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# ASSISTANCE TO LEGISLATIVE BODIES OF AFGHANISTAN

## QUARTERLY REPORT

April – June 2015



31 JULY 2015

# **ASSISTANCE TO LEGISLATIVE BODIES OF AFGHANISTAN**

**QUARTERLY REPORT: APRIL TO JUNE 2015**

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# CONTENTS

- CONTENTS .....1
- ACRONYMS .....2
- INTRODUCTION .....3
- CHAPTER I: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....4
- CHAPTER II: SUMMARY OF PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS .....7
  - OBJECTIVE ONE – STRENGTHENED LEGISLATIVE PROCESSES.....7
  - OBJECTIVE TWO – IMPROVED OVERSIGHT .....9
  - OBJECTIVE THREE – INCREASE OUTREACH CAPACITY .....14
  - OBJECTIVE FOUR – INCREASED INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARLIAMENT .....15
- CHAPTER III: PERFORMANCE MONITORING .....16
- CHAPTER IV: PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION.....17
- ATTACHMENTS.....18

# ACRONYMS

ALBA	Assistance to Legislative Bodies of Afghanistan
APAP	Afghanistan Parliament Assistance Program
API	Afghanistan Parliamentary Institute
AO	Assistance Objectives
BMP	Branding and Marking Plan
CI	Counterpart International
COP	Chief of Party
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DAI	Development Alternatives Incorporated
DG	Director General
DSG	Deputy Secretary General
IDLG	Independent Directorate of Local Governance
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
IR	Intermediate Results
MEC	Independent Anti-Corruption Monitoring and Evaluation Committee
MJ	Meshrano Jirga
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MOWA	Ministry of Women's Affairs
NUG	National Unity Government
PACC	Parliamentary Anti-Corruption Caucus
PC	Provincial Council
PMEP	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
SG	Secretary General
STTA	Short Term Technical Assistance
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
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

The report period (April-June 2015) covers the core of the spring/summer legislative session. This year it also saw the start of the Holy month of Ramadan (June 17<sup>th</sup>). As with last year, ALBA supported both houses and their legislative agendas. Key legislation debated in both commissions and plenary sessions included amendments to the anti-money laundering legislation; the financing of terrorism legislation; and the procurement legislation. Legislation passed by the Wolesi Jirga included residence and travel of foreign nationals; tax administration; plants and quarantine; and the law on acting ministers. These laws were subsequently debated in the Meshrano Jirga and also passed.

The issue of elections came to the forefront during this reporting quarter. The failure of the National Unity Government (NUG) to agree on the composition of the proposed electoral reform commission had major political implications as it directly impacted the ability to hold parliamentary elections. This, in turn, called into question the legitimacy of the current parliament by many – including by voices in the Meshrano Jirga. In the end, the NUG extended the current parliament until an electoral reform commission was established and its recommendations made public. While there is no specific timetable for the extension of Parliament, various observers have noted that the extension could be for as long as a year. At the time of writing, the NUG had just released the names of the Special Electoral Reform Commission (SERC) in late July (during the Eid break) and the head was to be Shah Akifi. Akifi is a respected technocrat who has served in both the Lower and Upper Houses, most recently serving as Deputy Secretary General of the Meshrano Jirga.

As reported in the previous quarterly report, the formation of the cabinet continued to face challenges in Parliament. During April, new appointees for those ministries that had been previously rejected were submitted to the Wolesi Jirga for votes of confidence. Most of the new nominees passed, however, the notable exception was the new nominee for Minister of Defense (Stanikzai) who appeared before the Lower House in late June and was rejected.

