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ASSISTANCE TO LEGISLATIVE BODIES OF AFGHANISTAN



YEAR 3 ANNUAL REPORT 2015 – 2016

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
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
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

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CONTRACT

Program Title: Assistance to Legislative Bodies of Afghanistan

IQC: Strengthening Legislative Bodies IQC

Contract Number: OAA-1-12-00003/AID-306-TO-13-00004

Contractor: Development Alternatives Incorporated

Period of Performance: March 28, 2013 – March 27, 2018

Contracting Officer's Representative: Jim Kovar

Contracting Officer: Patrick Robinson

Chief of Party: Paul King

FOREWORD

The Assistance to Legislative Bodies of Afghanistan (ALBA) project is a 4-year technical assistance initiative funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), implemented by Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI).

USAID designed the Assistance to Legislative Bodies of Afghanistan (ALBA) project to prepare both Houses of Parliament for greater self-reliance, and as we prepare for the final year, ALBA is well positioned to reach its objectives in all four components of the program. ALBA is building on the work of its first three years, expanding and deepening the work of Parliament commissions in terms of both **oversight** and **outreach**. In addition, the processes around **legislation** will continue to be strengthened, and the fourth year - as in the third – ALBA will support greater involvement of **civil society** in the drafting and amendment of critical legislation. The Afghanistan Parliamentary Institute, while maintaining its emphasis on both basic and advanced courses for elected officials and staff, will seek to engage the leadership of both Houses and the State Minister for Parliamentary Affairs on the **future governance** of the Institute to ensure the independence of its administration and government funding once the project closes.

Although the prolonged political crisis related to the Presidential elections led to some challenges in the work of the Parliament, the resulting delay in the Parliamentary elections (officially scheduled to be held in mid-October 2016, though rumored to be held in early 2017) will mean that ALBA will be able to work with the present cadre of MPs for at least the bulk of Year 4, enabling the project and its staff to move forward on key initiatives with the current leadership in the Lower House.

The staffing of ALBA has continued to reflect an emphasis on maximizing the involvement of Afghan nationals; the second year featured the arrival of a local Afghan Deputy Chief of Party, and a gradual drawdown of the use of ex-pat STTAs. In accordance with its long-term plan, the project will continue to empower its local program staff to lead its activities and present a truly Afghan face to legislative support.

Paul King

Chief of Party

Assistance to Legislative Bodies of Afghanistan – DAI ALBA

June 2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALBA Year 3: Oversight and Sustainability

Work under ALBA is designed to support the development of the Afghan Parliament and enable it to operate as an independent and effective legislative, representative and oversight body. With the first year consisting of the establishment of the project and a series of initial assessments to fine-tune the overall approach, the second and third year witnessed some substantial progress in project objectives. In particular, Parliament strengthened its attention to oversight and reached out to civil society and the public with much greater frequency, both in the capital and throughout the provinces. Legislation was passed that reflected the inputs of civil society, business groups and other stakeholders. The Afghan Parliamentary Institute (API) expanded its capacity-building efforts to both staff and elected officials, and launched a highly effective Fellowship program. Year 3 began the shift to increased sustainability, with the API relying more on senior staff from both Houses to provide trainings as well as moving toward an independent governance model and secretariat. Commission members and staff also began taking the lead in legislative and budgetary analysis. Year 3 also saw oversight continuing to grow in importance as Parliament, through the Parliamentary Anti-Corruption Caucus (PACC), played a more aggressive role in anti-corruption with an uptick in the number of commissions carrying out effective and focused oversight of government programs and operations.

More specifically, the third year of the project witnessed activities and progress in all four major objectives of ALBA:

Objective 1 – Strengthened Legislative Processes, ALBA launched its first Commission Support Unit (CSU) early in Year 2, an important step in instituting a standard approach toward building the capacity of the National Assembly staff and MPs in legislative analysis and drafting amendments. The same approach continued in Year 3 and ALBA intends to continue this approach in Year 4. The CSU is designed to assist commissions of the National Assembly in improving their legislative and oversight processes through conducting research and analysis for pending priority legislation and policy issues and assisting commissions in preparing analytical reports including bill analysis, proposed amendments, and a final commission report. In Year 2, through the CSU-approach, ALBA supported the Budget Commission to analyze the Banking Law, Anti-Money Laundering Law, the Law to Counter the Financing of Terrorism, and the Procurement Law assisting commissions with research, analysis, drafting of amendments, and holding hearings on draft legislation. This approach was expanded in Year 3 to include (among others) an analysis of the Electric Power Law, Telecommunication Duties Law, Transit Duties Law, Law on Regulating Salary of Government Officials, Law on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (EVAW), and the Anti-Harassment Law. This new approach enabled ALBA to play a key role in the passage of the Anti-Money Laundering Law, Countering the Finance of Terrorism Law, and a number of other laws. As part of its continuing efforts to build the capacity of commission staff, ALBA assisted PACC members in developing and introducing Whistle Blower Protection Law and likewise assisted the Women’s Affairs Commission in

developing an Anti-Harassment Law as a members' bills and assisted commissions in conducting workshops on several pieces of priority legislation, including the Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) and the Higher Education Law with staff of the Secretariats of both Houses. In Year 3, ALBA's Legislative Team also issued its series of Legislative Bulletins, with a focus on legislative analysis. ALBA mentored commission staff on rudimentary bill costing techniques as they related to Member's Bills introduced during the current session. In addition, ALBA worked with the Women's Commission of the WJ as they deliberated the re-introduction of EVAW.

Objective 2 – Improved Oversight ALBA continued support to the Parliamentary Anti-Corruption Caucus (PACC), which led efforts to enrich the draft of the Whistleblowers Protection Law which it will present as a Members' Bill to the National Assembly in Year 4. Assisted by ALBA, PACC received anti-corruption pledges from new nominated members of Cabinet, the Attorney General, members of Supreme Court, and other High-Ranking Cabinet Officials. ALBA also assisted PACC in establishing anti-corruption committees within Kabul and Bamyan Provincial Councils (PCs). ALBA continued its support to PACC by providing technical assistance and trainings to actively engage PACC in anti-corruption activities and demanding greater transparency and accountability from ministries and government agencies and to keep anti-corruption issues high on the agendas of both houses. Finally, PACC representatives continued to participate as observers in weekly sessions of the National Procurement Committee, chaired by President Ghani, in order to ensure transparency and accountability in government procurement processes.

ALBA also continued to engage the leadership of the Budget and Economic Commissions of both Houses, and was available to assist other commissions on an 'on-demand' basis, expanding the project's support to national budget processes to include greater scrutiny of draft budget reviews, mid-year budget reviews and the annual public financial report (Qatia). Oversight trips were conducted to a number of provinces that focused on important themes such as the implementation status of development projects, oil reserves, industrial parks, prisons and customs and revenue systems in the northern and western provinces of the country. Civil society organization (CSO) engagement was another key initiative in Year 3, with ALBA closely collaborating with CSOs and conducting a series of trainings on budget-related matters in coordination with Counterpart International.

Objective 3 – Increased Outreach ALBA supported the standing commissions of both Houses of Parliament to engage with a variety of CSOs, youth, civic groups and provincial councils through a total of seven national conferences, 13 provincial oversight visits and four public hearings in order to increase public participation in parliamentary decisions and to build effective relationship between Afghan parliament and several public groups.

