback mechanisms to gauge the level of member satisfaction with ILS services.

### **CRS Seminar**

In addition to presenting the CRS as a possible organizational model for the ILS (discussed under Component 1), the December 2011 seminar introduced ILS staff to the services offered by the CRS and to the ways member and committee requests are handled in the U.S. Congress. Clay Wellborn, a long-time CRS policy analyst, explained that the mission of CRS is to provide the U.S. legislature with authoritative information, research, and analysis.

“The project encourages critical thinking skills ... I have changed my way of working with members. I try to get closer to them to better understand and respond to their needs.”

— *Ngoc Van Phan, vice director, ILS Scientific Information Center*

Mr. Wellborn emphasized that CRS products and services must be timely, objective, impartial. They must also be confidential; a member or committee member may share the information or research, but CRS staff cannot share it with anyone or even divulge its existence without a written request from the member. After a spirited discussion of whether a report can be truly objective and impartial, Mr. Wellborn shared some ways

CRS achieves impartiality, noting first that its analysts never make recommendations. Instead, they present options. The opinions and arguments of those who favor or oppose particular legislation are an important part of a CRS report, but they must be balanced and properly documented.

Workshop participants and presenters discussed ways to ensure the relevance and control the quality of information and research reports. Methods can be informal (for example, always asking two colleagues to review and comment on a document before it is distributed) or formal (for example, convening a committee of staff and supervisors).

Chaired by ILS Vice President Hoan Van Tu, the seminar was well-received by the 46 attendees, who included USAID Contracting Officer’s Representative Nguyen Thi Bich Thuy and staff from the National Assembly’s committees on law, justice, defense, and security. Participant satisfaction with the event averaged 3.7 on a scale of 1 to 5; and 4.0 in terms of its usefulness to their work.

**Exhibit 1. Rating Scale for Vietnam LRP-Sponsored Training Events**

Overall Satisfaction		Usefulness to My Work	
1	Very unsatisfactory	1	Not at all useful
2	Unsatisfactory	2	Not useful
3	“So-so”	3	“So-so”
4	Satisfactory	4	Useful
5	Very satisfactory	5	Very useful

**Database of Vietnamese and International Experts to Conduct Studies for ILS**

The ILS has a database of 250 to 300 national experts it can call on to research and analyze public policy issues and proposed legislation. On several occasions, in line with the project work plan, the Vietnam LRP team offered to assist the ILS in expanding this database, using the project’s strategic activities fund. Following a budget review in June 2012, however, the ILS requested that the project focus on higher-priority capacity building work, such as skills training and national issue forums. USAID agreed, and the funds were redistributed under Component 3.

**Linking the Work of the ILS and Committees**

In legislatures with policy research goals, legislative committees are commonly the principle target of research services. For the CRS, this fact flows from its legal mandate to collaborate with committees and align its work with the legislative agenda of the U.S. Congress. Committees typically have the greatest need for the in-depth expertise and specialization of a research and analysis department to help them address pressing issues facing the legislature and the nation. The same experts who contribute to committee work are typically also helpful in the legislature’s oversight process.

In the National Assembly of Vietnam, the ILS has been unable to capitalize on the high demand for legislative research and analysis from committees, in part because it lacks

resources, but also because constitutional reform has been its top technical assistance priority. Member requests for information come second, leaving virtually no time for staff to support committee work. Another factor is the distribution of legislative skills and experience, with a few highly experienced staff in the Scientific Research Center handling major policy reform issues for the NASC and a much larger group of young professionals — new to the legislative arena — handling member requests, often for basic information.

Former CRS policy analysis and legislative strengthening expert Francis Miko wrote in Vietnam LRP’s report on the relationship between the ILS and National Assembly committees, “The most striking feature of the work of the ILS at the present time is that in the continuum of products and services from basic information at the bottom to highly sophisticated in-depth analytical work at the top, a great deal is being done at the bottom and top, with very little in the middle. It is this mid-level technical support that National Assembly committees need most: analysis of bills, comparative foreign laws, issue papers, and oversight. This work requires expertise and analytical capabilities, but not necessarily the highest level of knowledge and academic training.”

Committee work is not yet a priority for the ILS, though this may well change after constitutional reforms have been passed. Meanwhile, CILRES and the Department of Committees are stepping in to fill the gap. Although CILRES considers committee support its top technical assistance priority, it has only 11 professional staff members to provide legislative technical assistance. This situation offered an opportunity for Vietnam LRP to focus attention on younger, less-experienced staff, who were the principal participants in the project’s legislative and skills training programs.

After consulting with committee vice chairs, representatives of the Office of the National Assembly, and senior ILS staff, the project team organized a well-attended seminar, “Improving Legislative Information and Research,” to propose measures for linking the work of the ILS more closely with that of the committees. Aply led by Mr. Miko, the seminar generated a lively debate and a number of key recommendations (listed in the box below) among participants, including leading members of the National Assembly and key staff from the ILS, CILRES, and the Department of Committees.

**Key Recommendations for Linking the Work of ILS and Committees**

- Sharpen the ILS focus on work for committees
- Assign existing ILS staff members to work with specific committees
- Create an ILS internship program to better serve the needs of committees
- Undertake legislative research demonstration projects to show how ILS can benefit committees
- Improve ILS outreach to committees
- Strengthen ILS contacts with committees at all levels
- Establish a process of joint work planning between the ILS and committees
- Make it a top priority for the ILS to hire or contract several senior experts to support the work of committees

## **Expanding ILS Outreach and Communication**

In April 2012, to assist the ILS in building demand for its products and services, the Vietnam LRP team devised a marketing strategy and organized a series of workshops for ILS managers and staff. The first workshop, “Informing the Legislature” — conducted by former CRS information specialist and former director of acquisitions for the U.S. Library of Congress Nancy Davenport — set the tone for those by recognizing members and committees as the institute’s target audience and explaining how the ILS could establish credibility by understanding its clients and responding quickly and professionally to their information needs. Participants discussed committee needs — proactive assistance in planning and organizing oversight hearings, information on policy issues, and critiques of proposed legislation — and suggested several potential outreach activities:

- An ILS-sponsored orientation program for new members, to be held at the beginning of each new assembly
- Seminars on public policy issues
- A monthly newsletter and issue briefs on upcoming legislation.

The project team developed a communications planning guide for the ILS, along with detailed suggestions for creating an ILS brand, developing a new brochure, and updating its website. To emphasize service delivery as the heart of the ILS’s outreach strategy, Vietnam LRP conducted four more workshops:

- “Handling Member Requests” (April 2012)
- “Navigating the Internet for Legislative Information” (July 2012)
- “Effective Communication with Members of the National Assembly” (July 2012)
- “Streamlining the Critical Route of Member Requests” (July 2012)

Each workshop provided two and a half days of training to average of 30 participants. Overall satisfaction with the presentations was high, with an average rating of 4.1 (satisfactory). Participant ratings for the category of “Usefulness to My Work” averaged 4.0.

## **Developing Feedback Mechanisms: Results of the ILS Client Survey**

In addition to one-on-one interviews with committee leaders in February 2012, Vietnam LRP used survey research in March 2012 to gather feedback for the ILS on member perceptions of the quality, relevance, and timeliness of its products and services, with the goal of identifying and helping the ILS identify and correct problem areas. Of the 500 elected members of the National Assembly, 346 members (69 percent) requested ILS assistance during the 2nd Session of the 13th National Assembly (October and November 2011). Of this subset, 150 members responded (43 percent of those surveyed).

The March 2012 survey served as a baseline. The following year, in March 2013, a follow-up client survey polled the 288 members who had requested ILS support during

the 4th Session of the 13th National Assembly (October and November 2012). Of this group, 92 members (32 percent) completed the survey questionnaire.

The lower number of members requesting ILS assistance (from 346 in 2011 to 288 in 2012) may have been due to three factors. First, members were in their second year and may not have had as many questions as they did in their freshman year. Second, unanswered requests in the previous year may have reduced the number of requests in 2012. The third, and perhaps the most likely, factor is that in October and November 2011, the NASC allowed only the ILS to place a technical assistance booth in the foyer of the Plenary Chamber. This booth was the principle source of member requests, although others came by mail, e-mail, and telephone. In 2013, the ILS and CILRES were both permitted to place booths in the foyer. It is likely that CILRES, which continues to provide legislative technical assistance to members, received requests that would have otherwise gone to the ILS.

### Exhibit 2. Results of the 2012 and 2013 ILS Client Surveys

Type of Service/ Survey Year	Members Requesting Assistance	Members Receiving Reply	Response Was Relevant	Response Was Timely	Response Was High-Quality
<b>Document</b>					
2012	70%	81%	N/A	75%	N/A
2013	65%	95%	N/A	80%	N/A
<b>Information</b>					
2012	13%	81%	75%	85%	67%
2013	16%	100%	80%	67%	57%
<b>Research</b>					
2012	13%	63%	67%	78%	67%
2013	11%	91%	60%	70%	50%
<b>Analysis</b>					
2012	9%	67%	100%	100%	86%
2013	12%	100%	83%	92%	83%

The most striking change in the survey results was a substantial increase in the percentage of all types of requests that were answered by the ILS. In 2012, the ILS responded to 95 percent of all document requests (up from 84 percent), to 100 percent of quick-information requests (up from 86 percent), and to 91 percent of in-depth research requests (up sharply from 63 percent the previous year). The ILS also responded to 100 percent of requests for analysis (up from 73 percent).

This improvement is significant, given the surprisingly high non-response rate in the 2012 survey. In several meetings, National Assembly members expressed frustration about instances when they had not received answers to their requests. To address this concern, Vietnam LRP and the ILS organized several training sessions that sharpened ILS staff skills in handling member requests and stressed the importance of responding professionally to every request.

Another finding from the 2013 survey was that ILS workshops and symposia conducted during 2012 were well-received by National Assembly members. Some 72 percent of the members surveyed in 2013 had participated; of those, 99 percent rated them as “worthwhile” or “very worthwhile.” The 2012 client survey did not include this question, but the ILS will include it in future surveys.

A more thorough analysis of the 2013 client survey is presented in Vietnam LRP’s “Analysis of the 2013 Client Survey Results with Recommendations for Improving ILS Services to the National Assembly of Vietnam” (Annex A).

### **Component 3: Build Skills and Capacity of ILS Staff to Provide High-Quality Information, Research, and Policy Analysis**

Component 3 was aimed at improving staff skills and building technical capacity within the ILS, while creating opportunities for members and staff to examine critical policy issues in collaboration with national and international experts. To launch the component, the Vietnam LRP team conducted a comprehensive HICD assessment of the ILS, using the methodology developed by USAID in 2012. The first of its kind in Vietnam, the HICD assessment was a systematic way to analyze the institute’s organizational performance, identify gaps between actual and desired performance, and develop program activities, training, and technical assistance to fill the gaps.

Based on the findings of the HICD assessment and the results of the ILS Client Survey (discussed under Component 1), the ILS and Vietnam LRP held 22 training events and six national issue symposia during the 18-month life of the project. Together, these events drew nearly 1,200 participants, most of whom were “repeat attenders” from the staff of the ILS and the National Assembly, often accompanied by members and officials from different government ministries. These jointly sponsored training programs and public policy symposia represented almost 60 full days of staff training and issue-related programming.

#### **Assessing Human and Institutional Capacity**

Through a comprehensive analysis of organizational performance, based on six performance indicators, the HICD assessment identified key issues and provided specific recommendations to strengthen ILS staff skills.

##### *HICD performance indicators:*

- *Information.* Job descriptions clearly define role and performance expectations for each position, and staff receive frequent feedback on performance. Performance management system guides staff performance and development.
- *Resources and tools.* Materials, equipment, tools, support, and time to do the job are present. Processes and procedures are clearly defined in reference documentation. Overall work environment contributes to performance. Office equipment (such as IT hardware and software) is sufficient to meet job

requirements. Work conditions are clean, organized, and conducive to optimal performance.

- *Incentives.* Financial and non-financial incentives are present; measurement and reward systems reinforce positive performance. Work environment is positive, staff believe they have an opportunity to succeed, and career development opportunities are present.
- *Knowledge and skills.* Staff possess necessary knowledge, experience, and skills to meet expectations, are properly placed to use and share what they know, and are cross-trained to understand each other's roles.
- *Capacity.* Each staff member has individual capacity to learn and do what is needed to perform successfully. Staff are recruited to and selected to match the realities of the work situation.
- *Motives.* Employees' motives are aligned with the work and the work environment. Staff desire to perform the required jobs, and are selected to match the work situation.

### **Exhibit 3. Recommendations from the HICD Assessment**

#### **1. Recommendations that can be implemented under current ILS authority**

- Create job descriptions for all ILS positions to serve as the basis for staff recruitment, training, and annual performance evaluation.
- Provide orientation training for new staff on the ILS's mission, goals, objectives, organization, and procedures.
- Provide training to improve technical capacity in areas such as policy analysis and legislative research, budget analysis, legislative oversight, report writing, work planning, handling member requests, and navigating the Internet for legislative information.
- Implement merit-based hiring, with a salary scale determined by qualifications, experience, and specific job requirements.
- Improve internal and external communication by reducing "stove piping" and clarifying the role and responsibilities of each ILS unit.

#### **2. Recommendations requiring NASC approval**

- Complete the five-year ILS strategic plan to better define the institute's mission, goals, and objectives and guide its development.
- Restructure the ILS to improve communication, increase efficiency, and strengthen performance. (Alternative organizational models to achieve this objective are presented in the assessment.)
- Increase funding for applied research services, and designate a portion of the funding for out-sourced research to be used to recruit and hire a cadre highly qualified legislative analysts.

#### **3. Recommendations requiring National Assembly approval**

- Consolidate all National Assembly information and research services in the ILS to avoid duplication, increase efficiency, and improve coordination.
- Consolidate a single legislative library in the ILS to better serve the National Assembly, committees, and members.

The project team presented the recommendations at the ILS strategic planning workshop in March 2012; they also guided implementation of the Vietnam LRP work plan through the end of the project. ILS President Thao assured the project team that the ILS will incorporate some of the recommendations into its strategic development plan, following the adoption of constitutional reforms related to the National Assembly.

### **Strengthening Policy Analysis and Legislative Research**

According to ILS President Thao, policy analysis was the greatest gap for the ILS. He and the committees asked for more policy analysis from the ILS and recommended the creation of a strong legislative training program.

