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***FINAL EVALUATION***  
***OF***  
***USAID/DR STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY ACTIVITY***

Contract No. 517-0273-0--8229-0

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 1994 Presidential election in the Dominican Republic was marred by fraud. Joaquín Balaguer (PRSC party) won by a margin of 1%, or about 20,000 votes, in an election that was widely attributed to be rigged in his favor. According to a Verification Commission set up to review the voting process, there were between 28,000 and 53,000 registered voters who were either not permitted to vote or whose votes were thrown out; it is widely believed that the majority of these votes were for Balaguer's leading opponent, José Francisco Peña Gomez (PRD party).

The 1996 Presidential election--with a few exceptions (dirty campaigning, allegations of purchase of cedula) and to the tremendous relief of a significant portion of the Dominican population that was deeply embarrassed and shamed by the 1994 election--was widely considered to be fair and transparent. One of the determining factors contributing to the success of the 1996 election was Dominican civil society which came out full force to assure that Balaguer kept to his promise of leaving the Presidency in 1996; assist in selecting and subsequently supporting a highly respected Electoral Tribunal; and educate the Dominican citizenry on the importance of participating in the elections.

This is a historic moment. As a result of having had a successful election there is widespread pride among the Dominican population that they were able this time to "do it right". After nearly 65 years of autocratic rule, there is a feeling among Dominicans that their country is awakening from a long sleep. As one prominent private sector representation put it, "The cork has been taken out of the champagne bottle and the contents of the bottle are bubbling up". As a result of the elections, Dominicans have a renewed sense that they can influence the course of events in their country and they are eager to continue pushing for democratic and political reform.

### **The Strengthening Civil Society activity**

In August, 1995 USAID/Dominican Republic, through its Strengthening Civil Society (SCS) activity, signed two grant agreements--one with the Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra (PUCMM) for \$1.883 million and one with the Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos/Centro para Asesoría Electoral (IIDH/CAPEL) for \$517,000--to "*increase participation in fair and transparent elections in 1996*". These grants supported two Dominican civil society entities--Participación Ciudadana (PC), a recently established organization committed to participating in the 1996 elections as local observers; and the Grupo de Acción por la Democracia (GAD), a coalition of civil society organizations that were witnesses to the signing of the Pact for Democracy that was formed after the 1994 elections to assure that the 1996 Presidential elections were fair and transparent.

Funding under the Strengthening Civil Society activity was used to support four components: (1) establish a network of civil society local action committees to support municipal election boards and help recruit members for polling sites; (2) establish a network of national electoral observers and arrange quick count and monitoring of balloting; (3) conduct citizen education; and (4) formulate a national agenda from the perspective of civil society. Under the terms of the

grant, GAD was to take overall responsibility for Components 1, 3, and 4 and PC, with financing channeled through GAD, was to take responsibility for implementing Component 2. IIDH/CAPEL was brought in under a separate grant to provide experts from Latin America to assist in elections monitoring and quick count, other promotion activities, and provide faculty for seminars and workshops.

### **Performance of the key actors**

Four actors were responsible for implementing the Strengthening Civil Society activity -- Participación Ciudadana, the Grupo de Acción por la Democracia, IIDH/CAPEL, and USAID.

- Participación Ciudadana, by all accounts, did an outstanding job of recruiting a wide network of enthusiastic Dominicans, over half under 24 years of age, who performed superlatively in their roles as elections observers on May 16 and June 30 and in administering a parallel quick count of votes. To do this PC had to overcome grave doubts on the part of the Electoral Council and key political parties who feared that PC would be biased given a perceived preponderance, among its members, of individuals affiliated with the opposition party. As a result of recruiting and training some 5,000 volunteers as elections observers, there are now a large group of young Dominicans who are highly motivated and eager to continue participating in efforts to promote the democratization of their country.
- The Grupo de Acción por la Democracia was very effective in some areas and less effective in others. GAD members, using their clout, were instrumental in assuring that elections took place in 1996 and in helping to select and then actively support what was widely seen as a highly credible Electoral Council. GAD was also credited with having carried out a highly participatory activity which led to the development of a National Agenda that was endorsed by the three key political parties. GAD also got off to a good start at organizing civil society at the municipal level into local Action Groups. Less clear was GAD's effectiveness in carrying out mass media and other civic education campaigns designed to stimulate the Dominican populace to vote.
- IIDH/CAPEL provided invaluable assistance to Participación Ciudadana in developing materials for and training elections observers and in preparing for and carrying out the quick count. IIDH/CAPEL organized a seminar in August of 1995 that was widely attributed as successful in getting the key actors together (GAD, PC, Electoral Council) and kicking off civil society's participation in the 1996 elections. Of less utility was the assistance IIDH/CAPEL made available to GAD because the GAD was not very interested in receiving external assistance. Thanks to their flexibility, IIDH/CAPEL was able to reprogram \$90,000 in grant funds for Participación Ciudadana to cover elections monitoring expenses when Participación Ciudadana exceeded its budget.
- USAID/Dominican Republic received high marks for its collaborative and participatory approach. The USAID mission identified civil society groups with common interests and got them together. It brokered the design of a comprehensive program of civil society support for a free and fair election in 1996. It brought in IIDH/CAPEL to serve as a neutral bridge between PC/RED and GAD, on the one hand, and the JCE on the other. It played a proactive role behind the scenes in advising PC/RED in the design and implementation of the elections

monitoring and quick count activity, Finally, it provided a flexible vehicle for financing PC and GAD that permitted both organizations to respond quickly to unanticipated situations.