In addition, ALBA supported Parliament to increase the visibility of both houses, producing and distribution of plenary reports as well as 14,000 copies of parliamentary publications including quarterly magazines, official gazettes, calendars, brochures, file folders, covers for appreciation

letters, notebooks, diaries and 'end of session' reports on a regular basis to a variety of stakeholders.

Objective 4 – Increased Institutional Development, In order to develop the API's governance structure, a study tour for eight officials of the WJ, MJ and Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs (MOPA) was organized to the Bureau of Parliamentary Studies and Training in India.

During Year 3, API established linkages with private and public research institutes such as the Afghanistan Institute of Rural Development (AIRD), the Procurement Policy Unit (PPU-MoF), the Afghanistan Civil Service Institute (ACSI), the MOFA Diplomacy Institute and a number of private capacity building consultancy firms. Approximately 25%-30% of the trainings in Year 3 were conducted by these partner institutes.

In Year 3 the API Fellowship Program was re-designed and implemented in close consultation with both houses. The process was organized into three tranches: there were 45 fellows in the 1st tranche who were placed in the MJ; a 2nd tranche had 45 fellows placed in the WJ; and a 3rd tranche saw another 45 fellows enter the program, 30 of which were placed in the MJ (following the graduation of the 1st tranche) and 15 placed with the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.

THE FOUR OBJECTIVES OF ALBA

STRENGTHEN
LEGISLATIVE
PROCESSES



IMPROVE
OVERSIGHT



INCREASE
OUTREACH



INCREASE
INSTITUTIONAL
DEVELOPMENT





OBJECTIVE ONE

Strengthened Legislative Processes

ALBA's third year continued to see a significant increase in the passage of legislation through the two Houses of Parliament, although challenges with quorum remain. With support from the Commission Support Unit (CSU), Parliament showed that it could work constructively to improve their legislative and oversight processes to better analyze the Electric Power Law, Telecommunication Duties Law, Transit Duties Law, Law on Regulating Salary of Government Officials, EAW Law, and the Anti-Harassment Law, among others. Also, the input of civil society and other stakeholders was reflected in a growing number of bills over the past year. ALBA also designed several publications for wide distribution to support the legislative process including policy research guides, legislative drafting and legislative process manuals and parliamentary tool kit.

Institutionalize Legislative Drafting and Analysis

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

- ALBA provided support to the MJ Legislative Affairs Commission on the **Law on Salary and Privileges of High Ranking Officials**. The commission requested ALBA to assist them specifically on the issue of MPs' pensions.
- ALBA assisted MJ Legislative Affairs, Education and Health commission members to discern legal ways by which striking teachers' demands could be met through the **Civil Servants Law**.
- ALBA provided technical advice and assistance to the WJ Legislative Affairs Commission in regards to Article 3 of the Constitution (which deals with the application of Sharia Law) in reference to the **Banking Law**.
- The WJ Commission on Justice and Judicial Affairs intends to increase the punishment for Human Trafficking and ALBA, working with the commission, made recommendations for revisions and amendments to articles 6, 7 and 9 of the **Human Trafficking Law**.
- The MJ Legislative Affairs Commission, based on recommendation made by the ALBA Legislative Team, summoned officials from several governmental ministries and agencies including the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Education and Civil Service Commission to get their inputs concerning draft amendments brought to the **Civil Service Law** and **Education Law**.

- The WJ International Affairs Commission requested ALBA to prepare an analysis on two documents signed between Afghanistan and the United Arab Emirates: 1) the Agreement on the **Extradition of Sentenced Persons between Afghanistan and UAE**, and 2) the **Security Cooperation Agreement between Afghanistan and UAE**. ALBA's Legislative Team provided this to the Commission Chair.
- ALBA gave a final review of the **Draft Members' Bill on the Issuance of Presidential Decrees** and shared its analysis on the law, informing the Legislative Affairs Commission that the enactment of that law is contrary to the tenets of the Constitution. That said, the law is still pending before the commission.
- The MJ Commission on Legislative Affairs requested that ALBA assist in reviewing the **Rules of Procedures** and share proposed amendments with the commission.
- ALBA conducted research and a legal review of the **Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons**, which was referred to the WJ Legislative Affairs Commission.
- ALBA assisted the MJ International Affairs Commission to scrutinize the document, **Principles and Objectives of Foreign Policy of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan**. The policy document examines the general principles of Afghan foreign policy.
- The MJ Legislative Affairs Commission tabled the **IEC and IECC Law** (through Presidential Decree) and requested ALBA to prepare an analysis of the Presidential Decree to: brief members on the content of the Law; explain why the decree was originally rejected by the WJ plenary and; detail whether the decree is in compliance with the Constitution.
- After completing a general revision of the **Whistle Blower Protection Bill**, ALBA 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 Members Bill.



PACC meets to discuss the Whistle Blowers Protection Bill which they plan to introduce to parliament in Year 4.

Continued Technical Legal Assistance

ALBA also provided technical input pertaining to several laws for a variety of commissions of both Houses. These include:

- Electric Energy Law (Pending)
- Transit Duties Law (Passed)
- Income Tax Law (Passed)
- Civil Service Law (Rejected)
- Nuclear Energy Law (Passed)
- Sexual Harassment Law (member's bill in initial draft and in progress)
- Anti-Money Laundering Law (Passed)

International Agreements

ALBA assisted the MJ International Affairs Commission in reviewing the following agreements which were passed by the WJ:

- United Nations Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air
- Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports
- Strategic Partnership Agreement between Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and United Arab Emirate (UAE)
- Extradition of Sentenced Persons Agreement between Afghanistan and the UAE
- Security Cooperation Agreement between Afghanistan and UAE
- Military Cooperation Agreement between Afghanistan and Turkey
- Implementing protocol of grant aid of Turkey to Afghanistan
- Organization for Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Food Security Statute
- OIC Convention on the Fight Against International Terrorism
- South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Agreement on Rapid Response to Natural Disasters
- Agreement between the Ministries of Defense of Afghanistan and China

Training for MOPA

In order to meet the capacity building needs of MOPA staff, ALBA conducting the following trainings:

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

Developing Effective Communications Processes with the Executive

Meeting with Minister of Parliamentary Affairs

ALBA met with the Deputy Minister of Parliamentary Affairs to discuss cooperation in certain areas, including:

- **Support to the Network of Parliamentary Liaison Units.** These units were established to support coordination between the ministries and Parliament, but have been relatively inactive. ALBA and the MOPA Minister agreed to explore ways in which the units can be a resource to Parliament and its commissions.
- **Training for MOPA Staff.** The Deputy Minister enquired about training offered through the Afghan Parliamentary Institute (API) and noted that a number of his staff would benefit. In principle, it was agreed that such trainings not only provide technical skills but foster better executive-legislative relations at both a senior level as well as at a more functional level and that all such opportunities should be rigorously pursued.

A briefing was held with the MJ Secretary-General, and the MOPA Deputy to discuss common ground for improving coordination between the MJ secretariat, MOPA and ALBA for the creation and full implementation of Commission Support Units (CSUs) for all Upper House commissions. The Secretary-General warmly welcomed this idea and requested ALBA to develop a concept note.