The nominee for Minister of Defense appeared before the Wolesi Jirga on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Insurgents seized this date and event to launch a complex attack on Parliament. At approximately 10:15am, a large explosion rocked the Parliament causing significant damage, injuring more than 40 people in Parliament-including two MPs in the WJ plenary session in advance of the vote on the proposed Minister of Defense-and killing several civilians along Darulaman Road. Gunfire continued for approximately 2 hours and concluded with the killing of several insurgents by security forces stationed inside

the parliamentary compound. The plenary session was abandoned and the scheduled vote on the nominee for Minister of Defense did not occur. It was clear that insurgents wanted to send a message on the inability of the security forces to counter their recent resurgence. The Wolesi Jirga was unbowed, however, and held an extraordinary session at the Parliamentary Annex the following day, while the Meshrano Jirga also continued with its plenary session, despite the widespread damage.

Under **Objective One – Strengthened Legislative Processes**, ALBA supported work on several key pieces of legislation, including the Procurement Law, the Banking Law, and the Higher Education Law. ALBA supported the Religious Affairs, Cultural, Education and Higher Education Commission of the MJ to conduct public hearings on the Higher Education Law that was pending in the Lower House. In addition, ALBA held coordination meetings with the UNDP program’s visiting Inter-Parliamentary (IPU) experts on Rules of Procedure to assist in the efforts to provide recommendations for the leadership of the WJ. ALBA continued to engage the Executive during the reporting period, providing training to the staff of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs and convening several meetings between the nominated Cabinet Ministers in the lead up to their ratification votes as well as meeting both the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Border and Tribal Affairs to discuss greater engagement with Parliament.

Under **Objective Two – Improved Oversight**, ALBA, as part of the plan to improve the oversight by commissions, delivered a series of presentations to six different MJ commissions on the importance of coherent oversight plans and beginning the process of developing work plans for the upcoming months. ALBA hosted several PACC meetings with nominated Cabinet ministers in order to obtain their commitment to anti-corruption efforts in their respective portfolios. This reporting period also included the printing and distribution of the Anti-Corruption Policy Resource Guide produced by ALBA – a compendium of useful resources for civil society and MPs working on anti-corruption activities. Furthermore, ALBA’s anti-corruption team along with PACC had a meeting with President Ghani in May. One of the outcomes of this meeting was a decision to have a PACC member participate in the newly created Procurement Advisory Board in the President’s office.

ALBA also organized a major event in May – a National Provincial Council conference in Kabul – that brought together representatives from all of Afghanistan’s provinces. With more than 115 councilors in attendance, along with conducting meetings with President Ghani’s Chief of Staff; Dr. Abdullah Abdullah; and the Administrative Board of the MJ; a number of policy recommendations were developed at the conference. ALBA also sponsored an oversight visit by the MJ Budget and Economic Affairs Commission to Herat as well as the MJ Religious and Cultural Affairs Commission to Bamyan.

Under **Objective Three – Increased Outreach**, ALBA supported USAID partner Internews in their program of ‘training of trainers’, aimed at building the capacity of regional and provincial reporters seeking to cover Parliament more effectively. ALBA also made significant progress in the development of the revamped Parliamentary website, including both houses, with a tentative launch of the MJ page in late August and the WJ page in late September. ALBA also received the final report from the public opinion research conducted by Charney Research (an ALBA subcontractor) and their partner organization, ResearchOne. Finally, ALBA supported a large outreach event in Baghlan organized by the Meshrano Jirga.

Under **Objective Four – Increased Institutional Development**, ALBA initiated the second round of the Parliamentary Fellowship Program, identifying and recruiting additional Fellows to work in both houses of Parliament (in both commissions and the secretariats).

# CHAPTER II: SUMMARY OF PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS

## OBJECTIVE ONE – STRENGTHENED LEGISLATIVE PROCESSES

### Task 1.1 - Institutionalize Legislative Drafting and Analysis

ALBA supported the Religious Affairs, Cultural, Education and Higher Education Commission of the MJ to conduct a public hearing regarding the Higher Education Law which is pending in the Lower House. The event was chaired by Ms. Lailuma Ahmadi, Chairperson of the Commission, and featured participation from the Ministers of Higher Education and Justice. In addition, university deans and educators from around the country travelled to Kabul to participate in the one-day hearing, providing their views on necessary amendments and highlighting the urgency with which the legislation must be enacted. The report on the event is attached as **Annex A**. Following up on the successful public hearing, ALBA engaged the Commission in planning some key next steps to overcome the delays in the passage of this critical piece of legislation. These include:

- Establishment of a technical committee on the Higher Education Law made up of a representative from the Ministry of Higher Education, Civil Society representatives, the Academic Council of Kabul University, representatives from the private education sector, and two members of the Commission to provide recommendations for the President to issue a legislative decree for the enforcement of the Law; and,
- Organization of a press conference and media opportunities on national TV networks and regional radio stations on the Higher Education Law to draw the attention of the public and interested parties to push and speed up the process of the Law enforcement through a legislative decree by the President, bypassing the current stalemate in the Lower House.

**Deliberations on the Banking Law.** The ALBA Budget team assisted commission staff to deliver a presentation on monetary policy and Banking to the MJ Budget and Economic Commission at their request. The purpose was to move the debate on the pending Banking Law along, focusing on the issue of parallel banking systems – Islamic and non-Islamic – in Afghanistan. Officials from Da Afghanistan Bank attended the conversation and added their perspective.

**Meeting with UNDP and the IPU Advisor on Rules of Procedure.** ALBA held a working session with the visiting IPU advisor on Rules of Procedure, exploring revisions to the existing rules in both houses. Specifically, the discussion centered on:

- Improving Parliamentary Commission debates and deliberation on bills through the participation of different stakeholders, including CSOs, academia, etc.
- Supporting greater plenary debates on government bills during their initial introduction.
- Assessing current amendments proposed by the Legislative Affairs Commission of the WJ.

**Deliberations on the Procurement Law.** ALBA's Commission Support Unit (CSU) of the Budget and Finance Commission of the WJ met with President Ghani's newly appointed head of procurement policy as well as the head of Afghanistan's Reconstruction and Development Services (ARDS) of the Ministry of Economy and senior officials from the MoJ to discuss the Procurement Law. As a result of the discussions, the Government has asked to re-introduce a final version. After some internal debate it was decided to return the legislation to the government as it requested.

**Presentation on the Law on Geographical Indication.** In mid-May, ALBA's Legislative Team delivered a presentation on the Law on Geographical Indication to the senior staff of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs (MoPA), as part of the ongoing series of training sessions for MoPA staff. The presentation covered the following topics:

- A. Brief introduction of the relevant international organizations (WIPO and WTO);
- B. Definition of geographical indication;
- C. Difference between geographical indication and trademarks;
- D. Legal base and background (brief history of the law);
- E. Legal terminologies;
- F. Key provisions of the law; and,
- G. Strengths and weaknesses of the draft law.

**Additional Training for Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs (MOPA) staff.** In order to meet the capacity building needs of the staff of the MOPA, ALBA continued its capacity building program by conducting the following courses:

- Principles of Gender Budgeting
- Leadership Techniques for Middle Managers
- The Departmental Performance Reporting System
- Qatia Reports

- The Law on the Residence and Travel of Foreigners
- The National Budget Preparation Process

### **Task 1.2 - Develop Effective Communications Processes with the Executive**

**Ministerial Performance Reports.** ALBA met with the Ministry of Finance’s Budget Performance and Monitoring Unit manager and discussed quarterly performance reports of line ministries and the fact that they are not distributed to commissions in both houses. It is part of ALBA’s work plan to assist commissions in analyzing these reports to further improve their oversight functions. As a result of this meeting, it was agreed that submissions by line ministries should be standardized, preferably through ministry-based Parliamentary Liaison Units and coordinated by the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.

**Training for the Staff of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.** Following up on the initial assessment of the training needs of the Ministry, ALBA began various capacity building activities with the staff, including:

- Techniques for Legislative Research
- The Afghan Legislative Process
- Separation of Powers in the Afghan context

**Meetings with the Ministers of Justice and Tribal Affairs.** ALBA’s Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP) and the leadership of the MJ met with the two Ministers in May, briefing them on the project and the project’s collaboration with the Upper House. ALBA’s expanded support to the Executive – primarily through the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs – and its continued support to the Tribal Affairs Ministry relating to Kuchi issues were among the talking points during the meetings.

