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ASSISTANCE TO LEGISLATIVE BODIES OF AFGHANISTAN

QUARTERLY REPORT

October – December 2015



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ASSISTANCE TO LEGISLATIVE BODIES OF AFGHANISTAN

QUARTERLY REPORT: OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2015

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CONTENTS

- ACRONYMS2
- INTRODUCTION: ABOUT ALBA3
- CHAPTER I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY4
- CHAPTER II: SUMMARY OF PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS.....6
 - OBJECTIVE ONE – STRENGTHENED LEGISLATIVE PROCESSES6
 - OBJECTIVE TWO – IMPROVED OVERSIGHT8
 - OBJECTIVE THREE – INCREASE OUTREACH CAPACITY 13
 - OBJECTIVE FOUR – INCREASED INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARLIAMENT 17
- CHAPTER III: PERFORMANCE MONITORING20
- ATTACHMENTS.....21

ACRONYMS

ALBA	Assistance to Legislative Bodies of Afghanistan
APAP	Afghanistan Parliament Assistance Program
API	Afghanistan Parliamentary Institute
AO	Assistance Objectives
AUAF	American University of Afghanistan
BMP	Branding and Marking Plan
CI	Counterpart International
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contract Officer's Representative
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
CTAP	Civilian Technical Assistance Program
DAI	Development Alternatives Incorporated
DG	Director General
DIPR	Directorate of Information and Public Relations
DSG	Deputy Secretary General
ICLAD	International Consortium for Law and Development
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
IR	Intermediate Results
MEC	Independent Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee
MJ	Meshrano Jirga
MOPA	Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MOWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
MSI	Management Systems International
NDI	National Democratic Institute
PACC	Parliamentary Anti-Corruption Caucus
PC	Provincial Council
PMEP	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
PRD	Public Relations Directorate
SG	Secretary General
STTA	Short Term Technical Assistance
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WJ	Wolesi Jirga

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT ALBA

The Assistance to Legislative Bodies of Afghanistan (ALBA) project is a four-year technical assistance initiative funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), implemented by Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI). Work under the project supports the development of the Afghan Parliament to enable it to operate as an independent and effective legislative, representative and oversight body.

USAID's overarching Assistance Objective (AO) 1 for Democracy and Governance in Afghanistan is "Improved performance and accountability of governance." Five intermediate results (IRs) comprise this AO. ALBA supports the third IR, "Strengthened governance and service delivery at national and sub-national levels." Specifically, ALBA supports the following sub-IR: "Institutional capacity and oversight capacity of elected bodies at all levels strengthened."

ALBA will assist in the continued development of the Afghanistan Parliament as a strong, effective, and independent parliamentary institution. The four key areas of the program are: Legislative Support; Oversight; Outreach; and Institutional Development of the Parliament with a major focus on the commissions as a vehicle for many of ALBA's activities.

CHAPTER I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALBA's 11th Quarter (Year 3, Quarter 3) of October--December 2015 covers the majority of the Fall 2015 legislative session of the Afghan Parliament. ALBA supported both Houses in their legislative agendas and saw progress under all four of the project's objectives.

Key legislation deliberated and passed or rejected during this quarter includes:

- The Wolesi Jirga rejected the 1395 (2016) proposed National Annual Budget near the end of the reporting period. (After being studied in WJ commissions, it was passed in mid-January. According to the Constitution, the Lower House must approve the annual budget before the session adjourns for recess.)
- Proposed amendments to the Structure, Duties and Powers of the IEC and IECC Law were rejected by both Houses.
- Amendments to the Electoral Law were rejected by the Wolesi Jirga.
- Amendments to the Acting Ministers Law (extending terms of duty) were rejected.
- Revised procedures to elect Chairs of Wolesi Jirga commissions were approved.
- The number of standing commissions of the WJ was approved to decrease from 18 to 15 commissions.
- Proposed amendments to the Wolesi Jirga Rules of Procedures were approved.
- Proposed amendments to the Income Tax Law were approved.
- Proposed amendments to the Transportation Tariffs Law were approved, which increase taxes from 2% to 4%.
- The Draft Law on Regulating Telecommunications Service Charges was approved.
- The Law on Regulating Salary of Government Officials is pending in a joint commission. The Law on Regulating Salary of High-Ranking Government Officials was passed.