In response, Vietnam LRP programmed a series of practical training activities covering the three major steps in public policy analysis: defining the problem, developing alternative solutions, and assessing the impact of proposed options. The training program also addressed the importance of legislative research, differences between theoretical academic research and applied analysis — the latter of which had generally proven more useful to legislators — and the role a legislative analyst plays as a “broker” of research, serving as an interpreter and liaison between the academic and legislative realms.

*Training on policy analysis, legislative research, and writing for a legislative audience.* Vietnam LRP’s first major training session, held in March 2012, was a five-day course on policy analysis and legislative research and writing, covering the following topics:

- Qualities of Research Excellence
- Understanding the Request
- Quality and Control Review
- Enhancing the Presentation of Reports
- Types of Legislative Reports
- Structuring a Short Report
- Other Publications for the Legislature

Legislative strengthening experts Bill Robinson and Hugh Finsten delivered the course, which was designed to sharpen the analytical skills and improve the capacity of ILS and National Assembly staff, enabling them to better meet the needs of members and committees. Thirty-five participants attended (18 women and 17 men). Of the total, 22 were ILS staff and 13 were from National Assembly committees on law, economic development, foreign affairs, science and technology, administration, ethnics, judiciary, and general affairs; the Council of Peoples’ Petition and Deputy Affairs; and departments in the Office of the National Assembly.

In the course evaluation, participants ranked satisfaction at 4.3 and usefulness to their work at 4.2. Several participants recommended additional training, including a follow-up session on the same topic. The Vietnam LRP team used the training materials from the course to create a *Handbook on Writing Legislative Reports*, a guide to best practices to support legislative research staff in preparing research papers and reports.

*Training on legislative report writing.* In August 2012, Vietnam LRP facilitated a two-day training on legislative report writing, building on the recommendations in the *Handbook on Writing Legislative Reports* and giving participants practical skills to strengthen the quality of their written reports. The workshop, which was presented by former CRS analyst Francis Miko, addressed the following topics:

- Special Needs of a Legislative Audience
- Do's and Don'ts of Writing for the Legislature
- Steps in the Report Writing Process
- Types of Legislative Reports
- How to Structure a Report
- The Importance of Selecting the Right Sources
- Management of Quality Control

Mr. Miko highlighted the need for legislative relevance, clear and concise presentation, balance, and objectivity. He also stressed that, because the ILS was in competition with other providers of information and analysis to the National Assembly, its competitive advantages lay in its knowledge of the National Assembly and its ability to tailor its work to those needs.

The 24 ILS staff members and five representatives from different National Assembly agencies who participated in the workshop voiced their appreciation for the knowledge they gained; their average ratings were 4.6 for overall satisfaction and 4.2 for usefulness. One participant told the project team that the workshop “was very interesting and useful ... it had an impact on my mind and on my writing. Several people have asked me for copies of the handouts ... because they had heard how useful it was.”

*Advanced training in policy analysis and legislative research.* This follow-up activity in September 2012 explored the “how to” of policy research and analysis. Two national experts led the session: Vu Cao Dam, director of Vietnam National University's Center for Policy Research and Analysis, and Nguyen Quang Tuyen, a professor of law at Hanoi Law University. During the two-day session, 27 legislative staff members from the ILS and the National Assembly learned to select an appropriate research methodology, identify reliable sources of information, organize the research project, and develop estimates of the socioeconomic impact of proposed policy and legislation. Participants also learned how to approach public policy analysis and improved their ability to identify policy problems and analyze policy objectives, impact, and potential conflicts.

Participants ranked the workshop at 4.4 (on a scale of 1 to 5) for their satisfaction and for the session's usefulness to their work. One manager from CILRES noted, “After serving as a National Assembly information analyst for over 21 years, this is the first-ever course in policy analysis that I have been invited to attend.”



# SNAPSHOT A Leg Up for Legislative Research

## A USAID program helps Vietnam’s parliamentary research professionals gain essential knowledge and skills



Photo: LRP/Chemonics International

ILS staff members “follow the leader” during a Vietnam LRP-sponsored work planning course in July 2012.

*USAID’s Legislative Research Program brought experts from the United States, Canada, and Vietnam’s own National Assembly to share experiences and best practices that have helped boost the skills of professionals in the Institute for Legislative Research.*

The ILS was established in 2008 to serve as the leading center of legislative information, research, and analytical services for Vietnam’s parliament, the National Assembly. However, lack of technical capacity among ILS staff and service delivery challenges have constrained the institute’s ability to deliver high-quality timely services to its clients.

To help the ILS reach its goals for research and analytical services, USAID’s Legislative Research Program (LRP) brought in legislative experts to design and deliver more than 20 training programs for National Assembly members and professional staff of the ILS and National Assembly.

One workshop, led by a former CRS analyst, built participants’ skills in legislative report writing, to enhance their ability to provide relevant, high-quality, and timely research and information reports. A follow-up workshop on policy research and analysis, facilitated by two Vietnamese experts bolstered participants’ abilities to analyze policy objectives, estimate the impact of policy, and devise policy options for lawmakers.

Participants from the ILS and the National Assembly feel more empowered and effective in their work. Thao Phuong Nguyen, a specialist at the ILS Scientific Information Center, commented that the legislative writing workshop “definitely had an impact on my mind and on my writing. Several people have asked me for copies of the handouts ... because they had heard how useful it was.” Hoe Thi Bui, a specialist at the ILS Scientific Research Center, described the session on policy research and analysis as “very useful for my work in providing research and information to members. From now on, I will be much more confident and objective in writing for my clients.”

Participants in all of the LRP-sponsored training programs have improved not only their professional skills, but also their attitudes toward legislative work. As Hung Quoc Truong, vice director of the ILS General Affairs Department and assistant to ILS President Dinh Xuan Thao, put it, “Working with the project’s legislative experts, most of whom have spent a majority of their lives working with Congress, I have learned how to approach legislative issues. They have also been excellent role models, which has given us a great incentive to better serve the National Assembly.”

## **Strengthening Budgeting and Oversight**

Young legislatures often have little time or information on the budget presented for their approval by the executive branch, although this is one of the most important decisions members make each year. In part, this is because the executive branch (in every country) wants to use the budget as it deems appropriate, despite constitutional requirements for the legislature's approval and oversight of executive expenditures. In Vietnam, as in other many other countries, the National Assembly receives the proposed budget only a few days before it must be approved.

Another important factor is that young legislatures often lack the expertise to analyze the budget. Due to its complex nature, budget analysis requires specialized skills that often take years to develop. In the United States, the Congressional Budget Office was not created until 1974, almost 200 years after the Congress was established. Even in that case, the shift only occurred after a national scandal, Watergate, tipped the balance of power in favor of the legislative branch. In today's world, most modern legislatures have (or are in the process of developing) budget analysis offices to assist members of parliament and committees in reviewing annual budgets and providing independent estimates of the economic impact of the laws they are developing. Some legislatures require every proposed legislative initiative to be accompanied by an estimate of its projected cost to the nation.

*Training on budget analysis.* In August 2012, the Vietnam LRP team assisted the ILS in organizing a one-and-a-half-day workshop to strengthen the budget analysis capabilities of staff from the ILS and the National Assembly. Led by CRS budget expert Susan Epstein and Dang Van Thanh, former chair of the National Assembly's Economics and Budget Committee, workshop participants compared and contrasted the U.S. and Vietnamese budget processes. They also discussed products prepared by staff from the Congressional Budget Office and the Office of the National Assembly to facilitate committee deliberations on the budget. The workshop presented case studies illustrating methodologies for cost estimation, revenue forecasting, and budget projection. Participants also learned about the collection and use of complementary budget information and resources, and discussed the role of CRS staff in U.S. budget oversight and control.

The 31 participants from the ILS and the Office of the National Assembly gave the workshop average ratings of 4.5 for general satisfaction and 4.1 for usefulness to their work. At the end of the session, one participant from the Office of the National Assembly told the group, "We've been provided a comparison of the Vietnam National Assembly and the U.S. Congress regarding the budget process and analysis. It is extremely useful because we are preparing to amend the Vietnamese Law on the Budget. I would be grateful if the ILS can create more chances for us to join such useful courses."

*Legislative oversight hearings.* In June 2012, the NASC approved Resolution 27/212/QH13 to encourage the Ethnic Council and National Assembly committees to be more active in using accountability sessions (legislative oversight hearings, as they are called in the United States) as a means of strengthening the National Assembly's oversight

function, thereby enhancing its transparency and credibility with the public. In response, on October 8 and 9, Vietnam LRP assisted the ILS to train 11 of its staff, seven members of the National Assembly, 19 personnel from the Office of the National Assembly, and three ministry staff members to conduct legislative hearings. At the “How to Conduct a Legislative Hearing” workshop — presented by former CRS oversight expert Morton Rosenberg and Nguyen Van Me, a former member of the National Assembly’s Committee on Foreign Affairs — 37 participants discussed the concepts, features, and purposes of legislative oversight, as well as practices, procedures, and the kinds of institutional support required for successful hearings. Participants gave the workshop average ratings of 4.1 for general satisfaction and 4.1 for usefulness to their work.

### **Symposia on Key Legislative and Policy Issues**

In addition to assisting the ILS in programming training opportunities, the Vietnam LRP team also supported the institute in organizing symposia on national issues, giving members and staff the chance to examine and debate critical national policies, including national budgeting, legislative oversight, member bills, and decentralization.

*Development of legislation to establish a Capital District in Hanoi, under consideration by the National Assembly.* At the request of ILS President Thao, Vietnam LRP presented research about the formation of the District of Columbia at a December 2012 workshop on the development of legislation to establish a Capital District in Hanoi under consideration by the National Assembly. International experts from Germany, France, and Australia also made presentations on their countries’ capital districts. Participants in the workshop — included 40 members of the National Assembly; technical staff from the ILS, the Office of the National Assembly, and senior representatives from related ministries — learned how the boundaries of different capital districts had been decided, how they governed and policed; how they are governed; whether they are represented in the legislature; and how their economies have developed. This information will be used to help Vietnam draft legislation to create a capital district in Hanoi.

*Symposium on the budgetary process.* In August 2012, Vietnam LRP held a symposium on the budgetary process, featuring presentations by CRS budget expert Susan Epstein and four senior members of the National Assembly. Topics discussed at the symposium included the emerging role of members in the budgetary process, best practices for budgeting and budget oversight, the ILS’s potential role in the budgetary process, and review and comment on Vietnam’s current and proposed budget law. These discussions generated a series of recommendations to help the ILS improve Vietnam’s budgetary process, including:

- Updating and clarifying the regulations that govern the process
- Improving accountability by strengthening linkage between the budget process and the annual state audit
- Strengthening the capacity of National Assembly agencies and staff to assist in budget analysis

Forty-nine participants attended the event, including 14 members, 15 staff from the ILS, and 20 staff from the National Assembly. Participants rated their satisfaction with the symposium at 4.2 (on a scale of 1 to 5) and its usefulness to their work at 3.9.

*Symposium on legislative oversight.* In October 2012, the project team helped the ILS organize a lively symposium, “Improving the Effectiveness of National Assembly Oversight Activities.” The symposium featured presentations by former CRS legislative oversight expert Morton Rosenberg and eight current or former members on the roles of members, committees, civil society, media, research institutes, and parliamentary support agencies in legislative oversight activities. Mr. Rosenberg produced a 2009 monograph on congressional investigative oversight, “When Congress Comes Calling: A Primer on the Principles, Practices and Pragmatics of Legislative Inquiry.”

Nearly 100 participants attended two half-day sessions: including 15 members, five former members, 13 ILS staff, 36 personnel from the Office of the National Assembly and regional delegations, and 28 representatives from ministries and research organizations. Participants gave the activity a rating of 4 in general satisfaction, and the ILS has asked that proceedings of the symposium be transcribed and sent to all 500 members of the National Assembly, along with the report and recommendations.

Asked about the impact of the symposium, ILS President Thao commented, “This topic is very important. Members and other participants listened attentively to the presentations of the experts regarding oversight procedures, skills, and tools. It is very helpful for us in improving the current law on National Assembly oversight activities, which will soon be amended.”

*Symposia on member bills.* Although Vietnam’s constitution gives members the right to introduce legislation, only a few initiatives have been presented in the last 20 years, and none have survived. Most legislation comes from the Executive Branch through the ministries. Numerous obstacles have impeded members’ ability to initiate legislation, including a lack of staff with drafting expertise and limited access to outside experts. The procedures and methods for introducing legislation are complex and confusing to members, who are generally unfamiliar with the process, and there is no legislative manual to guide them through the complicated procedures required to propose an initiative. Moreover, there is a widespread belief that all legislative solutions are complex and must be drafted using “legalese” with which they are unfamiliar.

In June 2012, the NASC approved the Resolution 27/212/QH13 on Strengthening the Quality and Effectiveness of National Assembly Activities, with the objective of improving this process. Article 2.1 of the resolution directs the ILS, the Office of the National Assembly, regional offices of member delegations, and the people’s councils to assist members in preparing and presenting legislative initiatives.

To acquaint National Assembly members with international practices for introducing legislative initiatives and to familiarize National Assembly and ILS staff with the kinds of technical support other legislatures and legislative research organizations offer their

members and committees, Vietnam LRP assisted the ILS in organizing two symposia in December 2012, one in Ho Chi Minh City and another in Bac Ninh. Led by Sandra Strokoff, legislative counsel of the U.S. House of Representatives, and Muftiah McCartin, former staff director of the House of Representatives' Rules Committee, the symposia drew 135 participants, providing members and staff the opportunity to share their experiences and discuss with experts possible methods for using available resources and working around cumbersome procedures.

Participants rated their general satisfaction with the two events at 4.3 (Ho Chi Minh City) and 4.0 (Bac Ninh). For usefulness to their work, the average ratings were 3.9 (Ho Chi Minh City) and 4.0 (Bac Ninh). Nguyen Van Tien, vice chair of the Assembly's Social Affairs Committee, thanked Vietnam for organizing the events, pointing out that the reference materials he and other participants had received on the U.S. experience in legislative drafting were "especially helpful, because Vietnam is in the process of amending its Constitution." He added, "The current Constitution contains many articles on the health, culture, education, and other sectors, but the provisions are drafted in an inconsistent manner. This [material] will help us re-think how a Constitution should be drafted." In Ho Chi Minh City, Tran Khanh, a National Assembly member from Hanoi, told the group that the symposium on member bills had made her "more determined than ever" to propose a law on administrative rules. "Thanks to the symposium," she said, "I will pursue this initiative and ask the ILS for technical support!"