**Complaints Management.** The ALBA Anti-Corruption team completed the assessment of the MJ complaints management system, attached here as **Annex B**.

## **OBJECTIVE TWO – IMPROVED OVERSIGHT**

### **Task 2.1 – Increase General Oversight through Commissions**

**Oversight Presentations to Commissions.** As part of the plan to improve the oversight by commissions, ALBA’s legislative and oversight teams delivered presentations to six MJ commissions, led by ALBA’s STTA Budget and Oversight Specialist Raju Kalidindi. ALBA staff also shared a draft template with the commissions for planning oversight meetings, site visits, and hearings with government officials.

**Budget Commission Hearings on Trade Issues.** During the reporting period, ALBA supported the Economic Committee of the WJ in its meeting with the Deputy Minister of Transport, the Deputy Minister of Trade, and the Head of the Afghan Chamber of Commerce. The discussion concerned transit and transportation problems faced by Afghan traders, primarily through Pakistan. The MPs asked the Ministry of Transport, Trade, Foreign Affairs and Afghan Chamber of Commerce to prepare a strategy/proposal for reducing corruption and solving transport and trade problems with Pakistan.

**MJ Budget and Economic Commission Oversight Visit to Herat.** The Commission, as well as representatives from two other MJ commissions, visited Herat province to conduct a public hearing. They met with provincial line departments, businessmen, and civil society and discussed challenges facing Herat customs and border posts. The report from the visit is attached as **Annex C**.

**Oversight Planning with WJ Health and Natural Resources Commissions.** ALBA worked with the Health Commission and the Natural Resources Commission of the WJ to plan an oversight program for the parliamentary recess and fall legislative session. Plans were finalized by both commissions, and included literature and document reviews, provincial visits, public hearings in the provinces, commission hearings in Kabul, questioning of Ministers and officials, and dissemination of a final report including a media roll-out.

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

**Preparation for Workshops on Budget Preparation for MPs.** ALBA is planning a series of workshops that will bring together Ministries' officials, MPs, and budget experts to discuss the budget preparation process and identify ways in which MPs and commissions can both be aware of initial Ministry budget requests, and also contribute to the process well before the budget is introduced to Parliament in late November. This process will also be slightly amended for use in engaging CSOs on the budget preparation process, following the initial Parliamentary workshops. As part of these preparations, ALBA's Outreach team and Budget team are meeting and coordinating with the Budget and Finance Committee of the WJ.

## **Task 2.3 – Support Parliament in Oversight of Provincial Budget Performance**

**The National Provincial Councils Conference.** This conference was attended by over 115 provincial councilors from all over the country, as well as high ranking authorities from both the MJ and the Government. Besides a rigorous schedule of working groups, councilors were also provided with the opportunity to participate in networking sessions

with Afghanistan's CEO, Abdullah Abdullah; the administration board of the MJ; and the Chief of Staff of President Ghani in order to discuss provincial issues. A conference recommendation paper was developed and presented to the President to inform future policy decisions. Please find attached as **Annex D** the report on the conference.

## **Task 2.4 – Support Anti-Corruption Activities**

**ALBA/PACC Meeting with MEC Representatives.** ALBA's Anti-Corruption Team facilitated a PACC meeting with MEC representatives during which a MEC report on land seizures was shared and PACC's assistance was sought in furthering the issue in Parliament. MEC representatives also shared concerns on two current issues: nepotism in the recruitment process in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the misuse of official vehicles in the Ministry of Interior.