A date for **Parliamentary elections** had not been determined by the end of the reporting period. However, the IEC announced an election date of October 15, 2016, in mid-January. As scheduled Parliamentary elections were not held in 2015, discussion occasionally emerges on the legality of this sitting Parliament -- including among the members themselves.

Under **Objective One – Strengthened Legislative Processes**, ALBA advised and briefed commissions and plenaries on several key pieces of legislation, including the **Law on Acting Ministers**, the **Structure, Duties and Powers of the IEC and IECC Law**, the **Income Tax Law**, the **Transportation Tariffs Law**, and the **Law on Regulating Telecommunications Service Charges**. During the Fall Session which this report largely covers, Parliament

asserted greater independence and reflected a sharper separation of powers than in previous Sessions -- particularly with rejections of executive-proposed amendments to the **Electoral Law** and Structure, Duties and Powers of the IEC and IECC Law. Decisions on the National Budget and taxes also took precedence during this quarter, with passage of the Income Tax Law, the Transportation Tariffs Law, and the Law on Regulating Telecommunications Service Charges, all of which can assist in greater internal revenue. The eventual approval of the 1395 Budget shortly after the reporting period is also a boon to the national economy.

Under **Objective Two – Improved Oversight**, commissions from both Houses, with assistance from ALBA, continued their oversight activities around the country. The Wolesi Jirga convened a public hearing on land rights issues in **Bamyan province**. The Meshrano Jirga oversaw detention centers, prosecution offices and courts in **Herat province**; universities and the education sector in **Balkh province**; and a special MJ delegation traveled to **Kandahar province** to investigate the attack on Kandahar airport. The ALBA Budget and Oversight team delivered many important presentations and trainings this quarter, including an analytical report of the current **Mid-Year Budget Review** and in-depth presentations to several commissions from both Houses on the **1393 Qatia** (2014 Annual Expenditures Report). After an ALBA briefing on the **2016 proposed budget**, the Meshrano Jirga called and held a productive Extraordinary Session to question the Minister of Finance. A delegation from the ALBA-sponsored Parliamentary Anti-Corruption Caucus traveled to the US for the International Visitor Leadership Program, and the Caucus is making plans for future **Anti-Corruption Committees** in **Parwan, Panjshir and Kabul provinces**.

Under **Objective Three – Increased Outreach**, ALBA supported a number of unique public forums during this quarter that are anticipated to encourage progress on several fronts. The first-ever **Afghanistan National Youth Conference** was held with over 200 attendees including Ministers and the Office of the President. The conference ended with a commitment of specific measures from President Ghani to garner greater youth participation in the political process. An **International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women** event was held which celebrated global activism and spurred better integration of strategies to improve women's standing in Afghan society. Important public events were also held to solidify the **Bilateral Security Agreement** and with the **Civil Society Joint Working Group**. Finally, ALBA's work on the revised **Parliamentary websites** was recognized and applauded in a Meshrano Jirga plenary with a technical handover scheduled in January.

Under **Objective Four – Increased Institutional Development**, during the quarter the Afghanistan Parliamentary Institute (API) continued a full course schedule with a variety of courses ranging from **International Organizations** to the **Legal System of Afghanistan**. The API also had new electives giving greater focus to business management skills such as Monitoring & Evaluation and Audits, Budgeting Systems, and Records Management. A study tour to India featured prominently during the reporting period. A nine member delegation from both Houses and the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, accompanied by the ALBA DCOP and Senior Advisor to API to the **Indian Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training**.

CHAPTER II: SUMMARY OF PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS

OBJECTIVE ONE – STRENGTHENED LEGISLATIVE PROCESSES

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	REPORTING PERIOD	USAID INDICATOR	YEAR 3 TO DATE	TARGET YEAR 3
1.1 Number of draft laws subject to substantive amendments and final vote in legislatures receiving USG assistance	Quarterly	Yes	1	3

Overview of Indicator 1

After concentrated activity of both the Afghan National Assembly and the ALBA Legislative team in Year 2, substantive or policy-based legislative actions (1.1) slowed somewhat, owing to increased scrutiny by Parliament and a more assertive stance taken by the National Assembly when interacting with the Executive. The project remains significant in presenting analysis and research which affects the performance of commissions and votes in plenaries of both the Meshrano Jirga and Wolesi Jirga. ALBA's support, as well, results in final votes of a substantial number of draft laws, international treaties and conventions, and legislative amendments of a technical nature. Overall, indicator 1.1 looks to be strongly on track.