Bangladesh Study Tour for New Anti-Harassment Legislation

ALBA and the MOJ conducted a joint study tour to Bangladesh to analyze the country's policies on harassment. Upon return to Kabul, the delegation held a series of meetings with the MOJ and WJ Women's Affairs Commission to eventually propose anti-harassment legislation to Parliament. ALBA is taking the lead in assisting the commission to preparing a first draft of the bill.

Expanding External Networks for Legislative Drafting and Analysis

ALBA is developing a CSO database which identifies both organizational and individual expertise as potential support on policy and legislative issues. Commissions and staff can draw upon this support base in their scrutiny of bills referred to parliament. And the end of the reporting period, the initial draft of the database had been completed and was awaiting WJ and MJ secretariats inputs, comments and feedback.

Legislative Drafting Manual

ALBA began work on a *Legislative Drafting Manual* designed to enable commission and legislative directorate staff to improve drafting/analysis techniques in legislative drafting - particularly drafting members' bills and amendments in the national assembly. ALBA also developed a PowerPoint presentation and training materials, and delivered a two-day training on legislative drafting for MJ staff.

Legislative Process Manual

ALBA began work developing a *Legislative Process Manual* which aims to assist MPs, Senators and their staff, CSOs, NGOs, and other legal research institutions in understanding the law-making process in Afghanistan. At the end of the reporting period, the Dari and Pashto version had been completed and ALBA was working on edits to the English version.

Meeting with Director General of Parliamentary Affairs, Office of the President, GoIRA

ALBA met with the Director General of Parliamentary Affairs in the Office of the President to provide legal council on the official inauguration of parliamentary sessions.

Presentation on International Organizations

ALBA delivered a presentation on International Organizations to MJ staff at the API so they would have a clearer idea of how to engage with these bodies. The presentation covered the following topics:

- Goals and objectives of IOs
- Legal personality and procedural criteria for membership in IOs
- Privileges and immunities of IOs
- Classification and financial resources of IOs

Analytical Report on the Constitution

ALBA began work on an analytical report on interpretations of certain sections of the Constitution that were published in the 4th issue of the *Legislative Bulletin* in March. Copies were shared with members of the National Assembly.

Parliamentary Toolkit

ALBA began developing a toolkit that will provide information and advice to help parliamentarians become actively involved in their core constitutional functions of legislation, representation and oversight. It will also be a source of information for the general public on the functions of parliament.

Discussion on TAPI Pipeline Project

Based on a WJ International Affairs Commission request, ALBA provided a briefing and technical information on the TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) pipeline project including: background; international talks and supplementary agreements for TAPI; pipeline specifications and the political and socio-economic benefits for Afghanistan.

Public Hearing on Higher Education Law

ALBA supported the MJ Religious Affairs, Cultural, Education and Higher Education Commission to conduct a public hearing on the Higher Education Law which is pending in the Lower House. Educators from around the country participated in the one-day hearing, provided their views on necessary amendments and highlighted the urgency with which the legislation must be enacted.

Deliberations on Procurement Law

ALBA's CSU of the WJ Budget and Finance Commission 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 asked to re-introduce a final version. After some internal debate it was decided to return the legislation to the government as requested.

Strengthen Research Methods for Oversight and Legislation

Developing Policy Research Guides

ALBA completed Issue III of the *Budget and Oversight Bulletin and Legislative Bulletin* (English, Dari and Pashto) and distributed it to various Parliamentary commissions, the Parliament archive, universities, CSOs, and other stakeholders. The bulletin encompasses two research analyses on "Legislative Oversight" and "The Doctrine of Non-Retroactivity of the Law" as well as briefings on the following legislation:

- Wedding Ceremony Law
- Geographical Indications Law
- Tax Administration Law
- Law on Acting Ministers
- Law on Residence and Travels of Foreign Nationals to Afghanistan
- Bilateral Strategic agreement between Afghanistan and Turkey
- Higher Education Law
- Banking Law
- Tobacco Law

Developing Effective Communications Processes with the Executive

ALBA made gains in supporting the MOPA to better act as liaison between the Executive and Parliament on policy-making and legislation. Following up on an initial assessment of the training needs of MOPA, 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

Ministerial Performance Reports

ALBA met with the Ministry of Finance's Budget Performance and Monitoring Unit manager and discussed the quarterly performance reports of line ministries, and how they are not distributed to commissions in both houses. 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.

Meetings with the Ministers of Justice and Tribal Affairs

The ALBA DCOP and MJ leadership met with the two ministers, 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.



OBJECTIVE TWO Improved Oversight

Oversight activities continued to be a major focus of the project's third year. ALBA enabled Parliament to increase both the depth and breadth of its efforts to monitor government programs and priorities – with particular emphasis on the provinces - through a number of oversight trips outside of Kabul. ALBA continued support to the PACC, which reviewed and led the effort to enrich the draft of Whistleblowers Protection Law which it will present as a Members' Bill to the National Assembly in Year 4. Assisted by ALBA, PACC received anti-corruption pledges from new nominated members of Cabinet, the Attorney General, members of Supreme Court, and other Cabinet High Ranking Officials. ALBA also paid close attention to budgetary and expenditure issues that included greater scrutiny of the draft budget review, mid-year budget review and the annual public financial report.

Increase General Oversight through Commissions

ALBA provides oversight support to key sectoral commissions through a comprehensive and user-friendly database, training to commissions' staff, support to commissions on quarterly and annual performance reports, quarterly oversight and budget bulletin, and the *Oversight Manual*.

Provincial Oversight Trips

During the year, ALBA supported several provincial oversight trips investigating a variety of issues with commissions from both Houses. They include:

Public Welfare Commission Oversight Trip to Herat

ALBA supported the MJ Commission on Public Welfare, Environment, Natural Resources, Health, Work and Workers to convene an oversight trip to Herat Province to investigate the workings of provincial governance, the status of public services in Herat and to inspect claims of the existence of 'ghost' hospitals.

WJ Complaints Commission Oversight Trip to Bamyan

This ALBA-sponsored trip addressed land confiscation issues in Bamyan Province. The delegation conducted a public hearing for residents who shared their concerns and provided written complaints to the delegation. These were shared with the governor and provincial authorities who committed to looking into the matter.



Legislative Commission Oversight Trip to Herat

ALBA assisted the MJ Commission on Legislative Affairs in a provincial oversight visit to Herat Province. The delegation oversaw activities and procedures of the justice and judicial bodies of Herat, 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.

(Left) The Commission was particularly interested in reviewing how prisons were managed in Herat.

Budget and Economic Commission Oversight Trip to Herat

The commission visited Herat Province to conduct a public hearing on challenges facing Herat customs and border posts.

Meshrano Jirga Oversight Trip to Balkh

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

Meshrano Jirga Oversight Trip to Kandahar

ALBA supported the Meshrano Jirga on an oversight visit 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.

Commission Oversight Trip to Ministry of Public Health Project

The WJ Health Commission conducted an oversight visit to a Ministry of Public Health project and subsequently discovered the MOPH received approximately 23 containers of equipment for the project that it is not utilizing. As a result, the project has been carried forward a year and has failed to meet its objectives.