Recommendations from the symposia related to two key areas:

- First, the National Assembly must dedicate more financial resources to the ILS to support development of member bills. The ILS should establish a corps of trained legislative drafters for members; the U.S. House of Representatives model had proven to be a very effective way of ensuring that all members had equal access to drafting expertise.
- Second, the procedures regarding the introduction of member bills are too complex and cumbersome. At a minimum, they should be simplified, clarified, and communicated to members. The ILS should develop a legislative manual for members to follow when proposing legislative initiatives, including a clear delineation of committee jurisdiction and procedures to ensure that legislative initiatives are referred to the appropriate committee.

*Symposia on decentralization and local governance.* To improve the performance of local governance, the government of Vietnam has implemented administrative reforms since the early 1990s, but it was not until 2005 that it began to decentralize decision-making from the central level to regional and local levels. Decentralization continues to be an important and controversial issue, especially as the National Assembly plans to consider a number of constitutional reforms in May 2013.

Beginning in January 2013, Vietnam LRP assisted the ILS in organizing two symposia on decentralization and local governance. Led by international decentralization expert Franz

Barrios Suvelza, the symposia explored the worldwide trend toward decentralization since 1975 and explained how governmental responsibility and authority is distributed across different territorial levels in different countries. Vo Kim Son, former dean of Vietnam’s National Academy of Public Administration, and seven current and former National Assembly members presented papers on different aspects of decentralization and responded to questions and suggestions from one another and from the audience. A lively exchange of views ensued, with calls for clarification of responsibilities and authorities at each level of regional and local government; empowerment of people’s committees at all levels; and criteria to better distinguish rural and urban areas.

Nearly 170 participants attended the two activities, including 24 members of the National Assembly, representatives of people’s councils, people’s committees, and the departments of justice and home affairs. Asked to comment on the event in Can Tho, Nguyen Tuyet Lien, vice chair of the Member Delegation of Soc Trang Province responded, “The topic is very useful and interesting ... I have attended many events like this, but I believe this one had the best agenda. It is very logical, and the topic is of great concern and interest to the participants.”

### **Basic Skills Training**

Due to its many young and relatively inexperienced staff, the ILS requested basic skills training for its information specialists, legislative researchers, and general affairs staff. The request was consistent with the recommendations of HICD assessment, which identified several areas in which ILS staff needed to develop basic skills. In response, Vietnam LRP provided training in effective presentations, work planning, and meeting facilitation.

“I have become more confident in making presentations ... Instead of just reading my paper, I look at key notes when delivering a presentation. I apply the skills I have learned in my daily work and feel much more confident and effective.”

— *Dung Nguyen Thi, specialist, ILS Scientific Research Center*

- *Effective presentations.* In May 2012, Vietnam LRP organized a two-day training to improve skills required to present information to members and legislative groups. Using a participatory methodology, Dang Ngoc Su, a senior lecturer of the Vietnam National Economics University and an expert facilitator, put participants through a series of exercises aimed at strengthening their confidence and improving their presentation skills. Dr. Dang stressed the importance of carefully planning the presentation, knowing the audience, using notes and visual aids, standing to one side of the screen, maintaining eye contact with the audience, and enunciating so that everyone can hear. The activity drew 28 participants from ILS staff and one member. The group rated the training at 4.5 (on a scale of 5) in terms of general satisfaction and at 4.3 for its usefulness in their work.
- *Work planning.* In July 2012, the project team delivered a workshop — mixing theory, practice, and experiential learning games — to train ILS and Office of the

National Assembly staff in effective work planning. The mood was lively and energetic during the two-day activity, as international facilitator Robert Mellor engaged participants in series of exercises to practice planning and prioritizing tasks, allocating resources, understanding team capabilities, analyzing risks, and monitoring and evaluating results. The 34 participants rated the activity at 4.2 for general satisfaction and 4.4 on its usefulness in their work. Cong Thanh Van, a specialist with the Scientific Information Center, described the course as “very useful,” going on to say, “I have actively practiced skills to set goals and prioritize tasks in responding to member requests and I feel really effective.”

- *Meeting facilitation.* This one-and-a-half-day course, conducted in September 2012 and led by Vietnamese expert Phan Quoc Viet, provided 40 legislative staff members from the ILS, the National Assembly, and ministries with information on the key steps for leading a successful meeting, the role of the meeting facilitator, the art of conflict management, and problem-solving. Participants expressed their appreciation of the trainer’s use of a team-oriented teaching methodology. They gave the session a 4.3 rating for general satisfaction and a 4.4 rating for its usefulness in their work.

### **English Language Training**

A working knowledge of English is necessary to gather the kinds of information members and legislative committees require, and the ability to read in English enables researchers to conduct more effective Internet searches. In November 2011, the ILS encouraged Vietnam LRP to include English in its mix of training activities. After a competitive process, the project selected an Australian company, Languagelink, to implement the training. After pre-testing applicants from the ILS, the project team and Languagelink established one course for 13 beginners (elementary English) and another for 15 pre-intermediate students. The 12-week program was extended to 16 weeks to accommodate scheduling conflicts with other ILS activities.

Of the 28 participants, 12 completed the training: five from the elementary class and seven from the pre-intermediate class. To qualify for a certificate, each student was required to attend at least 75 percent of classes and score at least 60 percent overall on the midterm (weighted at 25 percent) and final exam (weighted at 75 percent). Four elementary students and two intermediate students earned certificates.

Classes took place during working hours, but even with the support of ILS leaders the main challenge was managing the conflicting demands of work and class time, particularly in August and September, as their workloads increased with the beginning of the 4th Session of the 13th National Assembly. The only solution was to reschedule classes based on how many students came to each class. This interrupted the flow of the course and discouraged many students. Still, those who completed the course felt it was worthwhile. The response of Nguyen Thi Dung, an ILS research specialist, was typical of those who persevered: “I loved the English language course. Now my English is much better and I am more confident in communicating with our foreign partners. I recently

took part in a workshop held by the Ministry of Justice, and I was confident in speaking with the Japanese presenters in English.”

### **Study Tour to Polish Sejm**

In November 2012, Vietnam LRP organized an ILS study tour to the Polish Sejm and its acclaimed Bureau of Research. The study tour was designed to assist the ILS in building its capacity to provide high-quality legislative policy research and policy analysis to the Vietnamese National Assembly and to facilitate linkages and cooperation between the ILS and respected legislative research organizations in other countries. Dr. Thao had expressed his interest in visiting the Sejm not only because of the reputation of its Bureau of Research, but also because of Poland’s historical similarities with Vietnam as a country in political and economic transition.

The study tour gave ILS President Thao and his staff insight into one of Europe’s premier legislative research organizations and an opportunity to discuss its organization and management with its leaders and the members it serves. Led by Dr. Thao, the delegation included six ranking ILS staff and two Vietnam LRP team members. The group spent five days in Warsaw, meeting with senior officials from the Sejm and the Bureau of Research to learn firsthand about the bureau’s structure, organization, and operations; its working relationship with Sejm members and committees; and the methodology it uses to produce consistently high-quality policy analysis and legislative research. Upon the delegation’s return to Vietnam, Dr. Thao completed a report for the NASC, stating:

“As we learned from the Polish Sejm, an effective research and information institution should at least have:

- A consistent, clear organizational structure
- Sufficient qualified human resources
- An appropriate budget allocation from the legislative branch

“The ILS should be more engaged with the leaders of the National Assembly, Committees and Members. They are the clients who request information. Particularly, the ILS should provide critical, in-depth information for the Standing Committees. The ILS should be able to offer specialized research by improving its recruitment process, using better databases, and expanding national and international cooperation. The ILS should continue to improve its research methodology (from initial preparation through the approval process) and should propose to National Assembly leaders that this information be shared with the other Members, the media and the voters, especially the younger generation. In addition, The ILS should continue to strengthen its close and effective cooperation with foreign partners, especially with organizations such as USAID. With this “supportive” channel, the Institute can not only improve staff qualifications and capacity, but can also to meet and work with experts from other countries. This will further contribute to improving the quality and effective performance of the National Assembly, its agencies and Members.”

In December 2012, Dr. Thao presented USAID officials with an English translation of his trip report and recommendations during a debriefing with all the participants at the offices of the ILS.

#### **Component 4: Improve the Organization and Management of the ILS**

With the results of Vietnam LRP's Client Survey and HICD assessment in hand, the leadership of the ILS is keenly aware of the limitations of its organizational structure, management practices, administrative processes, and office/IT infrastructure. ILS President Thao has committed to completing the ILS's strategic development plan after the constitutional reforms in May 2013, which are expected to result in a major reorganization of the National Assembly. The anticipated changes will likely answer many questions about the role and responsibilities of the ILS; whether and how CILRES will fit into the new organizational scheme; and where the National Assembly's proposed legislative library will be housed. Once the reforms are approved, ILS leaders will review Vietnam LRP's recommendations in the context of a restructured National Assembly and decide which ones to adopt.

In the interim, the project team continued to look for ways to strengthen the organization and management of the ILS under Component 4 of its work plan. The team reviewed ILS rules and procedures and suggested improvements to enhance the ILS's effectiveness and efficiency. Project support for the ILS also included training to improve the institute's management of legislative research, recommendations for establishing a legislative library, assistance with Vietnam's proposed Law on Libraries, helping meet information technology and office equipment needs, and strengthening links with international legislative libraries and research organizations.

#### **Reviewing and Improving ILS Rules, Procedures, and Organization**

Vietnam LRP reviewed ILS rules, procedures, and organization and prepared a manual, *Policies, Practices, and Guidelines for an Effective Legislative Research Service*, which was translated into Vietnamese and presented to the ILS in May 2012. The 48-page document outlines the policies and practices for provide top-quality information and research services to the National Assembly. It provides information on the best practices of outstanding legislative research organizations around the world, with guidelines for service delivery, out-sourcing of legislative research, and quality control. The manual also includes policies for merit-based hiring, job descriptions for key personnel, and detailed regulations for ILS organization and operation. ILS leaders have reviewed the materials and will give them further consideration after the anticipated reorganization of the National Assembly.

#### **Improving ILS Administration, Management, and Budgeting**

At a February 2012 seminar inaugurated by the USAID mission director, Vietnam LRP facilitated a discussion of organizational models of legislative information and research services, member and committee relations, staff recruitment and management,

administrative processes, products and services, research budgeting, and quality control, comparing experiences and best practices in other countries with the findings in Vietnam.

An animated discussion followed among the audience members, including National Assembly members and 52 staff from the National Assembly and the ILS. Some favored creating in-house legislative technical assistance capability, much like the U.S. Congress has done with the CRS, to build capacity and develop institutional memory. Others argued that such a model is too expensive for a developing country and that out-sourcing was a more realistic alternative. Vietnam LRP's team suggested combining the two approaches, as in the Polish Sejm's Bureau of Research, with a strong legislative internship program to lower the cost of research and serve as an incubator for future legislative staff.

When many participants asked about the CRS and other sources of technical support for the U.S. Congress, the project team offered brief descriptions of the Congressional Budget Office, which provides budget projections and estimates the economic impact of proposed legislation, and the Government Accountability Office, the congressional "watchdog" that serves as the audit, evaluation, and investigative arm of the U.S. Congress. Also mentioned in this context were the committee staff and personal staff members who support the work of members of Congress. The object was to assist National Assembly members and senior staff in their work to define the how to handle the need for technical expertise in the National Assembly.

The participants rated the seminar at 3.9 for general satisfaction and at 4.1 for usefulness to their work. Following the seminar, Vietnam LRP produced two reports with recommendations for different aspects of managing, administering and budgeting for legislative research.

In August 2012, the project team addressed the subject again at a workshop, this time focusing on improving the quality and management of ILS legislative information and research. Participants included 28 information specialists, legislative researchers, and supervisors, and three staff from the Office of the National Assembly. Vietnam LRP's expert, who had reviewed and evaluated a sample of the reports from the Scientific Information Center and the Scientific Research Center, reported on the findings, stressing the importance of simplifying reports and emphasizing applied research to make them more relevant to legislative decision makers, and the value of peer-review. Although most participants seemed to agree and called for more training, a few others disagreed strongly, arguing that the ILS was a think tank with a mandate to conduct theoretical research as well as applied research. Ratings for this workshop were 4.6 for general satisfaction and 3.9 for usefulness to the participants' work. The project team produced a report and written recommendations from the seminar for the ILS.

### **Supporting ILS Equipment Needs**

Every task the ILS undertakes involves the production, processing, storage, and dissemination of legislative documents, information, or research. To improve the quality

and delivery of ILS products and services, the institute's staff needed access to proper office and computer equipment and software.

Vietnam LRP's HICD assessment of the ILS and interviews with staff at the institute found that the ILS was operating with computers and office equipment that it had received for the Office of the National Assembly in 2008, as well as a few computers the institute had been able to buy before imposition of an ongoing, government-wide embargo on discretionary spending as way to reduce spending. Furthermore, only 32 (62 percent) of the institute's 52 professionals had access to this outdated equipment. The rest — including information specialists and legislative researchers — either brought personal computers from home or had to wait until an ILS computer became available. This tremendous loss of technical capacity was a major factor in the institute's delayed or nonexistent responses to member requests — one in every four requests received no reply at all. To function effectively, the studies recommended that all ILS professional staff members should be equipped, at a minimum, with basic desktop computers and shared access to printers and photocopiers.

To address this need, USAID authorized Vietnam LRP to procure 20 computers, three photocopiers, and three laser printers for the Scientific Information Center, Scientific Research Center, and Department of General Affairs. The new equipment increased the productivity of the ILS by almost 40 percent: 20 information specialists, legislative researchers, and administrative staff members gained direct access to computers, the Internet, and each other for the first time.

### **Building a Legislative Library to Serve the ILS and the National Assembly**

*Seminar on building a legislative library.* In the ILS and National Assembly, there was broad consensus on the need for a legislative library. Other than a few outdated law books and files, there were no legislative reference materials to be found. Staff and members depended on their access to a few university law libraries. In April 2012, in response to this need, the project team visited Vietnam's national library and specialized libraries in Hanoi to explore their collections and begin planning to fill the need for legislative reference materials.