**Did USAID assistance through the Strengthening Civil Society activity, and more broadly support from the U.S. government, make a difference in the 1996 elections?**

The answer is an unequivocal yes.

-- The fact that Dominicans knew that the U.S. Government was looking closely at what would happen, and intended to be neutral, undoubtedly influenced Balaguer and the political parties to keep the election on track.

-- USAID financial support for Participación Ciudadana made the role of the Elections Council more effective. Individuals running the polling stations on both election days, as well as the political parties, knew they were being watched. The tremendous success of the quick count, which provided data within .026 of the official elections returns, provided a great deal of credibility to the official elections returns.

-- USAID served as a catalyst in the formation of GAD. GAD member organizations, both individually and as a group, were widely recognized to have placed pressure on the Balaguer government to follow through with the 1996 Presidential elections. GAD is also credited with having initiated a National Agenda process, an attempt for the first time on the part of civil society to openly affect political party platforms with a comprehensive proposal for political, economic, and social reform.

-- Finally, under the SCS activity, assistance was provided in recruiting and training the individuals who managed the electoral tables.

**What next?**

Now that the 1996 elections are over PC (an organization of individuals) and GAD (a coalition of organizations) face uncertain futures. Both have the potential of playing even more significant roles in assuring fair and transparent congressional and municipal elections in 1998. Both would like to be involved in pressuring for needed reforms. Both would like to continue to play a role in civic education. And yet, both have significant organizational and financial challenges that they must sort out.

Assuming they are successful in doing so, it is recommended that USAID and other donors consider supporting both organizations, with the caveat that they coordinate their efforts.

**Among the lessons learned from this activity:**

Given the recent and not so recent past (high USAID and U.S. Government profile in the 1994 elections which was resented by many, the U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965 which has left bad feelings) and the high level of polarization leading up to the 1996 Presidential elections, it was not easy for either USAID or the U.S. Government to find ways to effectively support the 1996 Dominican Presidential elections. That both USAID and the U.S.

Government were widely seen as being effective actors in contributing to what turned out to be a free and fair election can be attributed to the following factors:

1. The fact that USAID, in implementing the Strengthening Civil Society activity, took a very participatory and collaborative approach. While the USAID Mission Director and the U.S. Ambassador took a proactive role in supporting a fair and transparent election, both they and their staff kept a low profile. As a result, both were lauded by their Dominican partners for letting them take the lead and relating to them with deference and respect.
2. In order to build in the flexibility needed to carry out this activity effectively, USAID included broad objectives and illustrative activities under each grant component, rather than setting out specific targets. This flexible approach made it possible for USAID, on numerous occasions during activity implementation, to jump in and provide urgently needed assistance.
3. The importance of having political parties and government authorities seeing themselves under surveillance during the electoral process cannot be overemphasized. Throughout the 20 month period, from the signing of the Pact for Democracy in August of 1994 to the second elections round in June of 1996, both entities were under the constant scrutiny of Dominican civil society, the U.S. Government, and the international press.
4. Given the circumstances surrounding the 1994 elections, USAID would not have been permitted, even if it wanted to, to bring in a U.S. technical assistance provider. Instead USAID arranged to bring in a Latin American technical assistance provider, IIDH/CAPEL, that had developed a relationship with and the trust of the Electoral Council. IIDH/CAPEL was able, especially in the early months of the grant, to serve as a neutral bridge between the Electoral Council, on the one hand, and GAD and PC, on the other. This outside technical assistance was critical, especially to Participación Ciudadana in organizing for their role as elections observers and in carrying out quick counts during both the May and June elections.

## I. CONTEXT

Dominican Republic is a Caribbean nation with a population of some 7 million people that shares the island of Hispaniola with the Republic of Haiti. Since achieving independence from Haiti in 1844 there have been some 40 presidential elections of which 6 or 7 are considered by historians to have been free and fair.<sup>1</sup>

The 1994 Presidential election was one of the 33-34 that did not fall into this category. On May 16 then President Joaquín Balaguer (PRSC party) beat his key opponent José Francisco Peña Gomez (PRD party) by a 1% margin, or some 20,000 votes. Had the elections been considered free and fair that tight margin may not have been a problem. However--given an Electoral Tribunal (JCE) that was considered incapable and a voter registration process that resulted in thousands of Dominican citizens who were registered to vote going to the polls and not being permitted to vote because their names were not on the local electoral tribunal's list of registered voters--both the international observer community and key concluded that fraud had taken place.