Commission Oversight Trip to North Afghanistan Customs Offices

The MJ Commission on National Economy, Finance and Budget undertook an oversight visit to two of the most important customs offices in Northern Afghanistan: Aqina and Hairatan. During the visit the commission reviewed complaints regarding corruption and conducted oversight visits of a number of development projects at the region.



The Commission on National Economy, Finance and Budget meets customs officials in Aqina to review development projects.

Commission Oversight, Planning Hearings and Presentations

As part of the plan to improve the oversight by commissions, ALBA's legislative and oversight teams delivered presentations to several commissions in both houses. 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

ALBA supported the WJ Economic Committee in a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Transport, the Deputy Minister of Trade, and the head of the Afghan Chamber of Commerce to discuss transportation problems faced by Afghan traders moving through Pakistan.

Oversight Planning with WJ Health and Natural Resources Commission

ALBA worked with the WJ Health Commission and the Natural Resources Commission 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 media roll-out.

Commission Moots New Tax Revenue Streams

The WJ Budget and Finance Commission sought ALBA's technical assistance to increase government revenue - the oversight team proposed that focus should be placed upon tax collection, especially from imports. It was highlighted that there is an agreement between the government and Coalition Forces that all companies importing fuel and military equipment were exempt from customs taxes. The Commission stated that it would closely monitor the matter and develop possible solutions in order to increase government revenue generation from this hitherto exempt revenue stream.

Complaints Commission Experiencing Lack of Resolution

ALBA met with the advisor to the WJ Complaints Commission to discuss ALBA support to the commission. The advisor spoke about the nature of complaints received and mentioned many are from high-ranking government officials, provincial governors and provincial police chiefs. In many instances, cases received could not be solved in local courts. The advisor requested pilot programs in different regions to clarify the complaints commission's role and how to make a case and submit a complaint, and links on the Parliamentary websites for citizens to submit complaints.

Support to Parliament's Oversight of Budget Priorities & Implementation

Preparation for MP Workshops on Budget Preparation

ALBA held a series of workshops that brought together ministry 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. This process will also be slightly amended for use in engaging CSOs on the budget preparation process, following initial Parliamentary workshops.

Report on Changes to the 2016 National Budget

ALBA assisted the WJ Budget, Finance, Public Accounts and Banking Affairs Commission by summarizing changes to the 2016 National Budget along with figures to be read out in the plenary. The ALBA team compiled a simple spreadsheet to highlight the differences between the first and second drafts of the budget.

Budget and Economic Fact Sheet on the 2016 National Budget

ALBA prepared a Budget and Economic Fact Sheet on the 2016 National Budget in English, Pashto and Dari. The document provides all necessary budgetary information to enhance MPs' and Senators' understanding of the operating and development budget amount, revenue forecast, gross domestic product estimation and income per capita for the nation.

Presentation on Gender Responsive Budgeting

ALBA's oversight team prepared a presentation on Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) which, among other things, covered:

- GRB Benefits and Goals
- GRB requirements
- Main GRB Stakeholders
- Role of GRB Legislature

Meshrano Jirga Extraordinary Session

The Meshrano Jirga held an Extraordinary Session to question the Minister of Finance and the Director-General of Budget on the draft budget for 2016. With guidance and training from ALBA, senators from the Budget and Finance Commission were better able to address substantive questions to the officials.

National Provincial Councils Conference

Attended by over 115 provincial councilors and high-ranking authorities from the MJ and government, the conference kept to a rigorous schedule of working groups and networking sessions to discuss provincial issues. A conference recommendation paper was developed and presented to the President to inform his office of future policy decisions.

2014 Annual Expenditures Report Training

ALBA prepared 60 information packets and conducted a presentation on the 2014 Annual Expenditures Report to the Meshrano Jirga plenary. Among other things, the presentation included:

- Budget execution and project expenditures (particularly projects with low or zero expenditures)
- Revenue trends
- Comparison of budget execution rates of the last 5 years

WJ Meeting with National Bank Officials

The WJ Economic Commission called the Deputy Governor of Da Afghanistan Bank to discuss monetary and currency policies for the first six months of the year and review monetary policy for the next 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

ALBA 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 stressed the importance of said office and explained that the Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Finance, and Ministry of Commerce and Industries need to coordinate 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 2015 National Budget

ALBA reviewed all development projects from six line ministries in the proposed 2015 budget and compiled a complete list of projects and activities for the WJ Women's Affairs Commission, which include among other things:

- the Female Youth Initiative Project
- construction of Women's Training Centers
- implementation of the National Action Plan for Women of Afghanistan

Healthcare Budgeting

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

Budget Bulletin

ALBA designed a quarterly issued document aimed at keeping Parliament informed about various aspects of budgetary oversight and upcoming components of the budgetary process. The first copy was printed in September 2015 and was presented to the leadership of both Houses, who distributed it to MPs and Senators in future plenary sessions. The bulletin will also serve as a tool for general training sessions provided through the API for both parliamentarians and staff.

Qatia Report

The Budget and Finance Commission of the WJ received the Qatia Report from Audit Office and analysis of the report by ALBA was undertaken. ALBA prepared and compiled a list of all projects which have zero percent expenditure in the last fiscal year. All documents were presented to all Commissions in both Houses. The documents include very useful data for questioning ministers and other high-ranking officials and can be used for decision-making in next year's budget allocation.

Development Project Database

ALBA created a development project database to track operating and budget expenditures. The report includes 717 development projects approved in the last fiscal year of which the team identified 347 development projects which had zero expenditures. The information will be shared with MPs and committee assistants in all line ministries and independent directorates.

Support to Parliament in Oversight of Provincial Budget Performance

ALBA facilitates information exchanges between parliament and their counterparts in the provinces to help MPs observe ongoing programs and projects. This oversight is crucial for understanding provincial priorities and reviewing budgets and the allocation of resources to the provinces review is essential.

List of Provincial Development Allocations

ALBA designed a provincial breakdown of the national development budget. The list provides details of development budget allocations by project to each province so that each province will understand its development budget for the fiscal year. ALBA worked closely with various commissions to share the list with all 34 provincial councils for oversight purposes.

Meeting with Upper House Secretary General

ALBA had several meetings with the MJ Secretary General on the Complaints Management System (CMS). The conversation has been ongoing but has not led to the desired results. Implementing the CMS is regarded as a high-priority project by both the MJ and ALBA, and will receive top priority once the MJ's administrative board provides approval.

Kabul Provincial Council Officially Establishes Anti-Corruption Committee

With assistance from PACC, the Kabul Provincial Council (KPC) formally established an anti-corruption committee and requested ALBA's assistance with anti-corruption trainings to support their work.

Oversight of Ministry of Public Health Performance

PACC members conducted an oversight visit to examine the HR practices of the Ministry of Public Health and the hospital at Camp Phoenix. PACC received complaints that most of the newly hired employees at the new hospital at Camp Phoenix are from Panjshir Province, prompting the scrutiny.