Later that same month, the project team assisted the ILS in organizing a seminar on building a legislative library. The presenters and participants discussed the importance of legislative reference materials and laid out guidelines for developing a collection, emphasizing that the heart of the collection must be formed by reference materials created in Vietnam, with supplemental materials from around the world. Seminar participants included 39 ILS leaders and staff and nine library specialists representing the World Bank, the University of Hanoi's Library of Government and Law and other university libraries, and the American Center in Hanoi. Participants rated the seminar at 4.2 (on a scale of 1 to 5) for general satisfaction and at 4.4 for usefulness to their work.

In response to questions from ILS President Thao and his advisors, Vietnam LRP produced a report and recommendations from the seminar, detailing how to establish,

organize, and staff a legislative library for the ILS and the National Assembly and presenting a blueprint for the library. This document includes a proposed mission statement, a description of the community to be served, the types of material to be collected and housed in the library, and guidelines for sharing resources and maintaining the collection. It also includes a list of publications, developed with the support of the International Association of Parliamentary Librarians, prioritizing the most useful legislative reference materials.

Supplementing this guidance, at Dr. Thao's request the project team reviewed recently enacted library laws in countries known to have outstanding libraries and offered detailed comments and recommendations on Vietnam's proposed Law on Libraries.

### **Facilitating ILS Links and Cooperation with Legislative Research and Information Services and Institutions in Other Countries**

With the assistance of Nancy Davenport, a former CRS information specialist and former director of acquisitions for the Library of Congress, Vietnam LRP launched an initiative through the International Association of Librarians, seeking assistance from legislative libraries around the world to identify which publications, reference materials, and information databanks their researchers found to be the most useful. The project team compared the responses and developed a list of the most common legislative reference publications, and shared the list with the participating international legislative libraries to assist them in their acquisitions. The project team also used this listing to recommend publications and reference materials the ILS could purchase for its proposed new legislative library.



# SNAPSHOT

## A Legislative Specialist Stands Up

### USAID support helps boost productivity and confidence in Vietnam's Institute for Legislative Research



Photo: LRP/Chemionics International

Specialist Dzung Nguyen practices her skills in front of participants at the LRP training course “Effective Presentation Skills.”

*As a result of USAID support through the Legislative Research Program, staff at Vietnam's Institute for Legislative Research have equipment and training that enable them to provide timely, high-quality services to the country's lawmakers.*

**Telling Our Story**  
U.S. Agency for International Development  
Washington, DC 20523-1000  
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

Dzung Nguyen's face lights up as she turns from her computer screen, “You see, now I work more efficiently because I was provided with a new computer.” Ms. Dzung has been a specialist in the Institute for Legislative Studies (ILS) Scientific Research Center for four years. She conducts research and analysis on legislative issues, focusing on social affairs, for members of Vietnam's parliament, the National Assembly.

As part of USAID support through Vietnam Legislative Research Program (LRP), the ILS benefited from much-needed training and tools for professionalizing its legislative research services. One small but essential part of this support came in the form of office equipment.

Before USAID's Legislative Research Program (LRP) began, 55 ILS staff members shared a limited number of computers. Ms. Dzung's ability to respond to requests from National Assembly members depended on the availability of a computer and the workload of her colleagues. Echoing Ms. Dzung's sentiments, other ILS staff report that they are able to do their jobs more promptly and effectively.

The right tools and skills bring new confidence. With a bright smile on her face, Ms. Dzung described how LRP training boosted her communication skills, saying how useful she found the training on effective communications with members of parliament.

Ms. Dzung frequently interacts with National Assembly members, briefing them on critical legislative issues. Maintaining a close relationship with these clients is important to the work of the ILS. “I understand better how to communicate effectively with members who requested information and research,” Ms. Dzung said, calling it a “win-win” situation. “Members of parliament can get information from us and we can get some ideas for studies from them.”

Based on ILS staff recommendations gathered through a human and institutional capacity development survey, the LRP team also designed and implemented an English language training course for three months. Ms. Dzung was a top student. When she attends international workshops related to her expertise, she can now carry on conversations in English, something she found difficult to do before the course.

## CHAPTER THREE

# MONITORING AND EVALUATION

To ensure that Vietnam LRP achieved its institutional strengthening goals for the ILS, the project team used an integrated performance monitoring and evaluation approach, based on the three primary indicators discussed in this section. Each Vietnam LRP quarterly report included a table comparing performance on the three indicators with the targets in the project work plan. These indicators, along with the results of the HICD assessment and the client survey, helped guide project implementation, serving as valuable forecasting and reporting tools.

### **Performance Indicator 1: Percentage Increase or Decrease in Member Satisfaction** *Vietnam LRP Custom Performance Impact Indicator*

To determine the extent to which the ILS improved its services during the project's 18-month period of performance, the ILS and the Vietnam LRP team conducted a baseline survey of member perceptions of ILS products and service (see page 12). The target for this performance indicator was an optimistic 20 percent increase in member satisfaction compared with the 2012 baseline year.

A follow-up survey in March 2013 applied the same methodology as baseline survey, but revealed fewer members requesting ILS products and services. This decline is likely due to the three factors described on pages 12-13 and to the ILS's limited operating budget, which prevented it from accepting a subscription-based software solution to monitor and track member requests more effectively.

Despite these factors, the 2012 and 2013 surveys are comparable, because the project team applied the same methodology for both surveys. Thus, the results of the 2013 ILS client survey should indicate the impact that the ILS and Vietnam LRP on the institute's efforts to improve the quality, relevance, and timeliness of its services.

### **Performance Indicator 2: Number of Executive Oversight Actions Undertaken by the Legislature Receiving U.S. Government Assistance** *USAID-required Standard Output Indicator No. 2.2.1-4*

Although executive oversight hearings and related actions have been infrequent in Vietnam since the adoption of the country's 1992 Constitution, they appear to be increasing as the National Assembly develops its capacity to fulfill its constitutional role as the "highest representative organ of the people and highest organ of State power of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam." Performance Indicator 2 tracked the number of oversight actions during Vietnam LRP's 18-month implementation period, from October 2011 through March 2013. This output indicator is defined as "direct or indirect member actions aimed at gathering information or public input on the implementation or impact of legislation and publicly funded programs and projects." Requests for ILS information,

research, and analytical services related to executive oversight were monitored and maintained by ILS and Vietnam LRP.

In the absence of recorded data for the time before the project started, Vietnam LRP set arbitrary targets for executive oversight actions for the project’s first four quarters. Targets for the fifth and sixth quarters were set at 9 and 1, respectively. As illustrated below and in Annex B, actual experience produced the following results:

**Exhibit 4. Number of Executive Oversight Actions Supported by Vietnam LRP**

Reporting Period	Target	Actual
Quarter 1	0	0
Quarter 2	9	6
Quarter 3	9	12
Quarter 4	9	1
Quarter 5	9	20
Quarter 6	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>42</b>

The lack of software to track and monitor member request related to executive oversight actions also had a negative impact on progress under Performance Indicator 2. The listing of oversight-related requests in Annex C was prepared based on a manual examination of member requests conducted by Vietnam LRP’s legislative coordinator, Mai Tran Ngoc, and the chief of information technology at ILS, Nguyen Xuan Son. In addition to being time-consuming, manual review increases the possibility of missing or miscounting requests for specific ILS services.

**Performance Indicator 3**

*USAID Standard Output Indicator 2.2.1-5*

In July 2012, at USAID/Vietnam’s request, Standard Output Indicator 2.2.1-5 was replaced with “Number of training days organized for national legislators and national legislative staff.” Vietnam LRP continued to use and report on both indicators, although only the new indicator is official. The project’s performance under Performance Indicator 3 is therefore presented in two sections.

**Performance Indicator 3a: Number of National Legislators and National Legislative Staff Attending U.S. Government-Supported Training or Educational Events**

To build in-house technical capacity in the ILS, Vietnam LRP provided a variety of training and educational opportunities, including issue symposia; institutional capacity building workshops, seminars, and courses; “soft skills” workshops; a four-month English language course; and a study tour to the Polish Sejm’s Bureau of Research.

Although these activities were primarily intended for ILS technical staff and members, National Assembly staff and committee personnel also participated. During the project period, more than 1,204 participants (including national legislators, legislative staff, and

representatives of ministries, bar associations, provincial peoples' councils, peoples' committees, and universities) attended Vietnam LRP activities. Of these, 58 percent were ILS managers and staff. Because the ILS employs only 51 professionals, many of the ILS participants were “repeat attenders” — a positive outcome, because building ILS staff capacity was a major program objective.

The targets for the number of participants in project training activities, shown below and in Annex B, are much lower than the actual figures, because Vietnam LRP's first home-office director, a senior legislative expert, left the program in May 2012 to direct USAID's legislative strengthening project in Indonesia. This change resulted in an unexpected budget surplus that enabled the project team to significantly increase the number and size of its activities, with USAID's full approval.

**Exhibit 5. Number of National Legislators and Legislative Staff Attending Vietnam LRP's Training and Educational Events**

Reporting Period	Target	Actual
Quarter 1	30	46
Quarter 2	30	195
Quarter 3	60	158
Quarter 4	60	340
Quarter 5	150	197
Quarter 6	50	71
<b>Total</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>1,007</b>

**Performance Indicator 3b: Number of Days of USAID-Supported Training and Educational Activities**

Activities for this performance indicator are reported in half-day increments. The total figures include the number of days for all types of training, from national issue symposia aimed primarily at members and senior staff, to soft skills workshops intended mainly for less experienced staff. Targets for this official performance indicator were also low.

**Exhibit 6. Number of Days of USAID-Supported Training and Educational Activities**

Reporting Period	Target	Actual
Quarter 1	0.5	0.5
Quarter 2	8.5	8.5
Quarter 3	6.5	6.0
Quarter 4	29.0	27.0
Quarter 5	9.0	13.5
Quarter 6	5.0	3.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>58.5</b>	<b>59.0</b>

## CHAPTER FOUR

# KEY CONSTRAINTS AND ISSUES

Vietnam LRP's initial work plan cited time as a major concern, with two key challenges: the brief time frame (18 months) in which to implement a project of this scope, and the limited time ILS managers and staff had to participate in project activities given their many other responsibilities, including providing technical support to the National Constitutional Reform Commission. At the project's close, these concerns appeared to have been unfounded. ILS President Thao and his staff have lived up to their commitment to participate in the work of the project and, despite the demands on his time, Dr. Thao never refused or even delayed a request to meet on project matters.

Two key constraints and critical issues were identified during the implementation period.

### **ILS Adoption of Key Recommendations**

When Vietnam LRP closed, the extent to which key recommendations emerging from project-supported workshops, seminars, and reports had been adopted remained unclear. Key recommendations include the following:

- Consolidating the Scientific Research Center and Scientific Information Center
- Assign three to five high-level ILS legislative staff members as liaisons to the most important committees, to provide more direct support to the committees.

ILS leaders may be waiting until after legislation to reorganize the National Assembly has been considered (scheduled for later in 2013) to make any significant organizational or operational changes. Nonetheless, the ILS assured Vietnam LRP that the institute's leadership agrees with some key recommendations from the project team. During the strategic planning workshop, the chairman of the National Assembly informed Dr. Thao that the number of personnel assigned to the ILS would be doubled in the coming year, underscoring a continuing commitment to the development of the ILS as the National Assembly's principal center for legislative information, research, and analytical services.

### **Improving the Institutional Capacity of the ILS**

Another important challenge concerns project impact. At its heart, Vietnam LRP's goal was to contribute to lasting improvements in the institutional capacity of the ILS. Training staff, creating opportunities to show them how other parliamentary research organizations work, and improving infrastructure were important prerequisites. The project made progress in that regard, but additional financial resources and decisions about structural and organizational changes are required to ensure that the ILS will realize its potential. These decisions and resources can only come from committed leadership at the highest levels of the National Assembly.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# LESSONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMING

The lessons presented here stem from the Vietnam LRP project team’s experiences and from international best practices. They were chosen for their perceived value to USAID in designing future legislative strengthening programs in Vietnam and other countries.

### **Lesson 1: A Successful Legislative Strengthening Program Begins with a Comprehensive Needs Assessment**

USAID’s support for the ILS began not in September 2011, when Vietnam LRP launched, but 19 months earlier, when the mission released a report, “Enhancing Government Effectiveness: An Assessment of the Institute for Legislative Studies.” That study laid the groundwork for Vietnam LRP by identifying the ILS’s critical needs and recommending concrete actions to resolve them.

Vietnam LRP’s work plan was based on the Enhancing Government Effectiveness assessment, and the project’s reports and recommendations — on human and institutional development, member perceptions of the ILS, linking the ILS with committees, strategic planning, communications, organizational structure, and even its study tour to the Polish Sejm — echoed the recommendations from the February 2010 assessment and deepened and reinforced its findings. For three years, ILS leaders and the NASC have received a steady stream of essentially the same messages: Better information and research services require an improved organizational structure, clear roles and responsibilities, more highly trained and experienced staff, and more resources to recruit, maintain, and equip them.

### **Lesson 2: Committed Leadership with Decision-Making Power and Periodic Meetings with Project Staff Can Enhance Legislative Strengthening by Informing, Facilitating, and Overseeing Program Implementation**

Vietnam LRP benefited tremendously from the unwavering support of ILS President Dinh Xuan Thao. Despite many demands on his time — including serving as a full-time member of the National Assembly and coordinating legislative technical assistance for the country’s National Commission on Constitutional Reform — meetings on project issues were always given high priority and held frequently.

Decisions under Dr. Thao’s purview were made promptly (participating in project work planning, setting dates for project activities, approving speakers and consultants, and allowing ILS staff to participate in project activities during working hours). However, broader issues that directly affected ILS development (such as adoption of a strategic development plan, developing a more competitive compensation package to attract and retain expert staff, and decisions that required NASC or National Assembly support)

proved far more difficult to address. Progress on more complex issues was minimal during the life of Vietnam LRP, though that may change with the adoption of constitutional reforms in May 2013.

Other than a few meetings with committee chairs or vice chairs, the project team had no direct access to the leadership of the National Assembly. It would have been helpful to have met periodically with Dr. Thao and a small committee of leaders to gain more insight into NASC priorities and discuss the more substantive institutional improvements, such as establishing a merit-based legislative civil service system similar to that of the United States, Canada, or Spain.