Task 1.1 - Institutionalize Legislative Drafting and Analysis

ALBA provided a variety of support to both the Wolesi Jirga and Meshrano Jirga to facilitate the analysis, amendment, and eventual passage of legislation. Examples of ALBA engagement in this process include:

Discussion on the Structure, Duties and Powers of IEC and IECC Law

The Presidential decree on IEC & IECC Structure, Duties and Powers Law, that was issued during the recess of the National Assembly and published in the Official Gazette No: (1184) was debated in the WJ plenary and rejected. During the reporting period, the Legislative Affairs Commission of the Meshrano Jirga tabled the Law and requested ALBA's Legislative team to prepare an analysis of the Presidential decree and:

- brief members on the content of the Law
- explain why the decree was rejected by the WJ plenary
- detail whether the decree is in compliance with the Constitution

Whistle Blower Protection Bill

After completing a general revision of the Whistle Blower Protection Bill, the ALBA Legislative team delivered presentations on the bill to members of the Parliamentary Anti-Corruption Caucus (PACC). It is anticipated PACC members will introduce this to the WJ as a Member's bill.

International Agreements

During the reporting period ALBA gave briefings and presentations on the following international agreements, all of which were approved:

1. Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Food Security Statute
2. OIC Convention on the Fight against International Terrorism
3. South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Agreement on Rapid Response to Natural Disasters
4. Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports
5. Extradition of Sentenced Persons Agreement between Afghanistan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)
6. Security Cooperation Agreement between Afghanistan and UAE
7. Agreement between the Ministries of Defense of Afghanistan and China
8. Strategic Partnership Agreement between Afghanistan and UAE

Discussion on TAPI Pipeline Project

Based on the WJ International Affairs Commission request, ALBA's Legislative Team provided a briefing and technical information on the TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) pipeline project including:

- background, international talks and supplementary agreements of TAPI
- pipeline specifications
- political and socio-economic benefits for Afghanistan

Bilateral Security Agreement

Based on the advice of ALBA's Legislative team, the International Affairs Commission of MJ held a hearing on the Bilateral Security Agreement with the Ministry of Defense's General Hamayoon Fawzi and representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Security Council. ALBA advisors highlighted Article 25 which proposes forming a Joint Commission for the implementation of BSA and remarked this has not yet been done. With ALBA's support, the commission drew up a thorough line of questioning for security sector officials to answer at the hearing.

The BSA public hearing is detailed under Objective 3 in this report.

Task 1.2 - Develop Effective Communications Processes with the Executive

Training to enhance engagement with the National Assembly continued with Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs (MoPA) staff, with the following courses held at the ALBA-supported Afghanistan Parliamentary Institute (API):

- Basic Management Skills
- Human Resources Management
- Strategic Planning

Task 1.3 - Strengthen Research Methods for Oversight and Legislation

Conduct Legislative Training for Staff

Please see Objective Four for a summary of the quarterly trainings held at the ALBA-supported Afghanistan Parliamentary Institute.

Developing Policy Research Guides

Issue III of the Budget and Oversight Bulletin and Legislative Bulletin (English, Dari and Pashto), produced by ALBA, were printed and distributed to Parliamentary commissions, the Parliament Library and Archive, universities, CSOs, and other stakeholders.

OBJECTIVE TWO – IMPROVED OVERSIGHT

Overview of Indicator 2

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	REPORTING PERIOD	USAID INDICATOR	YEAR 3 TO DATE	TARGET YEAR 3
2.1 Number of Executive oversight actions taken by legislature receiving USG assistance	Quarterly	Yes	47	50
2.2 Number of amendments/ changes made to the draft budget by the Parliament as a result of the assistance of USAID	Quarterly	No	1	3
2.3 Number of mechanisms for external oversight of public resource use supported by USG assistance	Annual	No	29	25

Commissions from both Houses continue to embrace oversight, and in addition to ministerial oversight in the capital, a substantial number of traveling delegations are supported every quarter. To date in Year 3, commissions have expanded their reach to issues as diverse as women's prisons and land rights, as well as expanding geographically to more 'forgotten' provinces. A number of budget trainings and presentations have been

conducted with CSOs separately and jointly with Parliamentarians. Additionally, with the project's support, the Parliamentary Anti-Corruption Caucus (PACC) has begun inducting PACC Committees within Provincial Councils around the country, and regularly has a representative sitting on the National Procurement Committee.