**PACC Meeting with Incoming Cabinet Ministers.** The ALBA Anti-Corruption Team facilitated a PACC meeting with the newly nominated ministers of the NUG in early April in the ALBA office. The purpose was to get the commitment of nominated ministers in the fight against corruption as well as to sign the anti-corruption pledge (as was done with the first tranche of nominees in January 2015). PACC chairwoman, Senator Humaira Ayubi, briefed the nominees on PACC, its goals and achievements, and stressed the close support they have received from USAID and the ALBA project. On behalf of the nominees, Mr. Gulab Mangal (nominated Minister of Borders and Tribal Affairs) and Mr. Mohammadullah Batash (nominated Minister of Transportation and Civil Aviation) stated that they were committed to work with PACC, and thanked ALBA for its support of this particular activity and, more generally, support to PACC and Parliament. The nominated ministers who signed the anti-corruption pledge were:

- Delbar Nazari, nominated Minister of Women's Affairs
- Mahmood Baligh, nominated Minister of Public Works
- Farida Mohmand, nominated Minister of Higher Education
- Abdul Satar Murad, nominated Minister of Economy
- Abdul Razaq Wahidi, nominated Minister of Telecommunications and ICT
- Asadullah Hanif Balkhi, nominated Minister of Education
- Mohammadullah Batash, nominated Minister of Transportation and Civil Aviation
- Homayon Rasa, nominated Minister of Commerce and Industries
- Asadullah Zamir, nominated Minister of Agriculture
- Gulab Mangal, nominated Minister of Border and Tribal Affairs
- Abdul Basir Anwar, nominated Minister of Justice
- Salamat Azimi, nominated Minister of Counter Narcotics

- Nasrin Oryakhail, nominated Minister of Works and Public Affairs
- Ali Ahmad Osmani, nominated Minister of Water and Energy

**Printing and Distribution of the Anti-Corruption Policy Resource Guide.** In this policy resource guide, developed by ALBA, there is information regarding national and international organizations working to combat corruption, as well as the laws and regulations related to the fight against corruption in Afghanistan. The guide will be distributed to PACC members, Parliamentarians, Provincial Council members, and civil society organizations.

**PACC/ALBA Meeting with President Ghani.** During this reporting period, PACC and ALBA had a meeting with President Ghani to introduce both programs and to create coordination between the Office of the President and the PACC, as well as to obtain the support and commitment of the President in fighting corruption. In order to promote good governance and combating corruption in Afghanistan, the PACC presented a set of recommendations to the President. They included:

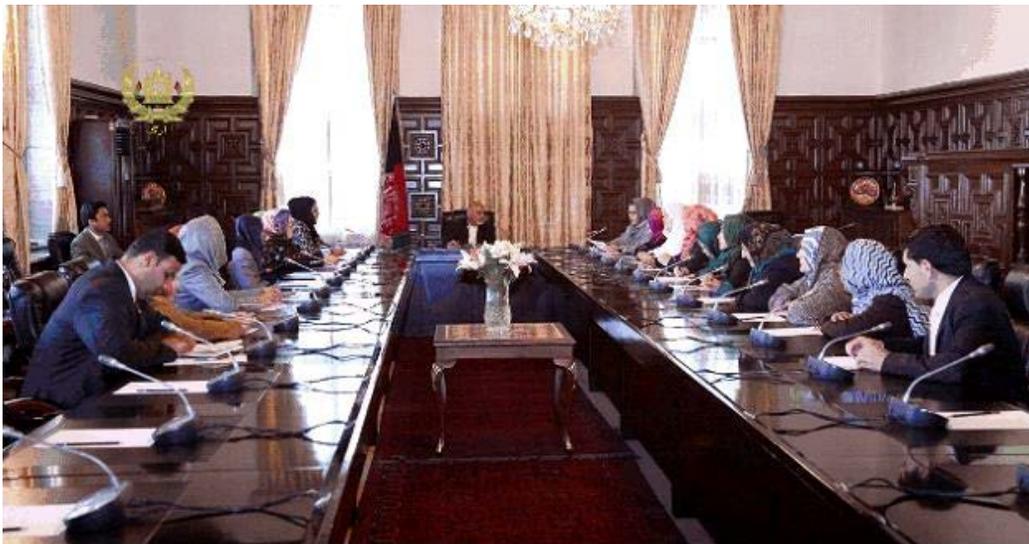
- Establish a coordination committee between all governmental and non-governmental anti-corruption institutions, to coordinate all anti-corruption efforts and to report directly to the President;
- Establish coordination offices inside institutions such as municipalities and the Ministries of Higher Education, Education, Commerce, Transportation, etc., to facilitate the affairs of customers/citizens and disengage them from direct contact with civil servants. This would reduce opportunities for corruption;
- Register and declare assets of senior public officials;
- Conduct an overall assessment of departments by sector, to apply reform measures including reforms to work procedures;
- Implement the Anti-Money Laundering and Organized Crimes law with proper follow-up procedures;
- Implement the Access to Information Law and allocate a specific budget for its implementation on a national level;
- Strengthen the capacity of Human Resources in the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC) to ensure a merit-based recruitment process in public institutions;
- Prevent misuse of the Ministry of Interior Affairs (MOIA)'s vehicles, personnel, and equipment by parliamentarians and other senior officials;
- Prevent double salary payments to public officials;