A major outcome of the 1994 Presidential race was widespread shame among the Dominican populace over the conduct of the elections. Many Dominicans interviewed as part of this evaluation indicated that they felt they had been embarrassed before the international press, key representatives from the OAS, United States and other countries who denounced the way in which the 1994 elections were conducted. Many of those interviewed indicated that they and their colleagues felt that the country had hit rock bottom and were fearful that the Dominican society may fall apart if the 1996 presidential elections were not successful.

The questioning of President Balaguer's legitimacy was so general that under pressure from all sides, international as well as domestic, the government was forced to agree to a modification of the election results within a "Pact for Democracy" among leaders of the principal political parties. The parties agreed, among others, to amend the Constitution to end the current presidential term after two years instead of the usual four. They also agreed to the following changes in the Constitution: no President can succeed him/herself; in the event of the winning party's getting less than 50% of the vote on the first round, there will be a run-off vote on June 30 between the two leading Presidential contenders; the establishment of "colegios cerrados"<sup>2</sup>; and other changes not related to the electoral process.

The Democracy Pact was signed on August 10, 1994--six days before Balaguer was installed as President for a two year term--by the key political parties in the presence of 50 to 60 civil society organizations that served as witnesses. Subsequent to the signing of this pact, 21

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<sup>1</sup> Brea, Ramonina, Isis Duarte, Ramon Tejada, and Clara Baez. *Estado de Situación de la Democracia Dominicana (1978-1992)*, Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra, 1995.

<sup>2</sup> The colegios cerrados system was instituted to assure that nobody can vote in more than one place. Under the colegios cerrados system women register and vote in the morning and cannot leave the polling site until after voting; men register and vote in the afternoon without being able to leave the premises until after voting. Registration takes place over a 2 ½ hour period. After registration finishes, voting begins and nobody else can be registered to vote.

of these organizations (9 associations of businessmen; 5 labor confederations; 3 universities; 2 church associations; 2 non-government organizations)--at the initiative of Monsiñor Agripino Nuñez Collado, Rector of the Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra (PUCMM)--gathered to form a group called the "Grupo de Acción por la Democracia (GAD). From that time hence GAD and numerous other civil society groups in the Dominican Republic, determined not to repeat the errors of the 1994 elections, jumped in to set the stage for what was widely considered to be a free and fair 1996 Presidential election.

Why was the 1996 election so different from the 1994 election? What were the factors that contributed to making this the stunning success that came on the heels of what was widely considered a disaster? The evaluation team asked this question of some 50 individuals they interviewed both in the Dominican Republic and the United States and these were the responses (in order of frequency of response):

- A highly regarded, impartial and effective Electoral Board. This was mentioned by every person interviewed. A new JCE was selected on October 1994 to replace the JCE that was widely perceived as having mishandled the 1994 elections. The individuals selected (with the active participation of civil society, see below) were seen as individuals of high integrity and sincerity and beyond reproach. The fact that they were inexperienced had been a concern. However, thanks to other factors (including a civil society that did everything possible to back up the JCE), they were able to pull off what was widely considered to have been one of the most successful, if not the most successful, Presidential elections in the Dominican Republic's history.
- An extraordinary role on the part of civil society (an all time first) in pitching in to assure that this took place. Civil society, determined that this HAD to be a free and fair election, played a key role in assisting in the selection of the members of the JCE. Civil society also zealously supported and protected the JCE throughout the electoral process. The JCE (for the first time) reached out to civil society asking private citizens to man the electoral tables (in the past government workers were asked to assume this role) and civil society responded with enthusiasm. A volunteer group of some 5,000 citizens, under the aegis of Participación Ciudadana, served side by side with international observers and observers from the political parties as elections monitors in both the May election and the June runoff--an all time first.

Civil society, with the GAD playing a prominent role, pushed forcefully in the early months to make sure that the accords included in the Democracy Pact (especially Balaguer's commitment to step down in 1996) took place. The JCE, GAD and other civil society groups were also active in providing electoral education to the Dominican populace, both to motivate them to participate in the 1996 elections and to instruct them in the new procedures set forth in the Democracy Pact (colegios cerrados, run-off vote).

- External pressure from the U.S. Government, and the international press: While relatively low key in its style, the U.S. Government kept strong pressure on

Balaguer to permit elections to take place in 1996. Pressure from the international press was also an important factor in "keeping the heat on".

- Balaguer "permitted" it to happen: While not mentioned as frequently, this was undoubtedly an important factor. Unlike in the 1994 elections where Balaguer withheld funds from the JCE, this JCE received the funds it needed and on a timely basis. In addition, those who mentioned this as a factor volunteered that Balaguer could have very easily squashed the elections through one of any number of means. The fact that he stepped back and let them happen was, in an of itself, important.