### **Lesson 3: As a Prerequisite for Support, USAID Should Require Host-Government Approval of the Proposed Legislative Strengthening Project and a Memorandum of Understanding with the Chief Beneficiary before Contract Award**

As the Vietnam LRP team discovered, once a contract is awarded, the beneficiary has no incentive — and neither the mission nor the contractor have the leverage — to aggressively pursue official project approval or substantive commitments to the project. Although the lack of government approval or a letter of understanding did not prevent implementation of any work plan activity, it did prevent a proper launching of the project and delayed start-up, because the ILS, USAID, and the project team were all hesitant to begin work without an official blessing. Lack of formal government approval can also be problematic for logistical details, such as reimbursement of value-added taxes. A letter of understanding details the commitments and clearly establishes the roles and responsibilities of the host-country government, USAID, and the contractor. It also allows the contractor to be decisive in implementing work plan activities, because they have been pre-approved by the two principal parties.

### **Lesson 4: Adopting a Strategic Institutional Development Plan Can Guide Overall Implementation, Prevent Gaps in Coverage, and Minimize Duplication of Efforts**

In scheduling the ILS client survey and HICD study in January and February 2012, Vietnam LRP's intention was to feed the results into the ILS strategic planning workshop in March. Although the workshop produced recommendations that documented and supported USAID's Enhancing Government Effectiveness assessment of February 2010, it did not result in the anticipated strategic institutional development plan, because the NASC asked the ILS to put its strategic plan on hold, pending constitution reforms reorganizing the National Assembly in May 2013. The decision did not impede project implementation; in fact, the delay may have benefited the ILS by allowing time for Vietnam LRP's recommendations to inform other changes in Vietnam's government. On several occasions, including at the project's closing ceremony on March 19, 2013, Dr. Thao hinted that Vietnam LRP's work had informed the development of proposed constitutional reforms related to the National Assembly. This is likely the case, given the ILS's mandate, "to conduct fundamental research on issues related to the organization and operation of the National Assembly" and its role as the primary source of technical assistance to the National Commission on Constitutional Reform.

One of the advantages of a strategic plan is that it enables the legislature to control project implementation and distribute responsibility for specific components to the donor best-qualified to implement them. A guiding strategy can mitigate potential overlap of donor programs and optimizes the use of donor funds from the beneficiary's standpoint. The lack of a clear ILS strategic plan created some duplication of efforts with those of other ILS donors, particularly the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). For example, in 2012 the ILS requested project support to organize a conference on anticorruption, although the UNDP had already been approached and had primacy. Similarly, UNDP, Vietnam LRP, and Microsoft all planned to assist with the development of the ILS website, unaware that the others were involved; both Vietnam LRP and the UNDP had also planned to provide IT support. In most cases involving Vietnam LRP and the UNDP, the teams learned of each other's involvement and worked out mutually acceptable divisions of responsibilities.

#### **Lesson 5: Involving the Beneficiary in Work Planning Can Generate Ownership for Project Activities and Help Ensure Success; Flexibility During Implementation Helps Ensure the Relevance of Activities to the Beneficiary's Perceived Needs**

Led by Dr. Thao, a small delegation of ILS managers participated in a workshop in November 2011 to review Vietnam LRP's proposed work plan. Very few changes were made. One exception was the addition of the English language training program, which had been deleted from the draft work plan, after Dr. Thao advocated for the need for the training and offered to secure fellowships abroad for the two top students.

During implementation, the ILS decided it did not need an approved activity that called for an expansion of its database of "outsourced" legislative research specialists. The ILS asked to redirect funding toward additional skills training and issue symposia; USAID approved the adjustment. Other USAID-approved budget adjustments increased strategic activity funding, enabling Vietnam LRP to increase the number of training activities and issue symposia still more. In his remarks at the close of the project, Dr. Thao cited the project's flexibility to respond to ILS needs as one of the reasons for its success.

#### **Lesson 6: Planning and channeling training activities through a beneficiary can generate ownership for project activities, build skills, improve collaboration, increase participation, and even lower costs**

An early decision to involve ILS Department of General Affairs counterparts in planning and funding all Vietnam LRP workshops, seminars, and symposia proved beneficial to the program in the long run, as ILS and project staff became more familiar with each other's accounting systems and regulations. The arrangement gave the human resources and administrative personnel from the ILS an opportunity to gain experience in planning and executing training and educational activities, and incentivized them to work hard to ensure a good turnout at the events. ILS sponsorship also reduced the project's expenses for meals and venues by enabling booking at state-owned facilities with special rates for the ILS. At the closing ceremony, Dr. Thao complemented teams on their "smooth and successful collaboration," remarking that the partnership was so close that it was hard for him to know who was from the ILS and who was from Vietnam LRP.

## ANNEX A

# ANALYSIS OF THE 2013 ILS CLIENT SURVEY

This annex presents the full analysis of results and recommendations for improving ILS services to the National Assembly of Vietnam. The report was produced by legislative strengthening expert and former CRS analyst Francis Miko for Vietnam LRP.

### Executive Summary

The following is an analysis of the Vietnam LRP's 2013 Institute for Legislative Studies (ILS) Client Survey results and changes from the baseline 2012 ILS Client Survey. The 2013 survey covers the period of the 4th Session of the 13th National Assembly, from October to November 2012. The 2012 baseline survey covered the period of the 2nd Session of the 13th National Assembly, from October to November 2011. Both surveys measured the level of satisfaction of clients — including National Assembly members and regional staff — with the ILS's responses to their requests.

The 2013 tabulation results included surveys completed by members of the National Assembly, regional staff directors, and two other regional staff members. Except for the first identifying questions for internal tracking purposes, the responses of members and staff were not distinguished. For a more accurate comparison of results, therefore, the version of the 2012 tabulations that also included members and staff was compared to this 2013 version. This accounts for the slightly different calculations of percentages than in an earlier analysis of the 2012 results for members only.

### Major Findings

- *Substantial increase in the percentage of all types of requests that were actually answered by the ILS.* The ILS responded to 95 percent of all document requests (up from 84 percent the previous year). It responded to 100 percent of quick information requests (up from 86 percent). The ILS responded to 91 percent of in-depth research requests (up sharply, from 63 percent the previous year). The ILS also responded to 100 percent of requests for analysis (up from 73 percent).
- *Decline in the quality of ILS products.* In most categories, the quality of ILS responses was rated lower in the 2013 survey than in the 2012 survey. Respondents who said the responses they received to quick information requests were of high quality or very high quality dropped from 71 percent in 2012 to 57 percent in 2013. For in-depth research, the ratings of high or very high quality dropped from 64 percent in 2012 to 50 percent in 2013. The ratings of high or

very high quality for other technical support fell from 89 percent in 2012 to 71 percent in 2013. Only the ratings for quality of analysis showed improvement. In 2013, 83 percent of respondents rated the quality of analysis as high or very high, compared to 78 percent in 2012.

A number of recommendations were offered to the ILS for improving the timeliness, quality, and relevance of its services:

- Better explain and advertise what services it can provide to National Assembly members and staff.
- Provide more seminars, workshops, and training for National Assembly members on issues before the National Assembly and on how to perform their functions.
- Provide more information and research not only during sessions, but also between sessions.

### **Number of Clients Requesting ILS Assistance**

A total of 288 members made requests of the ILS during the period of the 2013 survey. This number represents almost 58 percent of all 500 members. Comparatively speaking, such a level of member usage is not too low in absolute terms. However, the number is down significantly from the 346 members placing requests during the period covered by the 2012 survey, a decline of about 20 percent. Some 41 regional staff directors made request of the ILS in the period of the 2013 survey, down significantly from 62 in the previous year.

The reason for the year on year decline in client requests to the ILS is unclear, but may be attributed to the following explanations. First, during the 2nd Session in 2011, the ILS was allowed to place a booth to receive requests for assistance in the entry foyer to the plenary chamber, but its main competitor — the Office of the National Assembly’s Center for Information, Library, and Research Services (CILRES) — was not. During the 4th Session in 2012, both organizations were permitted to place booths in the foyer. Some requests that might have previously gone to the ILS may instead have gone to CILRES in 2013. Survey respondents actually reported that they used CILRES slightly less than they did in the 2012 survey. It is possible that other members and staff made requests of CILRES but not of the ILS.

It has also been suggested that the decline may be related to a presumed tendency of first-year members to require and seek more assistance than second-year members with an additional year of experience under their belt. One would hope that the opposite would be the case and that with more experience and greater knowledge about the ILS, members and staff would in fact make greater use of ILS services. However, that may not have been the case here.

It would be important for ILS to gather more information on why fewer members and staff made requests of the ILS in the most recent period, to see if the decrease in the number of members and regional staff requesting ILS assistance might also reflect an

erosion of client satisfaction with the work previously provided by the ILS. When comparing the client responses in 2012 and 2013, the survey responses do not provide conclusive explanations, but they may help to shed some light. Those who made requests in the 3rd Session, but for some reason did not in the 4th session are not captured in the survey. The best way to get a definitive picture would be to interview members and staff who made requests earlier, but not in the most recent period, as to why they did not.

### **Number of Clients who Completed Surveys**

In 2013, 92 members responded to the survey of 288 (some 32 percent of those receiving the questionnaire). In 2012, 150 members of the 346 who received questionnaires responded (about 43 percent).

One likely reason for the decline in response rates from 2012 to 2013 was that the competition for member time had increased significantly as a result of a very heavy legislative workload in preparation for the 5th Session of the 13th National Assembly in May 2013, where several major constitutional reforms were to be considered. During the period when the survey questionnaires were sent out and returned, work sessions were being conducted day and night in the National Assembly.

A slightly higher percentage of respondents were committee or Ethnic Council members in the 2013 survey than in the 2012 survey, including a higher percentage of deputy chairs. In both years, most responding members were part-time members (69 percent in the 2013 survey). Of the 41 regional staff directors who sent surveys, 10 responded as did 2 other regional staff (for a combined 29 percent). The breakdown of male and female respondents was about the same each year (women accounting for about 28 percent of respondents).

### **ILS' Success in Answering National Assembly Client Requests**

The most striking positive change from the 2012 to the 2013 survey results was the substantial increase in the percentage of all types of requests that were actually answered by the ILS. The ILS responded to 95 percent of all document requests (up from 84 percent the previous year). It responded to 100 percent of quick-information requests (up from 86 percent). The ILS responded to 91 percent of in-depth research requests (up sharply from 63 percent the previous year). The ILS also responded to 100 percent of requests for analysis (up from 73 percent). The table on the next page details the survey results, by category.

This improvement is significant because in the 2012 survey the ILS non-response rate to National Assembly requests was surprisingly high. In several meetings, members expressed their frustration over instances when they did not receive answers to their requests. It seemed that part of the problem was that the ILS did not have an adequate system to record and track requests and to monitor their completion. Partly to address this shortcoming, Vietnam LRP provided new computer equipment to the ILS and the Microsoft Foundation provided software. It is not clear whether the computers and software were in place long enough before the 2013 survey to have contributed to the

better ILS handling of requests for assistance. These resources should help with the monitoring and tracking of requests in the future, in any case.

### **National Assembly Requests for ILS Assistance: Results of the ILS Client Surveys, 2013 and 2012**

Type of Service/ Survey Year	Percent Requesting Assistance	Percent Receiving a Response	Response Was High- Quality	Response Was Relevant	Response Was Timely
<b>Workshop or Symposium</b>					
2013	72% attended	N/A	99% found worthwhile	N/A	N/A
2012 (not asked)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Document</b>					
2013	65%	95%			80%
2012	71%	84%			74%
<b>Quick Information</b>					
2013	16%	100%	57%	80%	67%
2012	14%	86%	71%	82%	83%
<b>In-Depth Research</b>					
2013	11%	91%	50%	60%	70%
2012	13%	63%	64%	64%	73%
<b>Analysis</b>					
2013	12%	100%	83%	83%	92%
2012	10%	73%	78%	100%	89%
<b>Other Technical Support</b>					
2013	14%	78%	71%	71%	71%
2012	9%	82%	89%	89%	89%

### **Where National Assembly Members and Staff Turned for Information and Research Assistance**

*Information.* Survey questions on where National Assembly members and staff turned for assistance were separated according to whether they were requests for information or for research. Some 38 percent of respondents said that they used the ILS as their primary source for information in the 2013 survey (similar to 2012). About 33 percent of respondents turned first to CILFRES in the 2013 survey (down 3 percent from 2012). The Committees Department (14 percent in 2013) and the Internet (13 percent in 2013) were alternately a distant third and fourth.

*Research.* The percentage of respondents who said they used the ILS as their primary sources of research was 48 percent in 2013 (similar to 2012). During the same period, the percentage of those saying they used CILRES as their primary source fell from 34 percent to 24 percent. It seems that respondents used CILRES less even though it had been allowed to set up a booth in front of the session hall to take in requests along with the ILS, during the 4th Session. The Internet (15 percent in 2013) and the Committees Department (11 percent in 2013) came in a distant third and fourth each year. Other

sources of assistance such as research institutes outside the National Assembly were named in only a few instances. While this would suggest that the ILS may be playing a relatively bigger role in serving National Assembly clients, it needs to be kept in mind that the survey included only those who had made requests for ILS services and that the overall number of those requesters dropped between 2012 and 2013. It could be that others turned only to CILRES or the Committees Department for research assistance.

*Requests for ILS assistance, by type.* The percentage of respondents requesting documents in 2013 survey was down slightly from the 2012 results, although document requests still dominated. The percentage requesting information and analysis was up by a small percentage. The percentage requesting in-depth research was down a fraction. To the extent that clients are turning to the ILS more often for assistance that goes beyond the provision of specific documents, this would seem a welcome though small change.

*Requests for documents.* Some 65 percent of survey respondents said in 2013 that they had requested documents from the ILS. This compared to 71 percent in the 2012 survey. Most respondents had most recently requested books (68 percent), government reports on specific topics (67 percent), existing studies (62 percent), and articles (34 percent). There were also a number of requests for proposed legislation, national, and foreign laws. In the 2012 survey by comparison, 71 percent requested books most recently.

*Requests for quick information.* Some 16 percent of respondents said they had requested quick information in the 2013 survey, up from 14 percent in the 2012 survey. Most respondents (86 percent) said they had asked for an answer to a brief factual question, compared to 83 percent in the 2012 survey.

*Requests for in-depth research.* Requests for in-depth research dropped slightly in the 2013 survey to 11 percent, down from 13 percent in the 2012 survey. “Research on a specific issue” was cited most frequently (by 27 percent) as the most recent request placed.

*Requests for analysis.* In the 2013 survey, 12 percent stated that they had made requests requiring analysis (up from 10 percent in the 2012 survey). The answers as to type of analysis varied widely. Among them were questions on constitutional reform issues and other policy research.