- Introduce a contact person from the National Procurement Board to be available to provide information regarding national contracts and their values to PACC members; and,
- Assess the performance of ministries under the new cabinet ministers

The President accepted all of these suggestions, and promised to support anti-corruption efforts and activities. Moreover, the President asked the PACC to:

- Introduce one representative to participate in the newly created Procurement Advisory Board within the President's office that works on government procurement issues; and,
- Meet with the President on a monthly basis to keep updated on each other's progress and to improve cooperation between the Executive and the PACC.

These outcomes are extremely significant, both in terms of moving forward PACC's and ALBA's objectives in the area of anti-corruption, but also in positioning PACC, and by extension, ALBA, as leaders in this effort.



*PACC and ALBA members meet with President Ghani to discuss anti-corruption efforts*

### **Initial PACC Participation in a National Procurement Commission Meeting.**

Following the meeting with the President, Senator Najiba Hussaini, PACC Deputy Chairperson, began attending meetings of the President's National Procurement Commission. President Ghani, CEO Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, representatives of different Ministries, and a representative of SIGAR participated in this initial session. The following issues were discussed:

- Construction of the Kamal Khan Dam

- Problems with the construction of the Hairatan – Mazar-e-Sharif railway
- Air aviation contracts
- Contracts of Da Afghan Brishna Shirkat (Electricity Company)

## **OBJECTIVE THREE – INCREASE OUTREACH CAPACITY**

### **Task 3.2 – Strengthen Parliament Visibility**

**Parliament Website Enhancement.** During this reporting period, the Outreach Team held coordination meetings with the Parliament’s ICT Director about the progress of this project. The revised website’s ‘back-end’ and ‘front-end’ were displayed and discussed. The current plan calls for a launch of the MJ web page in late August and the WJ page in late September.

**Public Opinion/Focus Groups – Final Report.** ALBA received the final report on the public opinion research commissioned as part of the Year 2 program and undertaken in March 2015 by subcontractor Charney Research and local partner ResearchOne. The report is attached as **Annex E**.

**Support to Oversight Visit to Baghlan.** ALBA’s Outreach Team supported the MJ’s Commission on Internal Security, Defense and Local Governance to coordinate a provincial visit to Baghlan in June. The objective of the visit was to discuss security problems and challenges with local government officials, community elders, provincial councils, civil society members, security officials (ANA, NDS, ANP), and women’s rights activists. Through their conversations, they explored ways to strengthen security and stability at the provincial level. ALBA has subsequently supported the commission in discussing findings and developing recommendations to the Ministry of Defense.

### **Task 3.3 – Improved Media Access to and Coverage of Parliament**

**Support to InterNews Journalists Training.** This support was delivered as a part of the Parliamentary Elections Reporting training-of-trainers (ToT) to prepare our USAID partner InterNews to roll out training sessions with journalists in the run-up to the parliamentary elections. There were six journalism trainers from Nai Supporting Open Media in Afghanistan (Nai)—from Kabul, Herat, Mazar, Jalalabad, and Kandahar provinces, and three trainers from Salam Watandar (radio network). In total, there were nine participants including three women. The ToT and follow-on training fall under InterNews’ Australian DFAT-funded Afghan Capacity for Media and Elections (ACME) program.