The fact, however, that the 1996 elections was a highly successful election does not mean that complacency can set in. Major challenges lie ahead for the 1998 Congressional and municipal elections. There exist constraints in the electoral process that, if not addressed, will affect civil society's ability to assure clean and transparent elections in the future.

The "colegios cerrados" concept, for example, is a rigid system which may discourage citizens from voting since it obliges voters to spend many hours in long lines. Its having been put in place for the 1996 elections constitutes an admission that the voter list in the Dominican Republic is deficient and that there are poor mechanisms for ensuring that citizens may not vote repeatedly at different polling sites.

There are also limitations in transparency in the way voting data are inputted into the computer system. Under the current system, political parties, press and representatives of civil society organizations--while permitted to be present at and witness all other aspects of the voting process--are not allowed to be present when data are keyed into the computerized data base.

Use of unlimited amounts of official funds to campaign for the President's preferred candidate should also be prevented. In our interviews we were repeatedly told that President Balaguer used government funds and resources to influence citizens to vote for his preferred candidate; a practice the JCE was unable to deter.

Last, and of immediate concern, is a movement on the part of some congressmen, both PRD and PRSC, to modify the constitution to extend the congressional and municipal elections from 1998 (four years after the last congressional and municipal elections) to 2000 to coincide with the next Presidential elections.

## **II. STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY ACTIVITY**

### **A. Background**

On June 25, 1993 USAID/Dominican Republic signed a grant agreement with the Government of the Dominican Republic to provide technical assistance to the Dominican Republic's Electoral Council (JCE) in preparing for and carrying out the 1994 elections. Under the agreement USAID contracted directly with the International Foundation for Electoral

Systems (IFES) to assist the JCE to establish an accurate and efficient, fraud-resistant identification/electoral registration system. Included in the agreement was assistance in *“establishing a training program for polling site personnel, modernizing the electoral logistics system, establishing a system for prompt computation of election results, establishing a system for coordinating NGOs whose activities included informing the general public concerning the electoral system, establishing a plan and system for coordination of election monitoring by Dominican and foreign observers, and improving the civil registry toward a more efficient and effective service”*.

Assistance under this project was terminated early due to a disastrous election and hard feelings between the government of the Dominican Republic and the United States government over USAID's highly visible role in the 1994 elections. In consultation with the United States Embassy, the USAID mission in the Dominican Republic set out in late 1994 to find a way to support the 1996 elections following a much lower key approach. USAID/Dominican Republic contracted with a consulting firm, Creative Associates International, to review and analyze the experience of the 1994 elections and develop a strategy for achieving fair elections in 1996. The assessment and concept paper was completed in January 1995. Drawing on experience of other countries, particularly in Latin America, the paper recommended strengthening civil society organizations to participate more actively in the electoral process, particularly in voter education and elections monitoring.

Following review of this assessment, the U.S. Embassy and USAID decided to adopt the approach recommended in the paper. At about the same time, Dominican groups supporting democratic development were beginning to organize for the May 1996 Presidential elections. In particular, 21 civil society signatories of the Pact for Democracy organized themselves in Grupo de Acción por la Democracia (GAD) specifically focused on generating non-partisan, country-wide support for an improved electoral process. USAID sought out the advice of several of the organizations belonging to this group and decided to support their efforts.

The outcome of this process was the signature of two grant agreements--one for the amount of \$1.883 million with the Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra (PUCMM) to support GAD as well as a local group, Participación Ciudadana (PC), that had expressed an interest in local elections monitoring. The second grant, for \$517,000, was signed with the Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos/Centro de Asesoría y Promoción Electoral (IIDH/CAPEL) to provide technical assistance to both the GAD and PC in preparing for and participating in the 1996 elections.

## **B. Program Description**

The two grants--signed on August 1, 1995 and August 16, 1995, respectively--have as their overall goal to *“Increase democratization in the Dominican Republic”* and as their purpose to *“Ensure broad-based, informed, citizen participation in fair and transparent elections in 1996”*. Through emphasis on involvement of civil society organizations, it was anticipated that the activity would not only “promote broader citizen participation toward more transparent elections in 1996, but also build the institutional foundation for electoral reform over the longer term and encourage a more participatory political process apart from elections”.

The activity was composed of four components:

1. **Integrating the elements of civil society** by establishing a network of civil society local action committees to support municipal election boards and help recruit members for polling sites; supporting GAD programs for citizen education and definition of the national agenda; supporting a network of electoral observers; and establishing a permanent network for analysis and advocacy of public interest issues.

2. **Establishing a network of national electoral observers and arranging quick count and monitoring of balloting.** Under this component GAD was to cover Participación Ciudadana's costs of implementing the quick count and monitoring elements of the elections. The GAD was also to have complemented and coordinated the work of other civil society groups in support of Participación Ciudadana's role in implementing this component. Finally, the GAD was to have sponsored an education program for the establishment and promotion of the observer network.