Supporting Anti-Corruption Activities

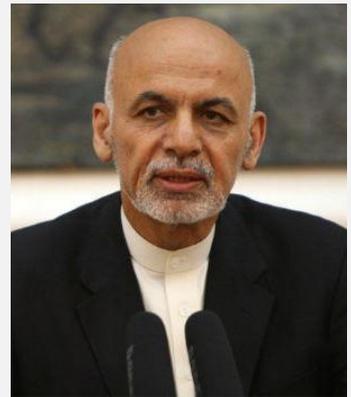
National Procurement Committee and PACC

PACC representatives continue to participate in weekly sessions of the National Procurement Committee, chaired by President Ghani. During the year, 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 army. The President underscored that the delegation was appointed to increase compliance, ensure transparency, and fight corruption in all contracts.

Afghan President Lauds PACC

Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, in a televised interview with *Tolo News* highlighted the role PACC played in overseeing the award of national contracts:

“In order to prevent corruption in government, at first we tried to bring fundamental changes in the banking system of Afghanistan, and we did this by introducing of Mr. Khalil Sediq as Head of Afghanistan Central Bank. So we are not facing any crisis in the banking system and this is directly helping us in the fight against corruption. A second issue is the awarding of national contracts as the procurement process was where most of the corruption existed. In order to combat corruption the government established the National Procurement Committee, which has five permanent members including the President, the CEO, the 2nd Vice-President, the Ministers of Justice, Finance, and Economics. To date, the committee has met on 22 occasions and has saved approximately US\$125 million.



“Fortunately, the Parliamentary Anti-Corruption Caucus has been participating in order to ensure both accountability and transparency”

PACC Meeting with Incoming Cabinet Ministers

ALBA facilitated a PACC meeting with newly-nominated cabinet ministers at the ALBA office. The purpose was to get the commitment of 14 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.

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

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



Commission nominees sign on the dotted line against corruption.

PACC/ALBA Meeting with President Ghani

PACC and ALBA met 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 support of the President in fighting corruption. In order to promote good governance and to combat corruption in Afghanistan, PACC presented a set of recommendations to the President. They include, among several others:

- Establishing 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
- Establishing coordination offices inside institutions from the federal to municipal level to facilitate the affairs of citizens and disengage them from direct contact with civil servants and reduce opportunities for corruption
- Registering and declaring assets of senior public officials

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 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.

Meeting with the First Lady

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

PACC Establishes Presence in Bamyán Province

ALBA supported PACC on the establishment of an anti-corruption committee within the Bamyán provincial council and to create coordination between PACC and civil society, provincial councils, and other government agencies. The PACC chair coordinated the delegation meeting with the provincial governor and met with the Education Department to collect information regarding 'ghost' (absent or nonexistent) schools, 'ghost' teachers and 'ghost' students.

PACC Members USA Trip: International Visitor Leadership Program

The United States Embassy in Kabul organized a trip to the US under the theme: "the approach to 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.

ALBA/PACC Meeting with MEC Representatives

ALBA facilitated a PACC meeting with MEC representatives during which an 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.

Anti-Corruption and Good Governance Training Manual

ALBA continued designing the *Anti-Corruption and Good Governance Training Manual*. A number of new topics were identified during the reporting period, and the manual was created in Dari language as sent for final designs at the end of the reporting period.

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 was distributed to PACC members, Parliamentarians, Provincial Council members, and civil society organizations.



OBJECTIVE THREE: Increased Outreach Capacity

ALBA's dedication to increasing outreach and expanding Parliament's national visibility, allowing citizens to better influence their elected representatives, deliberations, and decisions on issues continued. In Year 3, ALBA worked alongside CSOs and Parliamentary Secretariats to develop formalized procedures and guidelines for conducting public commission meetings and for better inclusion of CSOs in budgetary and legislative processes. ALBA also focused on inclusion of Afghan youth in the parliamentary process with youth conferences and preparations for a Youth Parliament. Additionally, ALBA worked with gender-based CSOs and commissions in both houses to design procedures through which enhanced coordination and strategic collaboration among women's activists and CSOs can be achieved.

Increased Interaction Between CSOs and Members

Nimroz and Farah Outreach Trip

ALBA sponsored a Judicial Affairs Commission delegation to Farah and Nimroz Provinces to investigate several matters, including the importation of tax-exempt fuel, the operational budgets of both Governors' offices, and allegations of the illegal hunting of exotic and rare birds by foreigners. The delegation made a trip to the Attorney Generals' offices and provincial prisons and met with approximately 500 members of the public. Basic sanitation, corruption and insecurity were highlighted as major concerns – due in large part to the fact that these provinces are major thoroughfares for the Taliban drug trade.



The Commission meets with prisoners from Farah Province to discuss basic sanitation in prisons.

Helmand Outreach Trip

The MJ Internal Security and Defense Commission met with local administrative offices, security officials, provincial council members, and community elders to investigate security challenges and ensure local voices and concerns are being heard in Kabul. The delegation noted specific issues and challenges and will follow up with relevant ministries/departments in Kabul and respond back to provincial authorities.

Gender Outreach

ALBA assisted both houses' Commissions on Women's Affairs, Civil Society and Human Rights in their strategic planning process for the current parliamentary term. The commissions' efforts were focused on thematic issues such as reviewing educational curricula from a gender perspective, girls' access to education in remote areas, marriage registration, and women's political participation. ALBA's interventions with both commissions were focused on effective processes through which enhanced coordination and strategic collaboration among women activists and CSOs could be achieved. Additionally, ALBA supported the WJ's Commission on Women's Affairs in developing a CSO database to be used as a tool for enhancement of CSO engagement in the commission decisions.

Women's Day Event

ALBA supported the MJ Commission on Women's Affairs to convene a public forum in recognition of International Women's Day and in celebration of the achievements of Afghan women. Parliamentarians, government officials from the Ministry of Women Affairs, senators and representatives from civil society spoke about the challenges and achievements of Afghan women, and made a call to action for accelerating gender equality in all government agencies. They called for greater women's representation in leadership roles and additional action to address the gaps in equality.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

ALBA 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, senators, ministry officials and many civil society and human rights groups. 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.

Youth Parliament

ALBA began preparations for a Youth Parliament, an endeavor that the Meshrano Jirga sees as a way to increase the visibility of parliament. ALBA conducted an extensive contextual analysis of the youth parliament as well as the target audience and selection methods.

Afghanistan National Youth Conference

With support from ALBA, the MJ Commission on Religious Affairs, Cultural, Education and Higher Education held the first National Youth Conference in Afghanistan in mid-October. The event attracted 200 young Afghans (almost half female). Participants mainly discussed youth participation in parliamentary decisions. 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 following six months.

Youth Political Participation

Following on the first Youth Conference, ALBA 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). ALBA also planned regional / national conferences on youth political participation for 2016.

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

ALBA coordinated a meeting with the MJ Secretary-General and the CS-JWG to reach a consensus on effective participation mechanisms for CSOs in the legislative process. Along with 12 CSOs, the representatives drafted two MOUs: 1) an MOU to formalize CSO roles and contributions to the legislative process, and 2) a commission-level MOU to govern both parties' interaction in the legislative process.

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

ALBA held a workshop on 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. Also, ALBA briefed CSOs and Parliament with a presentation of the draft 2016 budget to over 25 civil society organizations.