Task 2.1 – Increase General Oversight through Commissions

ALBA supported several oversight trips investigating a variety of issues with commissions from both Houses during the reporting quarter.

Wolesi Jirga Complaints Commission Oversight Trip to Bamyan province

This ALBA-sponsored trip largely addressed issues of land confiscation in Bamyan province. The delegation conducted a public hearing event which was attended by over 200 residents from around the province who shared their concerns and written complaints with the delegation. The Chair of the delegation shared their concerns with the governor and provincial authorities who committed to looking into the matter and following up with the commission.



Meshrano Jirga Legislative Commission Oversight Trip to Herat Province

ALBA assisted the Commission on Legislative Affairs of MJ in a provincial oversight visit to Herat province. The delegation oversaw activities and procedures of the justice and judicial bodies of Herat province, particularly prisons, detention centers, prosecution offices and courts. The commission took a special interest in the women's prison conditions and in pending appeals cases.

Meshrano Jirga Oversight Trip to Balkh Province

ALBA supported a delegation comprised of members from several commissions of the Upper House on this trip which reviewed education, cultural, and religious affairs in the province as well as a special site visit to Balkh University.



Meshrano Jirga Oversight Trip to Kandahar Province

The ALBA Outreach team supported the Meshrano Jirga on an oversight visit to Kandahar province. Based on a recent plenary decision, a delegation led by the Deputy Speaker of the MJ was assigned to travel to Kandahar province to investigate the attack on Kandahar airport. The delegation held a press conference and described next steps to be taken by the MJ regarding the incident.

Kabul Municipality Oversight

The Budget and Economic Commission of the MJ met to discuss projects undertaken by Kabul municipality – a meeting prompted by the presentation made by ALBA at an MJ plenary. The commission plans to conduct informal (unannounced) oversight visits to various municipal projects.

Task 2.2 – Support Parliament’s Oversight of Budget Priorities & Implementation

Meshrano Jirga Extraordinary Session

On November 21, the Meshrano Jirga held an Extraordinary Session for questioning of the Minister of Finance and the Director-General of Budget on the draft budget for 1395 (2016). With guidance and training from the ALBA Budget and Oversight team, Senators from the Budget and Finance Commission were better able to address substantive questions to the officials.

Presentation of the 1394 (2015) Mid-Year Review Budget Analytical Report

The ALBA Budget team prepared an analytical report of the 1394 Mid-Year Review budget and submitted the report to the Wolesi Jirga Budget and Finance Commission.

Training Presentation on the 1393 Qatia (2014 Annual Expenditures Report)

ALBA’s Oversight and Budget team prepared 60 packets of information and conducted a presentation on the 1393 Qatia report to the **Meshrano Jirga plenary**. Separate meetings were also held with the Wolesi Jirga’s **Budget and Finance**, **National Economic**, and **Women’s Affairs Commissions**. The presentation included:

- An overview of the budget, expenditures, and adjustments to the budget
- Violations against PFM, procurement and budget law
- Budget execution and project expenditures (particularly projects with low or zero expenditures)
- Revenue trends
- Comparison of budget execution rates of the last 5 years
- Factors contributing to a low budget execution rate
- Recommendations for improvement

WJ Meeting with National Bank officials

The Economic Commission of the WJ called the Deputy Governor of Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) to discuss monetary and currency policies for the first six months of the year and review monetary policy for the following six months. The meeting was held after a briefing by ALBA advisors on currency devaluation and the effects of increasing currency printing.

Discussions on Establishing a National Economic Advisory Office

Toward the end of the reporting period, ALBA's Budget and Oversight advisors met with the MJ Budget and Economic Commission and representatives from key economic ministries to discuss a National Economic Advisory Office proposed by the Administrative Affairs Office of the President. ALBA advisors briefed the senators about the role and importance of a National Economic Advisory Office and explained that the Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Finance, and Ministry of Commerce need to have proper coordination and cooperation and that the proposed budgetary unit would have considerable impact on the economy, business affairs and cross-border trade.