3. **Conducting citizen education campaigns.** Under this component GAD was to increase awareness of citizen rights and duties and increase participation in elections by: (a) conducting mass media campaigns, and (b) sponsoring conferences, seminars, workshops and retreats focused on specific groups such as journalists, NGO directors, labor leaders, politicians, women and youth.

4. **Formulating a national agenda from the perspective of civil society.** Under this component GAD was to have contributed to political party platforms by convening citizens to participate in determining key issues facing the Dominican Republic and their solutions by reaching out to local and national organizations to participate in the preparation of a national agenda.

In order to build in the flexibility needed to carry out this activity effectively, USAID agreed to include broad objectives and illustrative activities under each component in the grant agreement rather than setting out specific targets for each component.

Under the terms of the grant, the GAD was to take overall responsibility for Components 1, 3, and 4. PC, with financing channeled through GAD, was to take responsibility for implementing Component 2. IIDH/CAPEL, under a separate grant, was to provide experts from Latin America to assist in elections monitoring and quick count, other promotion activities, and provide faculty for seminars and workshops.

During the 16 month implementation period the four parties (USAID, GAD, PC/RED, and IIDH/CAPEL) met on a monthly basis to assess progress in implementing the four components. In addition GAD, PC/RED, and IIDH/CAPEL were asked to provide quarterly reports summarizing progress made in the last quarter against targets and laying out plans for the next quarter.

### III. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

On September 19, 1996 a two person team, composed of Marcia Bernbaum and Guillermo Marquez, was contracted under Purchase Order by USAID/Dominican Republic to evaluate the Strengthening Civil Society activity.

Marcia Bernbaum, team leader and signature of the Purchase Order, brought to the evaluation extensive background and experience in program and project evaluation, knowledge of USAID (having served as a Foreign Service Officer with USAID for 19 years) and in-depth knowledge of USAID/Dominican Republic's civil society program while serving as Director of USAID's Office of Caribbean Affairs in AID/Washington from 1993-1995. Before, during, and following the 1994 elections Bernbaum was kept apprised daily by the USAID Dominican Republic mission on the status of the pre- and post-elections drama that began in April and lasted until August 16 when Balaguer was sworn in as President. During this period she represented the USAID mission in high level meetings on the Dominican elections called by Department of State and USAID officials. Having moved to another position in USAID well before the 1996 elections, Bernbaum had no involvement whatsoever in monitoring the 1996 elections.

The second member of the team, Guillermo Marquez, is the former President of the Electoral Tribunal in Panama. Marquez was responsible for establishing Paz and Justicia, a volunteer organization that monitored the 1994 elections in Panama and which has served as a model for other countries, including Transparencia in Peru (which in turn served as a model for Participación Ciudadana in the 1996 Presidential elections in the Dominican Republic). He has also served as an international observer in numerous elections in Central and South America including the May, 1996 and June, 1996 Presidential elections in the Dominican Republic. Marquez and his fellow Magistrates assumed their roles on the Electoral Tribunal in 1990. They are widely credited with overseeing successful Presidential elections in 1994 and, in so doing, returning credibility to the Panamanian Electoral Tribunal after fraudulent elections in 1989.

Bernbaum carried out nine interviews with USAID, State, and NDI personnel before arriving in the Dominican Republic on September 30. She was joined by Marquez on October 2. Between October 3 and October 14 Bernbaum and Marquez carried out an additional 41 interviews in Santo Domingo with representatives from the four organizations being evaluated (PC/RED, GAD, IDH/CAPEL, and USAID), representatives from the major political parties, the press, religious groups, business sector, labor, and NGOs (see Annex B for names of individuals interviewed). Bernbaum and Marquez also traveled to the city of Santiago and five other towns along the way where they met with six focus groups made up of a total of 35 individuals. To round off the process they interviewed approximately 12 taxi drivers while traveling to and from their appointments in Santo Domingo.

Bernbaum also sat in on two internal meetings at the USAID mission to assess the operations of SO team 3, which was responsible for implementing the SCS activity. She also attended a weekend planning meeting of representatives from all 44 municipal GADS. Finally Bernbaum and Marquez consulted more than 80 documents provided to them by USAID/Washington and USAID Dominican Republic mission personnel as well as personnel

from PC/RED, GAD, and IIDH/CAPEL.

The two protocols used to carry out the interviews--one for representatives of religious organizations, business, labor, the political parties, and NGOs and one for the meetings with focus groups--may be found in Annexes D and E of this report.

Before leaving the Dominican Republic Bernbaum and Marquez prepared an in-depth outline of their report which they presented to representatives from the USAID mission and the Embassy on the morning of October 15 and to representatives from PC/RED and the GAD on the afternoon of October 15. This report closely follows both the format and content of the detailed outline.

In conducting the evaluation, Bernbaum focused on GAD and Marquez on PC/RED. The detailed scope of work for the evaluation may be found in Annex A to this report.