*Requests for other technical assistance.* Some 14 percent of respondents said they had requested other technical assistance from the ILS, up from 10 percent in the 2012 survey. The requests included questions related to computers and software. There may have been some confusion over what should have been included here. Some respondents included books and magazines. Some of these may have been double counted.

*Participation in ILS workshops and symposia.* ILS workshops and symposia were considered a significant ILS function and were very well received, according to the 2013 survey. Some 72 percent of respondents had participated in such events and of those 99 percent said they were worthwhile or very worthwhile. The question was not asked in the 2012 survey.

## Reasons Clients Did Not Turn to ILS for Specific Types of Assistance

In the 2013 survey, questions were added to find out why those not using a particular ILS service (documents, quick information, in-depth research, and analysis) chose not to do so. No such question had been asked in 2012. The survey questionnaires gave respondents three choices to answer these questions:

- Have no need for such help
- Go to another sources for such support
- Not aware ILS can provide such assistance

In each case, a large majority responded that they did not know they could request such assistance from the ILS.

A surprising 46 percent of respondents said they were not aware that they could request documents from the ILS. Some 39 percent said they went to another source and 14 percent said they had no need for such help. With regard to quick information, an even higher 58 percent of respondents indicated they did not know they could make such requests of the ILS. Some 32 percent said they went to another source. Only 11 percent said they had no need for such help. With regard to in-depth research, a similar 57 percent of respondent said that they did not know they could request such help from the ILS. Another 25 percent went to other sources and 19 percent said they had no need for such help. In the case of requests for analysis, also, 57 percent said they did not know they could turn to the ILS for such help. Some 27 percent used another source, and 16 percent said they did not need such help.

## Client Satisfaction with the Quality, Relevance, and Timeliness of ILS Work

Members and staff were asked to indicate how satisfied they were with the responses the ILS provided to their requests, in terms of quality, relevance, and timeliness. The results of 2013 surveys differed from the 2012 results in some respects and were similar in others (see the table on page 46). With so few clients requesting quick information, in-depth research, analysis, and other technical support, one should probably not read too much into the results of the small sample. One disgruntled customer could skew the results.

*Quality.* The most negative results related to client assessments of quality. The quality of ILS responses was rated lower in the 2013 survey than in the 2012 survey in most categories. Respondents who said the responses they received to quick information requests were of high quality or very high quality dropped from 71 percent in 2012 to 57 percent in 2013. For in-depth research the ratings of high or very high quality dropped from 64 percent in 2012 to 50 percent in 2013. The ratings of high or very high quality for other technical support fell from 89 percent in 2012 to 71 percent in 2013. Only the ratings for quality of analysis showed improvement. In 2013, 83 percent of respondents rated the quality of analysis as high or very high, compared to 78 percent in 2012.

*Relevance.* The ratings for relevance of ILS responses were somewhat higher in both 2012 and 2013 than for quality. However, here too there was a drop-off from 2012 to 2013. The decline among those who said that the quick information they received was relevant or very relevant was slight (from 82 percent to 80 percent). With regard to in-depth research, the ratings of relevant or very relevant were substantially lower and dropped from 64 percent in 2012 to 60 percent in 2013. Even for analysis, the relevance ratings dropped from 100 percent in 2012 to 83 percent in 2013. For other technical support, those who stated that the response was relevant or very relevant dropped from 89 percent in 2012 to 71 percent in 2013.

*Timeliness.* With regard to timeliness, the results were somewhat mixed. Those who felt the responses to document requests were timely rose from 74 percent in 2012 to 80 percent in 2013. On the other hand, those who said that responses to requests for quick information were timely fell from 83 percent to 67 percent. With regard to in-depth research, satisfaction with timeliness fell slightly from 73 percent to 70 percent between the 2012 and 2013 surveys. Satisfaction with timeliness of analysis was high both years and rose slightly from 89 percent in 2012 to 92 percent in 2013. Satisfaction with timeliness of other technical assistance dropped from 89 percent in 2012 to 71 percent in 2013.

### **Client Suggestions for Improving ILS Services**

In 2013, some 71 percent of clients believed that the ILS could be made more useful to their work in the National Assembly. This was down from 80 percent in the 2012 survey. Respondents were asked for their suggestion on how ILS could improve its services. They offered a number of different ideas.

- The most frequent common suggestions centered on the need for the ILS to better explain and advertise what services it can provide to National Assembly members and staff. The ILS needed to find ways to familiarize members with their services, whether through seminars, workshops or other training programs.
- A number of respondents were eager for more seminars, workshops, and training on issues before the National Assembly and on how to perform their functions. Some also suggested that such events should be scheduled between National Assembly sessions.
- A number of respondents mentioned that the ILS should provide more timely and quality information and research not just during sessions but between sessions as well.
- There was a suggestion that ILS provide more information to members on information technology.
- One suggestion was for the ILS to provide direct consulting and briefings to members on relevant issues.

- It was also suggested that the ILS use e-mail to contact and provide information to members.
- Some respondents use their answers to this question to praise the ILS and suggest it continue the good work it is doing. Some said that ILS documents and workshops are very useful.

### **Recommendations to Improve ILS Services to the National Assembly**

These recommendations are tied specifically to the 2013 survey results. They supplement the recommendations contained in previous reports prepared for the Vietnam LRP.

- The ILS needs to better explain, promote, and advertise the services it can provide to National Assembly members. This is borne out both by some of the client suggestions for improving the usefulness of ILS to their work and by the fact that the most frequent answer to questions about why specific types of ILS services had not been requested was that the respondents did not know that the ILS could provide those services. ILS could establish an orientation/training program for members and regional staff on the services it can provide and how to use them. Such training could be offered before each new session or when a new National Assembly convenes after elections. Other measures to inform members could include greater use of brochures, electronic communications and announcements, and one-on-one briefings for members.
- The ILS should consider expanding its offerings of seminars, symposia, and workshops to clients, both during and between sessions. From the 2013 survey results, it seems that these events were very well received and were an effective means of promoting the ILS to clients. Almost three-quarters of 2013 survey respondents had participated in such events and almost all considered them worthwhile. Such events could also be used as tools for promoting other ILS services.
- The ILS record in responding to National Assembly requests has improved significantly. The ILS should build on this success by committing to the goal of responding to 100 percent of all requests. This seems a legitimate expectation from clients. It should not come at the expense of high standards of quality, relevance, or timeliness of ILS work.
- ILS managers and researchers should dedicate themselves to improving the quality of ILS work for the National Assembly and the perceptions of their clients in this regard. Since In-depth-research and quick information received the lowest marks from respondents to the survey, ILS staff may need further training in research methods, as well as improved access to better information resources. In order to ensure consistent quality of ILS work, research management and quality control systems may need to be reexamined and improved. A rigorous system of review for all responses to National Assembly member and staff requests should be implemented.

- Alongside efforts to improve the quality of ILS research and information, the ILS should promote member confidence that the ILS is the best place to turn with more sophisticated requests for information, research, and analysis, beyond the provision of specific documents that form the bulk of requests at present. The ILS should strive to expand research and analytical services to members and increase their awareness of them.
- 2012 and 2013 Survey results suggest that National Assembly members and staff do not have a consistent understanding of the roles of the ILS and CILRES. The work of CILRES seems to overlap with that of the ILS, at least in the minds of clients. Ideally, the National Assembly should consolidate the research and information capabilities available to serve the National Assembly. At the least, the roles of different information and research providers should be clarified and rationalized so that clients can better understand where to turn with their requests.
- It would be helpful for ILS to continue to conduct client satisfaction surveys in the future. It would be good to keep the format and questions similar from year to year to allow for better comparisons over a longer period of time.
- Even before the next full survey, it would be useful for ILS to gather more information on why fewer members and staff made requests of the ILS in the most recent period to make sure that it is not the result of client dissatisfaction with the work previously provided by the ILS. The best way to get a definitive picture would be to interview or poll members and staff who made requests during the 3rd session but not the 4th session of the 13th National Assembly.

## ANNEX B

# INDICATORS AND TARGETS

<b>USAID/Vietnam Assistance Objective:</b> A stronger, more effective Institute for Legislative Studies providing National Assembly members and staff with better quality, more relevant, and timely information, research, and analytical services.			
Performance Indicator	Data Source, Collection Method, Timing, and Disaggregation	Baseline and Targets	Updates through March 2013
<b>1.</b> Improved quality, relevance, and timeliness of ILS products/services	<p><i>Source:</i> Purposive survey of principal ILS product/service users: NASC members, committee chairs, senior committee members, and key technical staff</p> <p><i>Method:</i> Annual surveys</p> <p><i>Timing:</i> January 2012 and January 2013</p> <p><i>Disaggregation:</i> Type of product/ service</p>	<p>Baseline established in January 2012</p> <p><i>Target:</i> 20% improvement in January 2013</p>	<p>In <b>March 2012</b>, Vietnam LRP conducted the first ILS client survey to measure the perceptions of members of the National Assembly regarding ILS products and services. Of the 409 survey questionnaires sent to members and technical staff who were recorded as having requested ILS services during the second session of the 13th National Assembly (October-November 2012), 175 responded to the survey. Vietnam LRP presented the survey results and recommendations to ILS leaders.</p> <p>In <b>February 2013</b>, Vietnam LRP conducted a second ILS client survey to measure the increase in client satisfaction with ILS products and services. The survey consisted of 329 questionnaires sent to 288 members and 41 technical staff who had requested ILS assistance during the 4th session of the 13th National Assembly. Vietnam LRP finalized the written report and recommendations in March 2013.</p>
<b>2.</b> Number of executive oversight activities undertaken by legislature receiving U.S. government assistance	<p><i>Source:</i> ILS and LRP records</p> <p><i>Method:</i> Review of ISL and LRP records</p> <p><i>Timing:</i> Quarterly</p>	<p>Baseline established in January 2013, using 2012 data</p> <p><i>Targets:</i> Quarter 1: 0</p>	<p><b>Quarter 2 (January-March 2012):</b> Six oversight activities were recorded in Quarters 1 and 2. Vietnam LRP assisted the ILS in procuring equipment and developing a system to improve monitoring and tracking of requests from members and committees, including those related to oversight activities.</p> <p><b>Quarter 3 (April-June 2012):</b> Twelve oversight activities were</p>

Performance Indicator	Data Source, Collection Method, Timing, and Disaggregation	Baseline and Targets	Updates through March 2013
	<p><i>Disaggregation:</i> Type of request/response</p>	<p>Quarter 2: 9            Quarter 3: 9            Quarter 4: 9            Quarter 5: 9            Quarter 6: 1</p>	<p>recorded. Requests from members of the National Assembly and regional delegation of members were placed at the ILS table during the 3rd session of the 13th National Assembly. There was still no tracking system for members' requests in place at the ILS.</p> <p><b>Quarter 4 (July-September 2012):</b> ILS recorded only one oversight activity. Vietnam LRP was not able to convince the ILS to install Trak-it software to monitor the handling of member requests, due to the cost of the annual subscription fee, but is exploring the possibility of a scaled-down pilot project to test the software.</p> <p><b>Quarter 5 (October-December 2012):</b> This quarter showed a significant increase in oversight activities. The ILS recorded 20 oversight activities, receiving requests directly from members and provincial delegation of deputies and provided timely responses.</p> <p><b>Quarter 6 (January-March 2013):</b> Only three oversight activities were recorded. Members' requests came via e-mail and telephone.</p>
<p><b>3a.</b> Number of training days organized for national legislators and national legislative staff</p>	<p><i>Source:</i> ILS and LRP records</p> <p><i>Method:</i> Review of ISL and LRP records</p> <p><i>Timing:</i> Quarterly</p> <p><i>Disaggregation:</i> Member/National Assembly staff/ILS staff; gender</p>	<p>Baseline established in January 2013, using 2012 data</p> <p><i>Targets:</i>            Quarter 1: 0.5            Quarter 2: 8.5            Quarter 3: 6.5            Quarter 4: 29            Quarter 5: 9            Quarter 6: 5</p>	<p><b>Quarter 1 (October-December 2011):</b> CRS seminar in December — 0.5 training days.</p> <p><b>Quarter 2 (January-March 2012):</b> Half-day seminars by Francis Miko and two training courses conducted by Robinson-Finsten — 8.5 training days.</p> <p><b>Quarter 3 (April-June 2012):</b> Six training days (2.5 days for the English Language Training Program and 3.5 days for other training activities, primarily Davenport I seminars). This quarter's number is slightly less than the target, because the English training program began later than scheduled.</p>

Performance Indicator	Data Source, Collection Method, Timing, and Disaggregation	Baseline and Targets	Updates through March 2013
			<p><b>Quarter 4 (July-September 2012):</b> Total of 27 training days (14.5 days of the English Language Training Program and 12.5 days of other educational and training events, including Davenport II, Miko II, and Epstein). This quarter's number of is slightly less than the target, because the study tour to Poland was postponed (ILS was unable to process visas in time).</p> <p><b>Quarter 5 (October-December 2012):</b> Total of 13.5 training days (5 days of the study tour to Poland, 5.5 days of the symposia and workshops, and 3 days of English training). This quarter's number is higher than the target (Vietnam LRP successfully processed the study tour to Poland).</p> <p><b>Quarter 6 (January-March 2013):</b> The symposia on Decentralization and Local Governance in Nam Dinh and Can Tho represented 3.5 days. This quarter's number is slightly less than the target, because Vietnam LRP doubled its Quarter 5 efforts to balance with Quarter 6 (to avoid the long holiday break for Lunar New Year). Project will close on March 30, so the project team concentrated on closeout, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting.</p>
<p><b>3b.</b> Number of national legislators and national legislative staff attending U.S. government-supported training or educational events</p>	<p><i>Source:</i> ILS and LRP records</p> <p><i>Method:</i> Review of ILS and LRP records</p> <p><i>Timing:</i> Quarterly</p> <p><i>Disaggregation:</i> Member/National Assembly staff/ILS staff; gender</p>	<p>Baseline established in January 2013, using 2012 data</p> <p><i>Targets:</i> Quarter 1: 30 Quarter 2: 30 Quarter 3: 60 Quarter 4: 60 Quarter 5: 150</p>	<p><b>Quarter 1 (October-December 2011):</b> Forty-six people (27 women and 19 men) attended Vietnam LRP training events: 40 ILS staff and 6 National Assembly staff.</p> <p><b>Quarter 2 (January-March 2012):</b> A total of 195 National Assembly members and staff attended Vietnam LRP training and education events (102 women and 93 men): 151 ILS staff; 28 National Assembly staff and 16 National Assembly members.</p> <p><b>Quarter 3 (April-June 2012):</b></p>

Performance Indicator	Data Source, Collection Method, Timing, and Disaggregation	Baseline and Targets	Updates through March 2013
		Quarter 6: 50 25% women	<p>A total of 158 members and staff from the National Assembly and the ILS attended Vietnam LRP training and educational events (98 women and 61 men): 147 ILS staff, 3 National Assembly staff, and 8 National Assembly members</p> <p><b>Quarter 4 (July-September 2012):</b> A total of 340 National Assembly members and legislative staff attended Vietnam LRP training and education events (169 women and 171 men): 266 ILS staff, 54 National Assembly staff, and 20 National Assembly members</p> <p><b>Quarter 5 (October-December 2012):</b> A total of 197 National Assembly members and legislative staff attended Vietnam LRP training and education events and symposia (66 women and 131 men): 73 ILS staff, 77 National Assembly and regional delegations staff, and 47 National Assembly members.</p> <p><b>Quarter 6 (January-March 2013):</b> A total of 71 National Assembly members and legislative staff attended Vietnam LRP symposia (12 women and 59 men): 18 ILS staff, 28 National Assembly; and regional delegations staff, and 25 National Assembly members</p>

## ANNEX C

# MEMBER REQUESTS RELATED TO EXECUTIVE OVERSIGHT

Proper monitoring of member requests for ILS support related to executive oversight requires an effective request tracking system, which ILS did not yet have when this information was compiled. This listing was prepared based on discussions with ILS staff.