Bilateral Security Agreement (BSA) Public Hearing

A public hearing on the implementation of the BSA was held with over 100 attendees, including senior government officials, Senators, university professors, international security experts, and

military professionals. CSOs and the media were also present to discuss the implementation of the BSA.

Second Annual Disabled Conference

ALBA supported the MJ Disabled Commission to hold 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 the commission’s findings from last year’s event.

Public Forums where Legislators and the Public Interact

Follow up on Baghlan Public Hearing with the MJ Defense Commission

ALBA worked with the MJ Defense Commission to develop a report and recommendations following a public hearing in Baghlan. The Commission met with Chief of Army staff and the Director of Operations of the Ministry of Defense and decided to reinforce Baghlan security forces with extra brigade of 700 ANA personnel.

Distribution of Publications to Stakeholders

During the reporting period, ALBA distributed 6,500 copies of a variety of publications that were designed and printed by ALBA to CSOs, International Organizations, Institutes, Universities, Media and other stakeholders. These included:

- Anti-Corruption Policy Guide (English, Dari and Pashto)
- Budget and Oversight Bulletin (English, Dari and Pashto)
- Legislative Bulletin (English, Dari and Pashto)
- ALBA in Brief (English, Dari and Pashto)
- Citizen Guide to Parliament (English, Dari and Pashto)
- USAID-branded pocket calendars with Parliament contacts

Public Awareness Event on Security Situation in Kunduz Province

ALBA initiated a public event with local security officials in Kunduz and the MJ Defense Commission to assure residents of the security force’s ability to combat security threats in the province. The event attracted over 500 citizens including provincial council members, security officials, civil society groups and community activists, community elders, religious leaders and district council members. After an open discussion, the following points were considered:

- The Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior Affairs must deploy additional troops to Kunduz
- The Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police need to be equipped with modern weapons



An Elder speaks his mind during an open discussion on recent security efforts in Kunduz.

- Reforms to administration and counter-corruption are needed in local administrations
- Jobs creation for youth and disarmament of criminal gangs

Panjsher Public Hearing

ALBA and the MJ First Deputy Speaker held a public hearing in Panjsher Province with more than 400 attendees. The hearing focused on public issues and their local representation in Parliament.

Qatia Conference

ALBA supported the MJ National Economy Committee to convene a National Conference on the Qatia (National Audit Report). The conference launched a debate on national expenditures and brought together Parliament and CSOs to foster greater cooperation to enhance government accountability and effectiveness in public service delivery. About 200 participants attended the conference (approximately 40% of participants were female). The following three topics were discussed in detail:

- CSO recommendations on steps to be taken by the MJ
- Specific interaction mechanisms for MJ and CSOs to sustainably support each other and enhance accountability in public sector
- Main lessons to be learned from the Qatia report

Strengthening Parliamentary Visibility

Distribution of Plenary Reports, AYAN and MJ Diary to Stakeholders

ALBA distributed daily plenary reports to a list of almost 200 CSOs, international organizations, institutes, universities, and media by email.

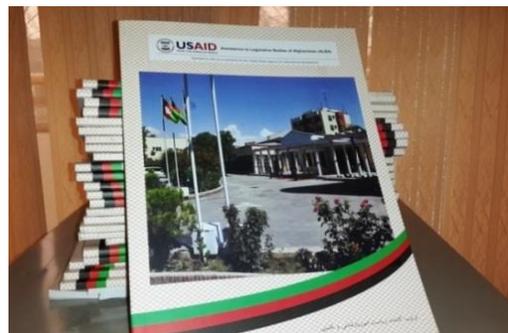


Over the year, ALBA edited and managed the printing of two issues of AYAN magazine (#36 and #37) for the MJ in compliance with USAID branding policies.

Additionally, ALBA worked to finalize the design of *Meshrano Jirga 2016 Diary* to be distributed to Senators, parliamentarians and select government departments. The diary was printed and submitted to the MJ in April.

End of Session Reports

Following the 9th and 10th sessions of the Wolesi Jirga and Meshrano Jirga, ALBA designed 1,000 copies in English, Dari and Pashtu of *End of Session Reports* for both Houses. The reports provide detailed coverage of bills discussed, passed, and rejected; issues covered in the daily business on both Houses; international treaties signed and adopted; and the details of questioning, hearing and interpellation sessions. The reports also provide information on activities of the WJ and MJ commissions as well as individual commission questioning sessions and deliberations.



Anti-Discrimination Campaign Materials

ALBA supported a group of MPs and youth activists to launch a 'no discrimination' campaign within Parliament. One thousand brochures and 300 buttons were designed and produced for the campaign which is aimed at bringing awareness to all facets of discrimination that exist in Afghan society and government.

Parliament Website

During the reporting period, ALBA held coordination meetings with the Parliament's ICT Director and discussed the revised website's 'back-end' and 'front-end'. While the original plan called for a launch of the MJ web page in late August 2015 and the WJ page in late September 2015, the website has been experiencing delays due to the scheduling of official meetings and approvals with the Secretaries-General and ICT Directorate. After a series of sessions with the M Secretary General and ICT staff, the new website was reviewed and finalized in term of its layout, content and structure. Preparations were made for training relevant staff on the new website, and the trainings were planned for April 2016. As of the writing of this report, final approvals from the ICT Directorate for sign off and public up-load was pending.



Improved Media Access to and Coverage of Parliament

Support to InterNews Journalists Training

Support was delivered as a part of the Parliamentary Elections Reporting training-of-trainers to prepare USAID partner InterNews to roll out training sessions with journalists in the run-up to the parliamentary elections. In total, nine participants including three women took part in the training.



OBJECTIVE FOUR: Increased Institutional Development

ALBA's main focus on this objective is the strengthening of the Afghanistan Parliamentary Institute (API) as a research and training institution that properly supports both Houses. Its eventual success requires an injection of new talent, political will, and a graduated approach to revealing its potential and value. In Year 3, ALBA continued existing and planned learning programs as well as developing an API governance structure.

Strengthening the Afghanistan Parliamentary Institute

Training Needs Assessments

With assistance from ALBA, API developed a training needs assessment for the staff of both Houses. In conjunction with the MJ and WJ Capacity Building units, API distributed over 250 assessments and completed forms were analyzed to help API develop and schedule its curriculum for the Parliamentary Spring Session. The ALBA API advisors also met with the Director of the American University of Afghanistan to plan new courses for senior WJ officials.

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. 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.

API Fellowship Program

The API Fellowship Program continued to be strong in its third year, in close cooperation with leadership from both Houses and the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs. The Fellows are assigned to relevant commissions and directorates for a period of one year and gain practical knowledge and skills during their tenure. There are currently 37 Fellows working in the Wolesi Jirga and 30 Fellows in the Meshrano Jirga. Another 15 Fellows are assigned to tasks in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs. ALBA graduated a total of 90 Fellows during the reporting period.

API Training

The year saw a greater variety of courses offered, and more offerings specific to the Wolesi Jirga Secretariat with a focus on business management coursework.