#### **IV. EFFECTIVENESS OF KEY ACTORS IN CARRYING OUT THEIR ROLES**

This section examines the effectiveness of the four key actors--GAD, PC/RED, IIDH/CAPEL, and USAID--in carrying out their respective roles within the Strengthening Civil Society activities. Each sub-section begins with a brief background sketch on the origins and structure of the organization, followed by a sub-section listing achievements under the SCS activity. This is followed (where relevant) by a sub-section on future plans, a sub-section where the evaluators provide their views on the organization's effectiveness within the context of the activity, and a final sub-section in which the evaluators provide their recommendations.

##### **A. GRUPO DE ACCIÓN POR LA DEMOCRACIA (GAD)**

###### **1. Background:**

The Grupo de Acción por la Democracia (GAD) has its origins in what turned out to be a highly frustrating and fraudulent 1994 Presidential election. With the exception of Participación Ciudadana (see Section IV.B. below), Dominican civil society did not join outside forces (international elections observers, the U.S. Government, the OAS, the international press) immediately following the elections in forcefully speaking up to object to the way the elections were carried out. However, with the signature of the Democracy Pact (which 50 to 60 civil society organizations signed as witnesses on August 10), civil society went into full swing to assure a clean and fair Presidential election in 1996. On March 8, 1995 Monsiñor Agripino Nuñez, Rector of the Pontificia Universidad Católica y Maestra (PUCMM) invited 21 signatory organizations (9 private sector associations, 6 labor groups, 3 universities, 2 religious associations, 2 associations of NGOs) to form what is now known as the "Grupo de Acción por la Democracia".

On March 11, 1995 GAD formally announced its creation setting as its goal using the 1996 electoral process as a means of accomplishing broader, more active incorporation of the civil society in the process of constructing a democratically organized society while contributing to the achievement of an electoral process that is effective, transparent and fair.

Before becoming formally structured, some members of GAD played a key role in both proposing and persuading individuals of integrity to become members of the Electoral Council (JCE). From the day the Democracy Pact was signed GAD member organizations (many with significant clout) started putting pressure on Balaguer to honor the Democracy Pact, especially Balaguer's commitment to step down after two years and not seek re-election in 1996.

When USAID financing for GAD and PC/RED came through to the PUCMM in August of 1995<sup>3</sup>, an Operating Unit was set up under the direction of the Vice-Rector of the PUCMM, Ráddames Mejía. Mejía served as overall secretariat to the GAD was the person responsible for overseeing the implementation of the USAID grant.

GAD has an informal organizational structure which has at its center the 21 member "Grupo de Acción por la Democracia" and a seven member Executive Committee. Ráddames Mejía reports to the Executive Committee. He is responsible for overseeing the day to day activities of the Operating Unit. The Operating Unit has an Executive Director and four sub-units (Agenda Nacional, Articulación Social Civil, Educación Ciudadana, Administración) each with its director. Under the existing organizational structure the sub-units are to receive advise and guidance from special Commissions made up of representatives of the GAD Executive Committee. Participación Ciudadana and its Red de Observadores are linked to GAD through the Executive Director who is responsible for assuring that PC/RED gets its grant funding on a timely basis. GAD's Executive Committee meets on at least a monthly basis (more frequently in the earlier months before and during elections); specific commissions meet on an as needed basis. At the time of the evaluation, GAD's Operating unit had a total of 28 employees on its payroll.

To date GAD has received most of its financing from the USAID grant. The Canadian government donated \$30,000 and the Spanish government financed two seminars on constitutional reform. Private sector contributions to GAD have consisted of: the time that GAD's Executive Committee and member organizations have donated to come to meetings and participate in seminars; donations of time of personnel from the Liga Dominicana de Agencias Publicitarias to prepare radio and television spots; and free air time from TV and radio stations. The Operating Unit's \$67,000/month in recurrent costs have been financed entirely with funds from the USAID grant.

## **2. Activities/achievements to date:**

GAD has just completed its first year of existence in what has been an extremely busy start-up year. During this period, GAD's "cupula" and its Operating Unit have:

### Played a Key Role in Guiding the 1996 Elections

Several (not all) individuals interviewed credit GAD (and its members before formally constituted as such) with: (a) assuring implementation of Democracy Pact

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<sup>3</sup> GAD at that time did not have and still does not have its personería jurídica which meant it could not, and still cannot, receive funding directly from USAID.

(including holding elections in two years); (b) selecting and then actively supporting members of JCE; (c) issuing a Governability Pact which committed political parties to respect elections results, not incite violence, and adhere to National Agenda; (d) Providing an umbrella for PC/RED and serving as a channel for financial assistance; and (e) in several instances, providing electoral education at the municipal level and assisting local JCE's to identify individuals to serve at electoral tables.