Source of Request	Specific Request	Date of Submission	Status	Source of Information and Verification
<b>Quarters 1 and 2: October 2011 – March 2012</b>				
1. Deputies Delegation of Nam Dinh Province	Information on how the Ministry of Justice can ensure a uniform legal system in Vietnam	Oct. 31, 2011	Completed	Nguyen Xuan Son, ILS manager of IT (Scientific Information Center); verbal check with Truong Quoc Hung (vice director of General Department and ILS president's assistant) by Tran Ngoc Mai (LRP)
2. External Relations Committee	Information on how water resources are managed in southern Vietnam	Nov. 2, 2011	Completed	Nguyen Xuan Son, ILS manager of IT; check with Mr. Hung by Ms. Mai (LRP)
3. Committee on Legislation	Information on how risks leading to corruption in land management can be identified and mitigated	Nov. 20, 2011	Completed	Nguyen Xuan Son, ILS manager of IT
4. Committee on Legislation	Information on how the organization and operation of the Council for Coordination of Law Dissemination and Education can be improved	Nov. 20, 2011	Completed	Check with Mr. Hung by Ms. Mai (LRP)
5. Deputies Delegation in Ha Nam	Information on how land-related policies and laws can be improved (for public hearing)	Nov. 24, 2011	Completed	Nguyen Xuan Son, ILS manager of IT

Source of Request	Specific Request	Date of Submission	Status	Source of Information and Verification
6. Deputies Delegation in Ha Nam	Information on how money laundering in Vietnam can be prevented	Nov. 24, 2011	Completed	Check with Mr. Hung by Ms. Mai (LRP)
<b>Quarter 2: April – June 2012</b>				
7. Deputies Delegation of Da Nang Province	Information on how to improve the settlement of complaints and denunciation	June 2012	Completed	Tran Dieu Huong, Division on Information on Administrative and State Law, Scientific Information Center, ILS (July 2, 2012)
8. Deputies Delegation of Thai Nguyen Province	Information on how commercial banks and credit organizations were managed and operated between 2010 and 2011	May 4, 2012	Completed	Nguyen Thuy Ha, vice director of Scientific Information Center, ILS (July 2, 2012)
9. Deputies Delegation of Hung Yen Province	Information on how the planning and management of transport infrastructure, airport, seaport, railways, industrial parks, coastal economic zone, universities, and vocational training can be improved	May 29, 2012	Completed	Tran Dieu Huong, Division on Information on Administrative and State Law, Scientific Information Center, ILS (July 2, 2012)
10. Deputies Delegation of Phu Tho Province	Information on how public policy, public administration, and management can be improved  Information on how policies applied to agriculture, farmers, and rural areas of Vietnam are conducted, and experiences from other Asian countries	June 5, 2012	Completed	Tran Dieu Huong, Division on Information on Administrative and State Law, Scientific Information Center, ILS (July 2, 2012)
11. Deputies Delegation of Phu Tho Province	Information on status of farmers and rural areas in Vietnam	May 31, 2012	Completed	Tran Dieu Huong, Division on Information on Administrative and State Law, Scientific Information Center, ILS (July 2, 2012)
12. Deputies Delegation of Phu Yen Province	Information on how public consultation is conducted and can be improved to support the work of People's Council  Information on how the National Assembly conducts oversight activities and how to improve these activities	June 15, 2012	Completed	Division on Resources and Information Technology, Scientific Information Center, ILS (July 6, 2102)

Source of Request	Specific Request	Date of Submission	Status	Source of Information and Verification
13. Deputies Delegation of Bac Ninh Province	Information on how public consultation is conducted and can be improved to support the work of People's Council  Information on trade-related legislation	June 18, 2012	Completed	Division on Resources and Information Technology, Scientific Information Center, ILS (July 6, 2102)
14. Pham Tri Thuc	Information on the planning of power investment projects and the power market in Vietnam and other matters to be considered in development of a revised power law  Information on how the draft Law on Water Resources is commented	June 18, 2012	Completed	Division on Resources and IT, Scientific Information Center, ILS (July 6, 2102)
15. Phung Khac Dang	Information on the status of publication activities and recommendations on how to improve these activities  Information on how the National Assembly conducts oversight activities and how to improve these activities	June 18, 2012	Completed	Division on Resources and IT, Scientific Information Center, ILS (July 6, 2102)
16. Deputies Delegation of Bac Kan Province	Information on how public consultation is conducted and can be improved to support the work of People's Council  Information on trade-related legislation  Information on ILO Convention No.29 regarding forced labor	June 19, 2012	Completed	Division on Resources and IT, Scientific Information Center, ILS (July 6, 2102)
17. Ha Thi Lan	Information on how the National Assembly conducts oversight and how to improve these activities  Information on the status of lawyer management and judicial practice in Vietnam	June 19, 2012	Completed	Division on Resources and IT, Scientific Information Center, ILS (July 6, 2102)

Source of Request	Specific Request	Date of Submission	Status	Source of Information and Verification
18. Nguyen Thanh Thuy	<p>Information on the model of national reserves and how to operate this model effectively</p> <p>Information on the planning of a power investment project and power market in Vietnam and other matters to be considered in development of a revised power law</p> <p>Information on how the National Assembly conducts oversight activities and how to improve these activities</p>	June 20, 2012	Completed	Division on Resources and IT, Scientific Information Center, ILS (July 6, 2102)
<b>Quarter 3: July – September 2012</b>				
19. Deputies Delegation of Ninh Binh Province	Information on how many targets (or indicators) in the Report on Socioeconomic Development prepared for the 3rd session of National Assembly 11 will be achieved. (It was reported that 32 targets were set out and 15 were achieved; which 7 targets were not achieved?)	July 6, 2012	Completed	Nguyen Thuy Ha, vice director, Scientific Information Center, ILS (October 25, 2012)
<b>Quarter 4: October – December 2012</b>				
20. Deputies Delegation of Binh Duong Province	<p>Information on rights to transfer land and Vietnam legal system's weaknesses in solving issues conflicts</p> <p>Information on state authority to revoke, assign, and lease land</p> <p>Information on land ownership and how to strengthen the current land law</p>	Oct. 20, 2012	Completed by Oct. 23, 2012)	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)
21. Deputies Delegation of Thai Nguyen Province	Audit report on Petrolimex Corporation	Nov. 13, 2012	Completed by Nov. 16, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)

Source of Request	Specific Request	Date of Submission	Status	Source of Information and Verification
22. Deputies Delegation of Quang Ninh Province	Information on environmental status of the economic zones and craft villages  Report on oversight of economic zones, industrial parks, and border-gate economic zones	Nov. 21, 2012	Completed by Nov. 21, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)
23. Deputies Delegation of Thai Nguyen Province	Information on land allocation and land leasing projects  Information on total land allocated or leased areas  Information on the number of land projects that were delayed, revoked, or allocated free of charge	Nov. 7, 2012	Completed by Nov. 9, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)
24. Deputies Delegation of Quang Ninh Province	Information on right to transfer land and state authority to revoke, allocate, and lease land in Vietnam	Oct. 29, 2012	Completed by Oct. 29, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)
25. Deputies Delegation of Ben Tre Province	Information on right to transfer land and state authority to revoke, allocate, and lease land in Vietnam	Oct. 29, 2012	Completed by Oct. 29, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)
26. Deputies Delegation of Quang Nam Province	Information on right to transfer land and state management over land in Vietnam	Nov. 19, 2012	Completed by Nov. 19, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)
27. Deputies Delegation of Ba Ria Vung Tau Province	Information on the transfer of land use rights	Nov. 19, 2012	Completed by Nov. 19, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)
28. Deputies Delegation of Quang Binh Province	Information on the status of rural areas and agriculture sector derived from the 2011 national survey on rural areas, agriculture, and fisheries in Vietnam	Nov. 16, 2012	Completed by Nov. 16, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)
29. Deputies Delegation of Phu Tho Province	Information on right to transfer land and state authority to revoke, allocate, and lease land in Vietnam	Nov. 16, 2012	Completed by Nov. 16, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)

Source of Request	Specific Request	Date of Submission	Status	Source of Information and Verification
30. Deputies Delegation of Danang Province	Information on right to transfer land and state authority to revoke, allocate, and lease land in Vietnam  Information on financial oversight and oversight models	Nov. 16, 2012	Completed by Nov. 16, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)
31. Deputies Delegation of Thanh Hoa Province	Information on right to transfer land and state authority to revoke, allocate, and lease land in Vietnam	Nov. 15, 2012	Completed by Nov. 15, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)
32. Deputies Delegation of Son La Province	Information on tax investigation  Information on national report on solid waste  Information on the status of rural areas and agriculture sector derived from the 2011 national survey on rural areas, agriculture, and fisheries in Vietnam	Nov. 13, 2012	Completed by Nov. 13, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)
33. Deputies Delegation of Quang Ngai Province	Information on land use rights transfer and state management of land in Vietnam  Information on the status of rural areas and agriculture sector derived from the 2011 national survey on rural areas, agriculture, and fisheries in Vietnam  Information on financial oversight and international models on financial oversight	Nov. 10, 2012	Completed by Nov. 10, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)
34. Deputies Delegation of Ninh Binh Province	Information on people's ownership of land	Nov. 22, 2012	Completed by Nov. 22, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)
35. Deputies Delegation of Hai Phong City	Information on state management of land	Nov. 22, 2012	Completed by Nov. 22, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)

Source of Request	Specific Request	Date of Submission	Status	Source of Information and Verification
36. Deputies Delegation of Ho Chi Minh City	Information on the right to transfer land and state authority to revoke, allocate, and lease land in Vietnam  Information on the status of rural areas and agriculture sector derived from the 2011 national survey on rural areas, agriculture, and fisheries in Vietnam  Information on financial oversight and international models on financial oversight	Nov. 8, 2012	Completed by Nov. 9, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)
37. Deputies Delegation of Ca Mau Province	Information on state management of land	Oct. 30, 2012	Completed by Oct. 30, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)
38. Deputies Delegation of Hau Giang Province	Information on right to transfer land and state authority to revoke, allocate, and lease land in Vietnam	Oct. 29, 2012	Completed by Oct. 29, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)
39. Deputies Delegation of Ha Noi City	Information on state management of land	Oct. 26, 2012	Completed by Oct. 26, 2012	ILS database, provided by Nguyen Xuan Son, chief of ILS IT division (January 21, 2013)
<b>Quarter 5: January March 2013</b>				
40. Deputies Delegation of Gia Lai Province	Information on legislation related to health care to ethnic minorities	Feb. 2013	Completed	Nguyen Thuy Ha, deputy director of Scientific Information Center, ILS (March 11, 2013)
41. Deputies Delegation of Khanh Hoa Province	Information on five key national programs	Jan. 2013	Completed	Ly Thanh Duc, staff of ILS IT division (March 11, 2013)
42. Deputies Delegation of Thai Nguyen Province	Information on land law	March 2013	Completed	Tran Dieu Huong, staff of Scientific Information Center, ILS (March 11, 2013)

## ANNEX D

# TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Exhibit D-1. Participants and Training/Education Days, by Type of Activity

Event	Presenter	Dates	Participants	Training/ Education Days
<b>Institutional Strengthening</b>				
1. CRS Seminar	Clay Wellborn	December 8, 2012	46	0.5
2. Improving Legislative Information and Research	Francis Miko	February 15, 2012	77	0.5
3. Research Administration, Management and Budgeting	Francis Miko	February 18, 2012	57	0.5
4. Legislative Process, Oversight and Working with Legislators	Francis Miko	February 21, 2012	13	0.5
5. Policy Analysis and Legislative Research course	Bill Robinson and Hugh Finsten	March 5-9, 2012	39	5.0
6. ILS Strategic Planning Conference	Bill Robinson and Hugh Finsten	March 11-12, 2012	19	2.0
7. Communication Policy and Strategy	Nancy Davenport	April 17, 2012	39	0.5
8. Building a Legislative Library	Nancy Davenport	April 27, 2012	48	0.5
9. Critical Path of Member Requests	Nancy Davenport	April 25, 2012	35	0.5
10. Report Writing Skills	Francis Miko	August 6-7, 2012	24	1.5
11. Quality and Relevance of ILS Reports	Francis Miko	August 15, 2012	32	0.5
12. Policy Research Skills	Vu Dam and Nguyen Tuyen	September 20-21, 2012	27	2.0
13. Poland Study Tour		Nov. 25-Dec. 1, 2012	7	5.0
<i>Subtotal, Institutional Strengthening:</i>			<b>463</b>	<b>19.5</b>
<b>Skills Training</b>				
1. Handling Member Requests	Nancy Davenport	April 20, 2012	24	0.5