Courses for Fall and Winter 2015

Basic Management Skills

PARTICIPANTS: MJ and WJ Parliamentary Fellows

Legislative Research

PARTICIPANTS: MJ and WJ Parliamentary Fellows

Budgeting Systems of the World

PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff

Human Resource Management

PARTICIPANTS: MJ and WJ Parliamentary Fellows

Strategic Planning

PARTICIPANTS: MJ and WJ Parliamentary Fellows

Legal System of Afghanistan

PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff

International Organizations

PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff

Budget Expenditure Reports

PARTICIPANTS: MJ and WJ Parliamentary Fellows

Accounting Basics and Banking Reconciliation

PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff

Monitoring & Evaluation and Audits

PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff

Public Personnel Management

PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff

Ethics and Code of Conduct

PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff

Effective Report Writing

PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff

Effective Office Management

PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff

Records Management and Filing Systems

PARTICIPANTS: Wolesi Jirga Secretariat staff

API Courses for Summer 2015

Parliamentary Fellows Orientation

Target: Parliamentary Fellows

Legislative Research

Target: MJ Legislative/Research staff

Separation of Powers

Target: Parliamentary Fellows

Parliamentary Oversight

*Target: Staff of Budget and
Legislative Research Units*

Presentation Skills

Target: Secretariat Staff / Commission Staff

Committee Procedures

Target: WJ Fellows

Parliamentary Oversight

Target: Secretariat Staff / Commission Staff

Civic Education

Target: Secretariat Staff / Commission Staff

Budget Process

*Target: Staff of Budget and
Legislative Research Units*

Conflict/Economic Development

Target: Secretariat Staff / Commission Staff

Legislative Process

Target: MJ and WJ Fellows

Legislative Online Research

Target: MJ and WJ Fellows

Legislative Drafting

Target: Staff of Legislative Research Units

Effective Communication Skills

Target: MJ and WJ Fellows

Legislative Research

Target: Staff and MJ/WJ Fellows

Legislative Drafting

Target: WJ Fellows

Effective Communication Skills

Target: MOPA staff

I394 National Budget

Target: MJ Fellows

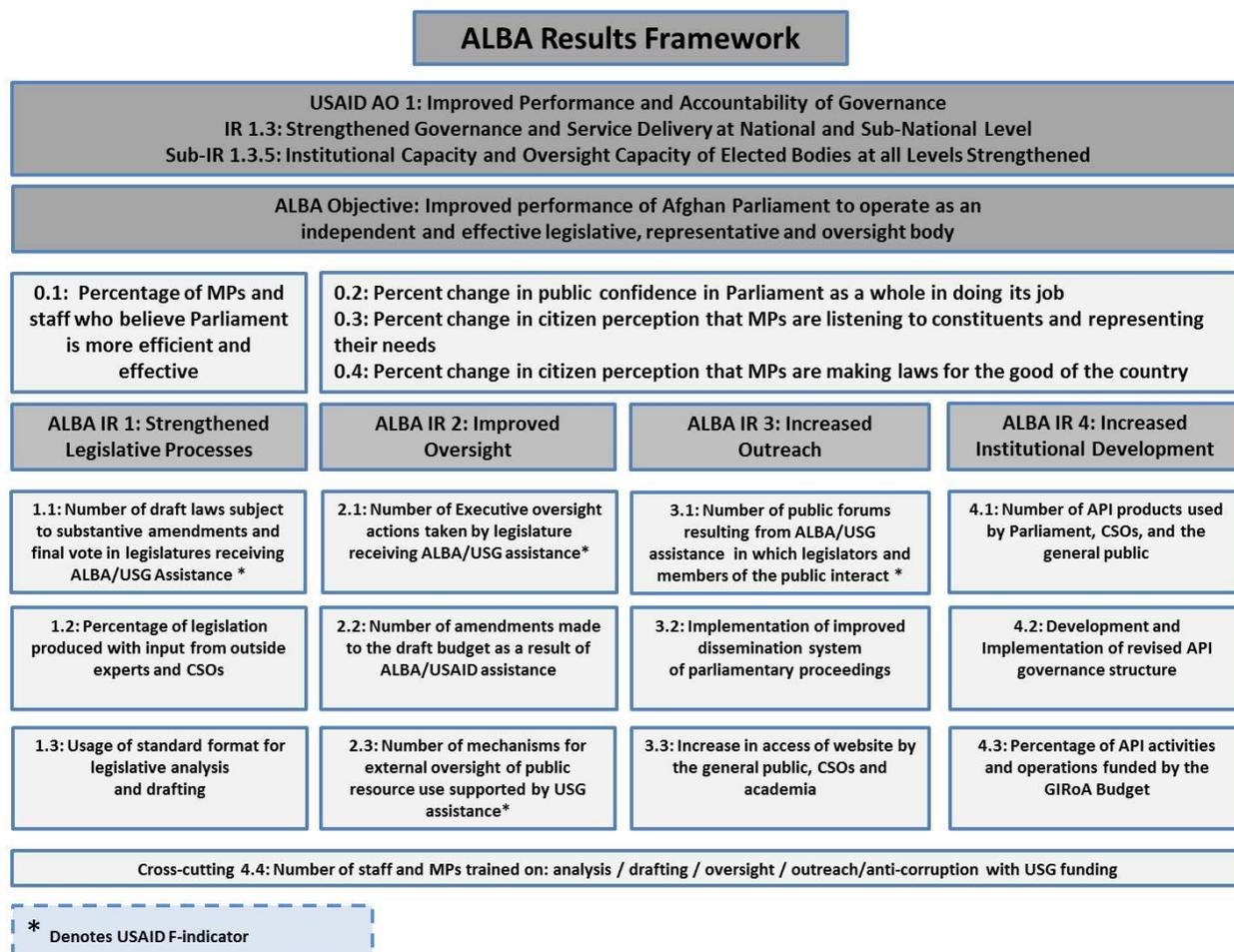
Specific Meshrano Jirga Support Activities

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, ALBA developed a needs assessment questionnaire for all MJ commissions to identify needs and challenges. This year, ALBA conducted assessments for three commissions and will continue this exercise with all other MJ commissions.

ALBA YEAR 3

Results Framework



ALBA Annual M&E Indicators Progress Report Year 3

Performances Indicator	Reporting Period	Unit of Measure	Yr3. Q1	Yr3. Q2	Yr3. Q3	Yr3. Q4	Actual yr. 3	Target	Comments
0.1: Percentage of MPs and staff who believe Parliament is more efficient and effective	Annual	Percentage	54%				54%	na	Based on the API's Training Needs Assessment.
0.2: Percent change in public confidence in Parliament as a whole in doing its job	Annual	Percentage	42.4%				42.4%	na	Based on 2015 Asia Foundation Survey of Afghan People
0.3: Percent change in citizen perception that parliament is listening to constituents and representing their needs	Annual	Percentage	57.8%				57.8%	na	Based on 2015 Asia Foundation Survey of Afghan People
0.4: Percent change in citizen perception that parliament makes laws for the good of the country	Annual	Percentage	42.9%				42.9%	na	Based on 2015 Asia Foundation Survey of Afghan People
1.1: Number of draft laws subject to substantive amendments and final vote in legislatures receiving USG Assistance *	Quarterly/ Annual	Number	1	0	3	5	9	11	
1.2: Percentage of legislation produced with input from outside experts and CSOs	Annual	Percentage	0	0	0	4%	4%	25%	
1.3: Number of draft laws, treaties, agreements and legislative documents receiving USG Assistance	Quarterly/ Annual	Number	2	1	2	7	12	12	
2.1: Number of Executive oversight actions taken by legislature receiving USG assistance*	Quarterly/ Annual	Number	29	6	12	8	55	50	
2.2: Number of amendments/ changes made to the draft budget by the Parliament as a result of the assistance of USAID.	Quarterly/ Annual	Number	0	0	1	1	2	2	
2.3: Number of mechanisms for external oversight of public resource use supported by USG assistance	Quarterly/ Annual	Number	3	17	10	3	33	35	