### Developed and Forged Consensus Around a National Agenda

A major focus of GAD's efforts during its early months was on developing and forging consensus around a ten point National Agenda. Using an initiative of CONEP (the Dominican Republic's leading business association) as a model, GAD's Agenda Unit followed a highly participatory process in which representatives from business, labor, PVOs, and municipalities each prepared their input into the National Agenda. In March 1996 GAD sponsored a conference attended by representatives of the major political parties and representatives of all four groups. The result was common agreement on a ten point National Agenda. This Agenda was formally issued to the public through press announcements in late March. In April GAD gathered the key political parties together at a widely publicized function to sign a "Pacto de Gobernabilidad" which, among others, committed the political parties to honor the Agenda in their party platforms.

In addition, GAD (see below) has begun assisting the 44 municipal GADs it has formed to develop their own municipal agendas. As of the date of the evaluation, one municipal GAD had completed its Agenda and 22 were in process.

### Formed Municipal Democratic Action Groups

As of the date of the evaluation, the GAD Operating Unit had established municipal GADs in the Dominican Republic's 44 most populated municipalities. These municipal GADs, like the national GAD, are made up of organizations. The GAD Operating Unit estimates that some 1,000 local organizations (20% representing social sector organizations, 12% business sector organizations; 11% professionals organizations, 10% religious groups, 9% barrio groups, 8% campesino organizations, 8% labor unions, and 4% women) are now members of the GAD network.

As of the date of the evaluation 36 municipal GADs had received training in institutional strengthening (including establishing their own statutes) and 20 had received training in programming (including strategic planning). The GAD Operating Unit has just started one day courses for the municipal GADs to assist their member organizations to prepare proposals for project funding. In addition, the GAD Operating Unit organized workshops with 38 municipalities to obtain their input into the National Agenda.

The GAD Operating Unit estimates that, as of mid October, 1996, 16 of the 44 municipal GADS were operating well and 21 were operating fairly well. Seven were either just getting started and/or are having serious problems. The GAD Operating Unit, before it runs out of USAID funding in November 1996, is giving special attention to helping the seven municipal GADS most in need of assistance.

Carried out a Civic Education Program

GAD's activities in the area of civic education may be broken out into three sub-components: civic education, electoral education and mass media campaigns:

a. Civic Education:

As of the date of the evaluation, GAD's Operating Unit had provided 73 courses in civic education-- rights and duties of citizens, political history of Dominican Republic, importance of municipal reform, "concertación" as a means of achieving consensus, women's rights--to 3,313 people (49% women) in 43 municipalities. GAD also sponsored several seminars at the national level.

b. Electoral Education:

Using funds from the USAID grant, GAD issued agreements with a variety of groups to provide electoral education before the May/June elections:

-- Through several agreements signed with labor unions (CTP, UGTD, CGT, CTU/CASC/CNTD), GAD sponsored courses in electoral education for 13,940 members of the Dominican labor movement of which 18% were women. GAD also sponsored courses on "sindicalismo" for 1,980 persons of which 18% were also women.

-- Through an agreement signed with the Fundación de Desarrollo para la Juventud Rural--FUNDEJUR (a confederation of youth) GAD sponsored electoral training for 1,135 youth in 36 communities in Santo Domingo and San Cristobal (62% girls).

-- Through an agreement with the Fundación El Caballero de la Ciudad, 604 residents of the province of San Pedro de Macorís attended 15 electoral workshops.

-- Through an agreement with the Centro de Investigación para la Acción Femenina--CIPAF (a federation of women's groups) GAD sponsored the production and distribution (including to the press, political parties, and NGOs) of 5,000 copies of a 15 page booklet on the importance of the feminine vote; the production and distribution (to mass media, schools, women's organizations, government organizations, political parties) of 10,000 copies of a special edition of CIPAF's magazine "Quehaceres" focusing on the feminine vote and its importance ; the production and distribution of 10,000 copies of a poster entitled "Politics is women's business"; the production and distribution of 1,000 educational folders targeted primarily at the press to be used on March 8, the "Día de la Mujer"; the issuance of three billboards in key areas of Santo Domingo with the same message as the folders; and workshops for 100 women from popular organizations, labor unions, government organizations, and professional associations.

-- Through an agreement with the Instituto Dominicano de Desarrollo (IDDI), GAD sponsored the production and distribution of 2,000 handbooks to all 108 municipalities in the Dominican Republic. The contents of these handbooks were used to deliver talks on elections to 3,673 people in the barrios of the west zones in Santo Domingo. IDDI also prepared and distributed, with GAD/USAID funding, 20,000 electoral handbooks for municipalities, labor unions, schools, women's groups. Training courses in electoral education were provided for 43 community leaders in the north zone in Santo Domingo and Villa Mella and 80 instructors from Ecclesiastical Assemblies in various parishes. IDDI also sponsored eight workshops on electoral education in a variety of barrios and two social society "events" on electoral education.

c. Mass Media Campaign:

With USAID funding (and donated time from the Liga Dominicana de Agencias Publicitarias) GAD sponsored the production of ten television spots<sup>4</sup> which were aired on all key TV stations 1,070 times to an estimated viewer ship of 1.6 million Dominicans between December, 1995 and June, 1996. GAD also sponsored radio spots, identical to the TV spots, which were aired on 54 radio stations 27,520 times between December, 1995 and May, 1996. Educational messages prepared by GAD personnel were issued in nine newspapers on 63 occasions. Finally, through the grant with CIPAF radio spots encouraging women to vote were prepared and issued free of charge by seven radio stations and the press. Four other radio spots were prepared and issued by IDDI.