Event	Presenter	Dates	Participants	Training/ Education Days
2. Effective Presentations	Dang Ngoc Su	May 16-17, 2012	29	2.0
3. Work Planning	Robert Mellor	July 5-6, 2012	34	2.0
4. Navigating the Internet for legislative Information	Nancy Davenport	July 12, 2012	30	0.5
5. Effective Communication with Members	Nancy Davenport	July 18, 2012	24	0.5
6. Meeting Facilitation	Phan Quoc Viet	September 13-14, 2012	40	1.5
7. English Language Training	N/A	June 18-October 18, 2012	19	20.0
<i>Subtotal, Skills Training</i>			200	27.0
<b>Issue Symposia</b>				
1. The Role of Members in Budget Oversight (Vinh Phuc)	Susan Epstein	August 23-24, 2012	70	1.5
2. Legislative Oversight (Ninh Binh)	Morton Rosenberg	October 11-12, 2012	97	1.0
3. Member Bills (Ho Chi Minh City)	Sandra Strokoff and Muftiah McCartin	December 13-14, 2012	70	1.5
4. Member Bills (Bac Ninh City)	Sandra Strokoff and Muftiah McCartin	December 17-17, 2012	65	1.5
5. Decentralization and Local Governance (Nam Dinh)	Franz Barrios	January 7-8, 2013	83	1.5
6. Decentralization and Local Governance (Can Tho City)	Franz Barrios	January 11-12, 2013	85	2.0
<i>Subtotal, Issue Symposia</i>			470	9.0
<b>Issue Workshops</b>				
1. Budget Analysis Skills	Susan Epstein	August 20-21, 2012	31	2.0
2. How to Conduct a Committee Hearing	Morton Rosenberg	October 8-9, 2012	40	1.5
<i>Subtotal, Issue Workshops</i>			71	3.5
<b>Grand Total, All Activities</b>			<b>1,204</b>	<b>59.0</b>

**Exhibit D-2. Participants in Project-Sponsored Activities, by Gender and Activity Rating**

Date	Activity	Days	Participants			Gender		Total Participants	Evaluation Results	
			ILS	Nat. Assem. Staff	Nat. Assem. Members	M	F		Satisfaction with Activity	Usefulness to My Work
<b>Quarter 1: October – December 2011</b>										
Dec. 8	CRS Seminar	0.5	40	6	0	19	27	46	4.3	4.2
<i>Subtotals — Quarter 1</i>		0.5	40	6	0	19	27	46		
<b>Quarter 2: January – March 2012</b>										
Feb. 15	Improving information and research	0.5	49	14	8	32	39	71	N/A	N/A
Feb. 18	Research administration, management, budgeting	0.5	48	0	6	25	29	54	3.9	4.1
Feb.21	Legislative process, oversight, and working with legislators	0.5	11	1	0	6	6	12	4.0	4.3
Mar. 5, 9	ILS policy and legislative research course	5	25	13	1	17	22	39	4.3	4.2
Mar. 11-12	ILS strategic planning	2	18	0	1	13	6	19	3.7	4.0
<i>Subtotals — Quarter 2</i>		8.5	151	28	16	93	102	195		
<b>Quarter 3: April – June 2012</b>										
Apr. 17	Communication policy and strategy	0.5	29	3	6	18	21	38	4.0	4.0
Apr. 20	Handling member requests	0.5	24	0	0	8	16	24	4.2	4.4
Apr. 27	Building a legislative library	0.5	38	0	1	16	23	39	4.2	4.4
May 16-17	Effective presentation skills	2	28	0	1	11	18	29	4.5	4.3
Jun. 18-30	English language training	2.5	28	0	0	8	20	28	N/A	N/A
<i>Subtotals — Quarter 3</i>		6	147	28	8	61	98	158		

Date	Activity	Days	Participants			Gender		Total Participants	Evaluation Results	
			ILS	Nat. Assem. Staff	Nat. Assem. Members	M	F		Satisfaction with Activity	Usefulness to My Work
<b>Quarter 4: July – September 2012</b>										
Jul. 5, 6	Work planning skills	2	33	0	1	15	19	34	4.2	4.4
Jul. 12	Navigating the Internet for information	0.5	29	0	1	16	14	30	4.0	3.7
Jul. 18	Effective communication with National Assembly members	0.5	22	0	0	9	13	22	4.5	4.3
Jul. 27	Critical path of member requests	0.5	32	0	1	17	16	33	4.0	3.8
Aug. 6, 7	Report writing skills	1.5	19	5	0	11	13	24	4.6	4.2
Aug. 15	Quality and relevance of ILS reports	0.5	28	2	1	17	14	31	4.6	3.9
Aug. 20, 21	Budget analysis skills	2	20	7	1	14	14	28	4.5	4.1
Aug. 23, 24	Symposium on members' role in budget oversight	1.5	15	20	14	31	18	49	4.2	3.8
Sep. 13, 14	Meeting facilitation skills	1.5	25	14	1	20	20	40	4.3	4.4
Sep. 20, 21	Policy analysis and legislative research skills	2	18	6	0	14	10	24	4.4	4.4
Jul. 1-Sep. 30	English language training	14.5	25	0	0	7	18	25	N/A	N/A
<i>Subtotals — Quarter 4</i>		<i>27</i>	<i>266</i>	<i>54</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>171</i>	<i>169</i>	<i>340</i>		
<b>Quarter 5: October – December 2012</b>										
Oct. 8, 9	How to conduct a committee hearing	1.5	11	19	7	16	21	37	4.1	4.1
Oct. 11, 12	Symposium on legislative oversight	1	13	36	17	54	12	66	3.9	4.1
Dec. 13, 14	Member bills (HCMCT)	1.5	16	13	10	29	10	39	4.4	3.9

Date	Activity	Days	Participants			Gender		Total Participants	Evaluation Results	
			ILS	Nat. Assem. Staff	Nat. Assem. Members	M	F		Satisfaction with Activity	Usefulness to My Work
Dec. 17, 18	Member bills (BN)	1.5	8	9	12	23	6	29	4.0	4.0
Oct. 1-18	English language training	3	19	0	0	6	13	19	N/A	N/A
Nov. 25-Dec. 1	Poland study tour	5	6	0	1	3	4	7	4.4	4.1
<i>Subtotals — Quarter 5</i>		13.5	73	77	47	131	66	197		
<b>Quarter 6: January – March 2013</b>										
Jan. 7, 8	Decentralization and local governance (Nam Dinh)	1.5	9	9	14	29	3	32	4.3	4.2
Jan. 10, 11	Decentralization and local governance (Can Tho)	2	9	19	11	30	9	39	4.2	4.3
<i>Subtotals — Quarter 6</i>		3.5	18	28	25	59	12	71		
<b>LIFE OF PROJECT TOTALS</b>		<b>59</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>1,007</b>		

## ANNEX E

# CONTRIBUTORS

A unique feature of Vietnam LRP was the level of experience and expertise of its management team and many national and international contributors. The project was designed by Legislative Strengthening Specialist John Johnson and led by Chief of Party Reginald Todd, who have more than 50 years of combined experience working with legislatures and developing legislative strengthening programs in the United States and around the world.

Three of project contributors to the project served as CRS coordinators for the U.S. House of Representatives Task Force on Parliamentary Development in Central and Eastern Europe: Francis Miko, Nancy Davenport, and William Robinson. That program helped set up and strengthen legislative research services and train members of parliament and professional staff in Poland, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine, and Russia from 1990 to 1996.

In Vietnam, Mr. Miko provided technical assistance in helping link the work of the ILS with that of the National Assembly's legislative committees, and led workshops on improving the quality, relevance, and timeliness of ILS information and research. Ms. Davenport provided technical support in developing a legislative library and handling member requests, facilitating workshops on both topics. Mr. Robinson joined Hugh Finsten, former general director of the Canadian Parliament's Information and Research Service, in conducting ILS's strategic planning workshop and teaching the five-day course on policy development and legislative research.

Clay Wellborn, an expert on congressional organization with more than 30 years of CRS experience, gave ILS managers a close look at the structure and operation of the CRS and the parliamentary research services of several other countries, discussing international best practices and different organizational models of interest to the ILS.

In many instances, Vietnam LRP teamed international contributors with national experts. For example, economist and CRS budget specialist Susan Epstein joined Vietnamese economist and former National Assembly member Dang Van Thanh to lead the budget analysis workshop in Hanoi and the national budgeting symposium in Vinh Phuc. Morton Rosenberg, an attorney and former CRS expert in congressional oversight and investigatory prerogatives related to the Executive Branch, was paired with Nguyen Van Me, a former member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and recognized expert on legislative oversight, at the workshop, "How to Conduct Oversight Hearings," in Hanoi. At the symposium on legislative oversight in Ninh Binh, Mr. Rosenberg was paired with Nguyen Minh Thuyet, a former National Assembly member and vice chair of the Committee on Culture, Education, Youth, and Children. Seven distinguished speakers

selected by the ILS and Vietnam LRP delivered prepared remarks at the request of the ILS and Vietnam LRP:

- Nguyen Dinh Quyen, vice chair of the Committee on Justice
- Luong Phan Cu, former vice chair of the Committee on Social Affairs
- Nguyen Quoc Thang, general editor of the *People's Online Newspaper*
- Tran Ngoc Hung, president of the Federation of Civil Engineering Associations and the Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations
- Dang Van Thanh, former vice chair of the Committee on Finance and Budget
- Nguyen Huu Quang, member of the Committee on Finance and Budget
- Duong Thu Huong, former vice chair of Committee on Economics

Two U.S. experts were featured speakers at the two symposia on member bills: Sandra Strokoff, the legislative counsel of the U.S. House of Representatives, and Muftiah McCartin, former staff director of the House Rules Committee. In Ho Chi Minh City, five speakers delivered papers at the request of the ILS and the project:

- Tran Ngoc Duong, senior expert of the Vietnam National Assembly
- Dang Dinh Luyen, vice chair of the Committee on Law
- Nguyen Minh Thuyet, former member and vice chair of the Committee on Culture, Education, Youth, and Children
- Nguyen Van Tien, vice chair of the Committee on Social Affairs
- Truong Dac Linh, associate professor at the Ho Chi Minh City University of Law

At the Bac Ninh symposium on member bills, four speakers presented comments:

- Tran Ngoc Duong, senior expert of the Vietnam National Assembly
- Nguyen Minh Thuyet, former member and vice chair of the Committee on Culture, Education, Youth, and Children
- Nguyen Van Tien, vice chair of the Committee on Social Affairs
- Dang Dinh Luyen, vice chair of the Committee on Law

Franz Barrios Suvelza is an expert in comparative constitutional design in decentralization, autonomies in decentralization autonomies and federalism. He specializes in constitutional distribution of authorities and responsibilities among territorial levels and comparative decentralization. Dr. Barrios was the principal speaker at the Decentralization and Local Governance symposia in Nam Dinh and Can Tho. In Nam Dinh, he was accompanied by 10 national speakers selected by the ILS and Vietnam LRP:

- Le Thanh Van, member of the Committee on Finance and Budget
- Dang Dinh Luyen, vice chair of the Committee on Law
- Tran Ngoc Duong, senior expert of the Vietnam National Assembly
- Nguyen Van Me, former member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

- Thai Vinh Thang, dean of the Faculty of State Administration, Hanoi University of Law
- Nguyen Minh Tan, vice director of Budget Department, Office of the National Assembly
- Nguyen Hai Dung, member of the People's Council, Nam Dinh Province
- Nguyen Dinh Bich, vice chair of the People's Council, Hai Phong City
- Vo Kim Son, professor at Vietnam National Institute of Administration
- Vu Hung, head of Culture and Social Department, People's Council, Da Nang Province

In Can Tho, 11 speakers delivered papers at the request of the ILS and Vietnam:

- Le Thanh Van, member of the Committee on Finance and Budget
- Nguyen Van Thuan, former chair of the Committee on Law
- Tran Ngoc Duong, senior expert of the Vietnam National Assembly
- Dang Van Thanh, former vice chair of the Committee on Finance and Budget
- Nguyen Ngoc Dien, professor, Ho Chi Minh National University
- Thai Vinh Thang, dean of the Faculty of State Administration, Hanoi University of Law
- Pham Tuan Khai, director, Department of Law, Office of the National Assembly
- Dao Nghia Nghiem, member of the People's Council, Kien Giang Province
- Pham Phuong Thao, former member of National Assembly and former chair of the People's Council
- Vo Kim Son, professor, Vietnam National Institute of Administration
- Vu Hung, head of Culture and Social Department, People's Council, Da Nang Province

and home-office professionals. A mix of long-term and short-term professionals provided direct technical assistance, project coordination, and oversight. The long-term expatriate position was the chief of party, who served through the entire life of the project. Long-term local professionals included a deputy chief of party, legislative coordinator, training coordinator, finance and operations officer, and administrative officer. The project also benefited from the assistance of an office assistant and excellent program interns who were completing their university degrees. Short-term international and local experts provided intermittent technical assistance in training, capacity building, and completing technical deliverables. Home-office professionals supported Vietnam LRP with startup, communications, finance and auditing, procurement, closeout, and other activities.

In total, the project will bill about \$1,246,525 in actual costs, versus the \$1,282,982 budgeted for work days ordered. This lower actual cost is due, in part, from a change in personnel. The senior strategic advisor who had been slated to provide technical assistance was no longer available. As a result, the project shifted resources and level of effort from the senior strategic advisor position to the pool of short-term local professionals. This change was successful and well-received by the ILS. Short-term local professionals provided a range of technical assistance, from writing assessments to “twinning” with short-term international experts as co-presenters in training sessions.

#### *Other Direct Costs*

Under the Other Direct Costs line item, the project billed for costs associated with local support, fringe, travel and transportation, allowances, project other direct costs (e.g., communications, shipping, and bank charges), office equipment and furniture, and the strategic activities fund. The strategic activities fund contributed to Vietnam LRP’s objectives through training and symposia, a study tour, IT support, and other technical activities.

Under this line item, the project will bill \$885,563 in actual costs versus the budgeted amount of \$850,196. The actual cost is higher than the budgeted cost. One contributing factor was the procurement of IT equipment for the ILS, a need that the project team identified during its HICD assessment; as a result of recommendations from that assessment, USAID/Vietnam provided the ILS with computers, printers, photocopiers, and other IT equipment.

#### *General and Administrative Costs*

Chemonics applied a general and administrative rate based on the Recovery and Reform through Democratic Governance indefinite quantity contract’s rates for all materials costs. Under General and Administrative line item, \$30,331 in actual costs will be billed, lower than the budgeted amount of \$42,510.