Review of Gender Budgeting in the Proposed Annual 1395 National Budget

The Wolesi Jirga's initial rejection of the 1395 budget was due in part to insufficient budget allocation for gender activities. In turn, the WJ Women's Affairs Commission requested ALBA's Oversight team to brief their understanding of development projects directly benefiting women and girls for fiscal year 1395. The Oversight team reviewed all development projects from six line ministries in the proposed 1395 budget and compiled a complete list of projects and activities for the Commission, which includes:

- the Female Youth Initiative Project
- strengthening maternal and child care including immunizations
- assistance in women's agricultural activities in urban and peri-urban areas
- construction of Women's Training Centers
- implementation National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan
- gender training and capacity building for women in Kabul, Balkh and Herat provinces
- construction of 50-bed Pregnancy Hospital in Helmand province
- construction of girl's schools and dormitories in many provinces

Healthcare Budgeting

The Health Commission of the WJ invited the Minister of Health, and the Minister and Deputy Minister of Counter Narcotics and Ministry of the Interior officials to discuss the problems of addiction in the country. Line ministry budget execution and project status related to addiction had been presented by ALBA in previous settings.

Task 2.4 – Support Anti-Corruption Activities

National Procurement Committee

Parliamentary Anti-Corruption Committee (PACC) representatives continue to participate in the weekly sessions of National Procurement Committee, chaired by President Ghani. During the quarter, a delegation was assigned to review all contracts of the Ministry of Defense and the committee approved a separate framework for procuring supplies for the National Army. The President underscored that the delegation was appointed to increase compliance, ensure transparency, and fight corruption in all contracts of the Ministry of Interior.

Additionally, the PACC agreed to hold a large conference to share their views of the performance of the National Procurement Committee with the public.



Signing of Anti-Corruption Pledge of Constitutional Commission and Supreme Court Nominees

With assistance from the ALBA Anti-Corruption team, PACC asked six individuals nominated for the Independent Commission for Overseeing the Implementation of the Constitution and the Supreme Court nominee to sign the official Anti-Corruption Pledge that ALBA and PACC had instituted earlier with minister-nominees.

Provincial Anti-Corruption Committees

PACC members discussed future provincial trips and agreed that **Parwan** and **Panjshir** will be the next two provinces to establish an Anti-Corruption Committee within their respective Provincial Councils. A formal meeting to establish an Anti-Corruption Committee in **Kabul province** also took place in mid-December.

Finalization of the Draft Complaints Form for the MJ Complaints Department

ALBA's Anti-Corruption team finalized the draft complaints 'receiving form' and shared with the MJ Petition and Complaints Receiving Department. The Department's comments and suggestions were incorporated and the form is ready for use. The digitized forms will also be included in the 'Submit a Complaint' section of the revised Parliamentary websites.

Meeting with the First Lady

ALBA's Anti-Corruption team facilitated a meeting with **First Lady Mrs. Rula Ghani** for the PACC. The Committee and the Office of the First Lady agreed to meet regularly to discuss anti-corruption activities and women's affairs.

PACC Members USA trip: International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP)



- The United States Embassy in Kabul organized a trip to the US whose theme was “the approach and effective fight against corruption”. Six female MPs participated and discussed the current situation in Afghanistan and options for moving forward with their American counterparts. Meetings were held with US Congressional Representatives, civil society organizations, and a number of senior government representatives who engaged in thoughtful dialogue with the Afghan delegation.

OBJECTIVE THREE – INCREASE OUTREACH CAPACITY

Overview of Indicator 3

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	REPORTING PERIOD	USAID INDICATOR	YEAR 3 TO DATE	TARGET YEAR 3
3.1 Number of public forums resulting from USG assistance in which legislators and members of the public interact	Quarterly	Yes	14	15

Parliamentarians do not shy away from public events, and Year 3, Quarter 3 produced some impactful forums including the Afghanistan National Youth Conference, the Elimination of Violence Against Women event, and the public Bilateral Security Agreement conference. Response from specific provincial public hearings has been highly favorable and these will likely increase going forward. So far 14 public forums with 530 participants have been held in Year 3 with an annual target of 15. ALBA will most likely exceed this target.