## **OBJECTIVE FOUR – INCREASED INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARLIAMENT**

### **Task 4.1 - Strengthening the Afghanistan Parliamentary Institute**

**New Fellows Orientation Program.** A new cadre of 20 Parliamentary Fellows began their orientation program at the end of March and this continued in full during this quarter. Consisting of 10 male and 10 female graduates, the group had training on 1) parliamentary structures, rules, and regulations; 2) the ALBA project and its approach to supporting the Parliament; and 3) their roles as Fellows in both parliamentary commissions and Secretariat offices. In addition, the Fellows underwent initial language and IT skills testing.

# CHAPTER III: PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The report period witnessed progress on several key indicators within the ALBA PMEP:

Indicator	Q9	Actual (YTD)	Target Year	Progress	Comments
1.1: Number of draft laws subject to substantive amendments and final vote in legislatures receiving ALBA/USG Assistance	7	7	4-6	117%	Includes: Anti-Money Laundering Law (amendments); Afghanistan-Italy and Afghanistan-Kazakhstan Bilateral Relations; Civil Service Law and Education Law; Law on Geographical Indication; Law on Salary and Privileges of High Ranking Officials; Law on Tax Management; Public Health Law.
2.1: Number of Executive oversight actions taken by legislature receiving ALBA/USG assistance	28	28	40	70%	ALBA revised its PMEP during Year 2, changing the definition of oversight actions to the following: 1) provincial oversight visits; 2) national policy conferences; 3) public hearings; and 4) Ministerial questioning on specific government projects and spending.
Cross-cutting: Number of staff and MPs trained on: analysis / drafting / oversight / outreach with USG funding	593	593	600	99%	The API's expanded training programs and the expansion of these programs to the MoPA and the members of the Fellowship program, as well as the renewed engagement with the Meshrano Jirga, has ensured that the target has been exceeded significantly. It must be noted that these figures represent instances of training, wherein an individual could be counted against more than one course that she/he has taken.

**Indicators Relating to Website Use.** Progress against indicator 3.3 (Increase in access of website by general public, CSOs and academia) has been lagging. However, with the launch of the parliamentary websites planned for August (MJ) and September (WJ), we expect to see considerable results in the two upcoming quarters and beyond.

# CHAPTER IV: PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

**Damage to ALBA offices during attack on Parliament.** ALBA's offices sustained significant damage during the June 22<sup>nd</sup> attack on Parliament. Fortunately, no employees were injured during the event. Office 1 is located approximately 40 meters from the blast epicenter. It was significantly damaged, and is at the time of reporting still undergoing repairs. Office 2 sustained only limited damage. ALBA – as Parliament did – continued to operate and all staff members are operating on a temporary basis in Office 2 until repairs and security upgrades to Office 1 are complete.

**COP Departure.** ALBA underwent a significant personnel change in June, with COP since the project's inception – Peter Dimitroff – departing from Afghanistan. Mr. Dimitroff was succeeded by Mr. Paul King, a former COP for several USAID programs, including ALBA's predecessor program, APAP. The COP transition was facilitated by visits to Kabul by ALBA's US-based Project Director and Associate Project Manager. While the leadership position has now been transferred, Mr. Dimitroff has returned to DAI's home office and will continue to provide technical support to ALBA in an advisory capacity. This will ensure continuity in technical support and retain valuable institutional memory on ALBA.

# ATTACHMENTS

**Annex A:** Report on the MJ Public Hearing on the Higher Education Law

**Annex B:** Assessment of the MJ Complaints Management System

**Annex C:** Report on the MJ Budget and Economic Commission Oversight Visit to Herat

**Annex D:** Report on the National Provincial Councils Conference

**Annex E:** Public Opinion/Focus Groups Report