3.1: Number of public forums resulting from USG assistance in which legislators and members of the public interact *	Quarterly/ Annual	Number	5	4	5	1	15	15		
4.1: Number of API products used by Parliament, CSOs, and the general public	Quarterly/ Annual	Number	6	0	0	6	12	12		
4.2: Development and Implementation of revised API governance structure (Process Indicator)	Annual	Stages	Situational analysis for identifying steps to develop governance structure				√			
			Integration of Capacity building unit of the parliament to the API				√			
			Linkage of API with the other national institutes				√			
			Establishment of API Management board							
			Confirmation of funding for the API as a separate line item in the GIROA budget							
Cross-cutting: Number of staff and MPs trained on: analysis / drafting / oversight / outreach / anti-corruption with USG funding	Quarterly/ Annual	Number	593	894	480	531	2,498	2,150		
Number of Briefing and Presentations Provided to MPs, Fellows and other staff	Quarterly	Number	55	14	36	4	109			

Additional Notes to Indicators

As ALBA moves into its fourth and final year, it is anticipated that further adjustments to the indicators will be required – both because of significant progress encountered in some objectives, but also so the project can give a clearer picture of its accomplishments. We will review the indicators as part of Year 4 work planning and work with USAID to adjust ALBA indicators in line with our work plan. Highlights of progress and challenges to ALBA objectives during Year 3 include:

Passage of Legislation: The passage of legislation ramped up during Year 3, however this was clearly a result of two factors; 1) the disruption associated with the initial Presidential elections, and the subsequent and prolonged political crisis; and 2) the complexity of some of the legislation in the agenda, such as the Banking Law, the Procurement Law and the Tax Management Law. As the Parliamentary elections are now thought to be scheduled for October 2016, it is a possibility that further disruptions are inevitable during Year 4 of the project.

Oversight Actions: Commissions were more comfortable to undertake an increased number of provincial field visits during Year 3, and this will increase further into Year 4 of the program as MPs realize the importance of getting out of the capital and conducting ‘on-the-ground’ scrutiny of government programs. Parliamentary delegations managed to visit some very insecure provinces, such as Kandahar, Helmand, Nimroz and Farah, as well as secure regional hubs like Herat and Bamyan. Further commission trips will be planned for Year 4.

Public Hearings: In Year 3, ALBA successfully supported an increase in public engagement, with both ordinary citizens and civil society. The number of public hearings has increased both in the capital and throughout the provinces, and commissions now include public hearings as part of their regular planning activities for each Parliamentary session.

ALBA YEAR 4: Successes and Building Sustainability

As part of ALBA's long-term strategic focus, Year 1 focused primarily on conducting assessments, building relationships, and laying the foundation for effective programming during Year 2. In almost all aspects, Year 2 witnessed ALBA consolidate its support to the oversight functions of Parliament, supporting an increase in public hearings, oversight visits, and a greater scrutiny of the public accounts. Likewise, the introduction of the CSU concept to commissions has gone a long way in regularizing the input of civil society groups and other stakeholders in legislative amendments. During Year 3, ALBA focused on meeting targets in the area of outreach (website, legislation tracking), taking advantage of the anticipated interest in the Parliament as an institution prior to the Parliamentary elections. In this light we will also engage media in a deeper fashion, building upon the initial engagement with parliamentary journalists in Year 4. Key themes are described below:

Consolidating the Technical Scope of Programming

Over the course of Year 3, it became apparent that oversight and anti-corruption efforts were a priority for all parliamentary stakeholders, from CSOs, to MPs and commissions, to the incoming leadership of the recently appointed Cabinet. During Year 3, ALBA seized opportunities to expand programming in support of increased parliamentary oversight and outreach, working with the PACC, as well as with relevant commissions, to ensure that the government fulfills its commitments in this area. ALBA took advantage of its deepening relationships with the new Cabinet ministers to increase transparency in governance with the signing of anti-corruption pledges, supporting the dissemination of the Ministry of Finance Budget Execution reports, as well as supporting the implementation of the Access to Information Law. On legislative matters, ALBA began assisting Parliament and its commissions on drafting two important members' bills: the Whistle Blowers Protection bill and the Anti-Harassment bill – which will continue into Year 4 – and provided technical input into numerous other pieces of legislation that were before both houses. The Afghan Parliamentary Institute also matured in Year 3 with the Administrative Boards of both houses provided more direct training of staff. In Year 4, support to Parliament will expand on several levels. ALBA will support Parliament to pave the way for greater youth engagement in parliamentary decisions with a Youth Parliament program and with continued support from the ALBA Fellows initiative. ALBA will also support commissions to emerge as a major representative axis of development with more focus on the security, economic and human development sectors. ALBA will also work with CSO umbrella organizations and their international partners to form thematic advocacy groups and link them with relevant commissions of both houses to increase level of cooperation among them on the issues of national interest. ALBA will support PACC members in Year 4 in creating more Provincial Council Anti-Corruption Committees (PCACC), to better consolidate anti-corruption efforts outside of Kabul.

Coordinating with Other Programs

For the majority of Year 1, ALBA was the sole program providing focused support to the Parliament. Year 2 witnessed a great deal of coordination with the UNDP Institutional and Capacity Support to the Parliament of Afghanistan (ICSPA) program and both programs continued to meet regularly during Year 3. For Year 3, it was critical to reach out to various USAID governance programs. ALBA continued its close collaboration with Counterpart International (CPI) and provided training to numerous CSOs on the national budget, including the Qatia report. With the National Democratic Institute (NDI) trainings were held with provincial councilors on the national budget process and the Qatia report. ALBA also worked with new USAID governance programs including Strong Hubs for Afghan Hope and Resilience (SHAHAR) and Promoting Gender Equity in National Priority Programs (PROMOTE) to ensure the overall USAID efforts are as effective and efficient as possible. As parliamentary elections loom larger as we move into Year 4, ALBA will continue to coordinate closely with existing partners such as Counterpart International and Internews in our expanded work to connect parliament with civil society organizations, as well as increasing the media ability to provide effective coverage of Parliamentary affairs.

Ensuring Sustainability in Year 4

The major theme in Year 4 for ALBA will be the stress on sustainability, both in terms of resources and in terms of skills and knowledge transfer. More of ALBA's core activities will be transferred to the API, and the management of the Institute needs to migrate to Afghan ownership over the course of Year 4. Secretariat and commission staff need to take a progressively larger role in the planning and execution of parliamentary activities, and technical skills must improve to allow parliament to play a more active role in legislative analysis and amendments.