Second Annual Disabled Conference

In a new effort to **follow up on commitments and actions** after a conference or public event, the Disabled Commission of the Meshrano Jirga with the support of ALBA held a second annual Conference on People with Disabilities. The conference reviewed the importance of developing a cross-ministerial plan to address the needs of people with disabilities and reviewed Commission findings from last year’s event. The MJ Disabled Commission will follow up individually with all identified ministries.

Task 3.1 – Number of Public Forums where Legislators and the Public Interact

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

ALBA's Outreach and Gender teams supported the MJ Commission on Women's Affairs in a public forum to celebrate the 16 days of activism against gender violence designated by the World Health Organization.



The event was attended by the Upper House Speaker and Deputy Speaker, a number of senators, and officials from eight ministries. The High Commission of the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Office of the President, the Supreme Court and many civil society and human rights groups were also present, including the Afghan Women's Network and UN-Women. All parties presented their action plans and strategies to bring positive change to women's social and

living conditions in Afghanistan. The event was broadly covered by the Afghan media.

Afghanistan National Youth Conference

The MJ Commission on Religious Affairs, Cultural, Education and Higher Education – with support from ALBA – held the first-ever National Youth Conference in Afghanistan in mid-October. Two hundred youth (almost half female), along with the Commission Chair, Deputy Speaker and Secretary-General of MJ, three Ministers and a Deputy Minister were in attendance.

Participants discussed youth participation in parliamentary decisions. Importantly, President Ghani declared his commitment to youth by promising to schedule a minimum of eight regional youth conferences to be held in Kabul over the next six months. At each conference, the President will meet with regional representatives – up to 200 at a time – for one hour, taking questions and giving updates on national policy.

Please see Appendix A and B for the full conference report and Success Story, respectively.



Youth Political Participation

Following on the Youth Conference, the ALBA Outreach Team participated in a 3-day seminar focused on developing a youth political participation strategy for 2016-17. Representatives from over 30 youth organizations and networks participated and a draft strategy was submitted. The strategy will play a vital role for future youth political

participation and is in line with the Presidential promise (see above) and ALBA Outreach team's planned regional / national conferences on youth political participation for 2016.

Civil Society Joint Working Group (CS-JWG) Meeting with Secretary General of MJ

The ALBA Outreach team coordinated a meeting with the Secretary-General of the MJ and the Civil Society Joint Working Group (CS-JWG) to reach a consensus on effective participation mechanisms for CSOs in the legislative process. The Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General of the MJ joined 12 CSO representatives and drafted two MOUs: 1) an MOU to formalize CSO's roles and contributions in the legislative process, and 2) a commission-level MOU to govern both parties' interaction in the legislative process.

Training Workshop on the Role of Civil Society in the National Budget Process

During the quarter, the ALBA Oversight team presented the national budget process and discussed the role of civil society organizations in the budget process. The workshop brought together experts from government agencies involved in formulating and approving the national budget with representatives from more than 30 civil society organizations. Participants requested ALBA for assistance in attending Budget and Finance Commission meetings of both Houses.

Also during the reporting period, ALBA briefed CSOs and Parliament with a presentation of the draft 1395 (2016) budget to over 25 civil society organizations. Both events were held in conjunction with Counterpart International.



Bilateral Security Agreement Public Hearing

In mid-November a public hearing on the implementation of the **Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA)** was held with over 100 attendees, including the Speaker of the MJ, the Acting Defense Minister, a number of Senators, senior government officials, university professors, international security experts, and military professionals. CSOs and the media were also present to discuss the implementation of the BSA.

A full report is attached in Appendix C.

Task 3.2 – Strengthen Parliamentary Visibility

Distribution of Publications to Stakeholders

During the reporting period, a distribution list of almost 200 CSOs, international organizations, institutes, universities, media received daily plenary reports and other electronic and hard copy Parliamentary and ALBA publications.

Wolesi Jirga 'End of Session' Report Published

To increase visibility and public access to Parliamentary information, ALBA supported the WJ Legislative Directorate in the printing and distribution of 1000 copies of its End of Session Report (the Ninth Session of the 16th term of Parliament or the March–July 2015 Spring Session) in Dari and Pashto.



Publications and Official Stationery Submitted to MJ Secretariat

ALBA Outreach team delivered over 24,000 pieces of stationery items and publications to the MJ Secretariat as requested by the Meshrano Jirga. All publications carry the MJ color scheme and seal, as well as USAID branding. The publication distribution gives Parliament greater visibility to all stakeholders.

Task 3.3 – Improved Media Access to and Coverage of Parliament

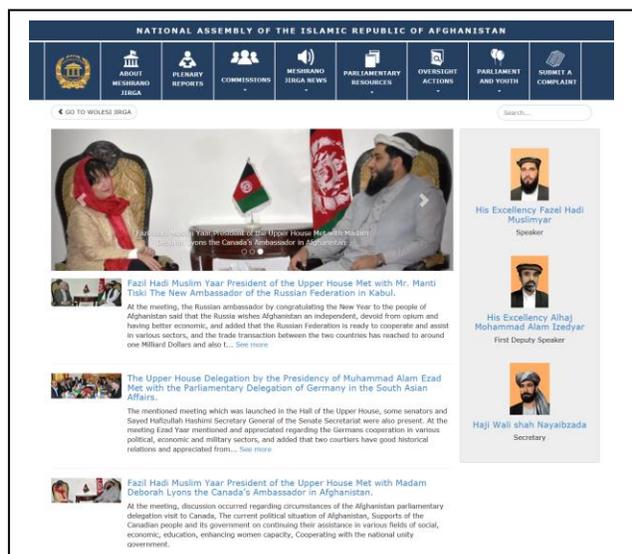


Revised Parliamentary Websites Approved in Plenary

The Parliamentary websites saw slight delays during the quarter in scheduling official meetings and approvals with the Secretaries-General and ICT Directorate. The extra time however, gave ALBA staff the opportunity to add additional content and features to better the sites for users.

Content Pages Increased 56% for Meshrano Jirga and 27% for Wolesi Jirga

At the request of Secretary-General, ALBA staff was invited to the Meshrano Jirga plenary on December 13, and the ALBA DCOP and web team presented the complete Meshrano Jirga site. Several Senators spoke during the session, expressing gratitude for an updated website and thanking ALBA for its hard work and for including many new international standards advised by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) global body. The ALBA DCOP reiterated that parliamentary websites offer an excellent



means to communicate actively with citizens and enhance public understanding of parliament’s role and responsibilities.

The MJ plenary agreed the new Parliamentary website should be officially launched and applauded the efforts of ALBA. The Secretary-General of the Wolesi Jirga has also approved the WJ site and an official handover (electronic transfer) is scheduled for January 2016.

The tri-lingual Website Launch flyer is attached as Appendix D.

OBJECTIVE FOUR – INCREASED INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARLIAMENT

Overview of Indicator 4

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	REPORTING PERIOD	USAID INDICATOR	YEAR 3 TO DATE	TARGET YEAR 3
4.1 Number of API products used by Parliament, CSOs, and the general public	Annual	No	86	75

To date in Year 3, linkages have been formed between the Afghanistan Parliamentary Institute (API) and the capacity building unit of Parliament as well as other national institutes. In addition, a situational analysis on developing a formal governance structure for the API has been completed. API ‘products’ (i.e., trainings) have already outperformed the target for Year 3, with 30 trainings for WJ, MJ, and Secretariat staff; 28 trainings for Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs staff; and 28 trainings for ALBA’s two groups of Fellows. Performance indicators for the Afghanistan Parliamentary Institute are measured on an annual-basis.

Task 4.1 – Strengthening the Afghanistan Parliamentary Institute

Parliamentary Institute Study Tour to India

ALBA’s DCOP and Senior Advisor to API accompanied a delegation of seven officials on a study tour to the Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training (BPST) of the Indian Parliament during this reporting period. The trip gave Parliamentarians from both Houses and officials from the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs the opportunity to work together and determine



sustainable strategies for API and discuss further technical assistance from BPST.

The API Fellowship Program continues to be strong in its second year, in close cooperation with leadership from both Houses. The Fellows are assigned to relevant commissions and directorates and have gained practical knowledge and skills during this session. During the upcoming Parliamentary recess, Fellows will have an increased course workload at the Afghanistan Parliamentary Institute. There are currently 48 (19 female and 29 male) Fellows working in the Wolesi Jirga and a total of 25 (10 female and 15 male) Fellows in the Meshrano Jirga.

Quarterly API Courses – October-December 2015

This quarter's schedule at the API shows a greater variety of courses, more offerings specific for the Wolesi Jirga Secretariat and a focus on business management coursework.

4-5 October	Basic Management Skills <i>PARTICIPANTS: MJ and WJ Parliamentary Fellows</i>
11-12 October	Legislative Research <i>PARTICIPANTS: MJ and WJ Parliamentary Fellows</i>
18-19 October	Budgeting Systems of the World <i>PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff</i>
18-19 October	Human Resource Management <i>PARTICIPANTS: MJ and WJ Parliamentary Fellows</i>
25-27 October	Strategic Planning <i>PARTICIPANTS: MJ and WJ Parliamentary Fellows</i>
26-28 October	Legal System of Afghanistan <i>PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff</i>
1 November	International Organizations <i>PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff</i>
2 November	Qatia (Budget Expenditure Report) Training <i>PARTICIPANTS: MJ and WJ Parliamentary Fellows</i>
8-10 November	Accounting Basics and Banking Reconciliation <i>PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff</i>
22-24 November	Monitoring & Evaluation and Audits <i>PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff</i>
28 November	Public Personnel Management <i>PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff</i>

6-8 December	Ethics and Code of Conduct <i>PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat support staff</i>
7-9 December	Effective Report Writing <i>PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff</i>
21-22 December	Effective Office Management <i>PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff</i>
28-30 December	Records Management and Filing Systems <i>PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff</i>

Task 4.4 – Specific Meshrano Jirga Support Activities

ALBA Establishes Women’s Gym for Meshrano Jirga

See the Appendix E News Release for further details.

Needs Assessment of MJ Commissions

To continue overall capacity building for all members of the National Assembly and consider new senators’ requests for trainings on different parliamentary topics, the ALBA Legislative and M&E teams developed a needs assessment questionnaire for all Meshrano Jirga commissions to identify needs and challenges. ALBA has conducted assessments for three commissions so far and will continue this exercise with all other MJ commissions.

CHAPTER III: PERFORMANCE MONITORING

ALBA's 11th Quarter witnessed progress on several key indicators within the Program PMEPP. Commentary follows on selected Indicators.

Performance Indicator 1.3: *Number of draft laws, treaties, agreements and legislative documents receiving USG assistance*

After concentrated activity of both the Afghan National Assembly and the ALBA Legislative team in Year 2, legislative actions slowed somewhat, owing to increased scrutiny by Parliament and a more assertive stance taken when interacting with the Executive. ALBA, however, remains significant in presenting analysis and research to affect the performance of commissions and votes in plenaries of both the Meshrano Jirga and Wolesi Jirga. ALBA's work continues to include both policy-based and technically-based support. Quarter 3 of had five laws as well as a number of treaties and agreements presented for voting in session combining to a total of 10. The target for Year 3 is 12, and ALBA is poised to meet or exceed this goal.

Performance Indicator 2.1: *Number of Executive oversight actions taken by legislatures receiving USG assistance*

Commissions from both Houses continue to be keen on oversight, and in addition to ministerial oversight in the capital, a substantial number of traveling delegations are supported every quarter. During Year 3, commissions have expanded their reach to issues as diverse as women's prisons and land rights, and have expanded geographically to more 'forgotten' provinces. Additionally, the Parliamentary Anti-Corruption Caucus (PACC) -- with ALBA support -- has begun inducting PACC Committees within Provincial Councils around the country. Oversight actions for Year 3, Quarter 3 add up cumulatively to 47. The Year 3 target is 50 and it is anticipated ALBA will exceed this.

Performance Indicator 3.1: *Number of public forums resulting from USG assistance in which legislators and members of the public interact*

Parliamentarians do not shy away from public events, and Year 3, Quarter 3 produced some impactful forums including the Afghanistan National Youth Conference, the Elimination of Violence Against Women event, and the public Bilateral Security Agreement conference. Response from specific provincial public hearings has been highly favorable and these will likely increase going forward. So far 14 public forums with 530 participants have been held in Year 3 with an annual target of 15. ALBA will most likely exceed this target.

Please see the Excel spreadsheet (Appendix F) attached to this report.

ATTACHMENTS

- Appendix A -- Afghanistan National Youth Conference report
- Appendix B -- Youth Conference Success Story
- Appendix C -- Bilateral Security Agreement public forum report
- Appendix D -- Revised Parliamentary websites flyer
- Appendix E -- ALBA M&E Indicators