**3. Future plans**

After a very intense start-up year--most of which was spent preparing for the 1996 elections, assembling the National Agenda, and starting the 44 municipal GADS--GAD is in the process of reflecting on what it has accomplished and where it is going. GAD Operating Unit staff have distributed a questionnaire to all 44 municipal GADS asking for feedback on its operations to date.

On September 14 and October 12, respectively, the GAD Operating Unit assembled members of its "cupula" organizations and representatives of its municipal organizations in one day workshops to analyze progress to date and reflect on the future. Both workshops resulted in a series of initial reflections on what GAD's mission should be, what its current constraints are, and the broad outlines of future actions.

In brief, GAD sees itself as playing a role in the future in: (a) assuring that the Dominican government implements key reforms related to the judicial sector, decentralization, public enterprise, the electoral council, and constitutional reform through the constituent assembly; and (b) promoting civic education including promoting democratic values and informing citizens of their rights and duties.

The preliminary mission statements of the GAD cupula and the municipal GADS, to be synthesized by the GAD Operating Unit, are printed below:

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<sup>4</sup> One presenting GAD, three focusing on national problems, three supporting elections, one supporting the JCE, one on political parties, and one on clean electoral campaigns.

PRELIMINARY MISSION STATEMENT OF GAD CUPULA:

*"Promote participation of civil society in strengthening democratic institutions through citizen education, incorporating organized groups, and support for the State, giving priority to dialog and bringing groups together as a means of achieving national development "*

PRELIMINARY MISSION STATEMENT OF MUNICIPAL GADS:

*"Promote participation of citizens through civil society organizations in strengthening and institutionalizing democracy and in participating in decision making at the municipal and national level in order to contribute to the integral development of society through the conceptualization of proposals for solutions to collective needs".*

**4. Evaluators' comments:**

Section IV.A.2 summarizes GAD's achievements since it was founded in March of 1995. In this section the evaluators provide their views on GAD's structure and organization and its achievements to date based on their own observations, review of extensive documentation, and individual and focus group interviews.

General Comments

a. Overall we were very impressed with GAD's membership, both in terms of the organizations that were asked to join GAD and the level of their participation. Among GAD's founding organizations are a number of the "heavy weights" of civil society-- organizations that, due to their membership, possess a great deal of "muscle" (key business and labor organizations, the church).

b. With the exception of Santo Domingo, which is not yet formally represented, GAD appears to have representation from a broad cross-section of organizations at the municipal level. GAD currently counts among its membership some 1,000 organizations in the 44 municipalities with the highest population concentration. Twenty percent of these organizations are social in nature, 12% are from the business sector, 11% are professional organizations, 10% are religious groups, 9% barrio groups, 8% campesino organizations, 8% labor unions, and 4% women's groups. When we met with representatives of three municipal GADS, we were struck with their enthusiasm and commitment. There was a clear sense among these individuals that this is a historic moment and that they must take advantage of it.

c. There is, however, concern about the representativeness of GAD's membership at its "cupula". GAD's founding organizations are seen by many (including several of the founders of GAD) as elite and made up of individuals with strong interests (especially the Catholic church and CONEP). One individual expressed concern that the bulk of the founding members came from "corporate" organizations (business, labor). This person

also pointed out that there was minimal participation from NGOs (only two NGO groups represented) and no representation of women's groups. Of clear concern is that the central district (Santo Domingo), which has nearly 40% of country's population, is not yet a part of the GAD network (although organizations who are members of cupula have significant membership in Santo Domingo).

d. While the majority of the individuals we interviewed, both inside and outside of GAD, saw GAD as a positive force with the potential for assuring democracy in the Dominican Republic, there was a small minority that voiced concerns. One individual expressed concern that GAD could become a monopoly and that this could eventually be detrimental to civil society's participation in pushing for reform. Another person expressed concern that GAD might end up competing with its member organizations for funding. A third expressed concern that a powerful organization, such as GAD, could stifle the individual expression of its member organizations.

e. In the course of our interviews a number of people (within and outside of GAD) emphasized that, to maintain credibility, GAD needs to be seen as an entity that is independent, especially from the church and the business sector.

f. GAD's work is just beginning. As was pointed out in Section IV.A.2, the municipal GADs are in various stages of organization. Most are just getting started and will need significant follow-up. The National Agenda is yet to be implemented and work on the municipal agendas is just starting. USAID funding is coming to an end in November, with no immediate source of external funding in sight. Does GAD have the capability to follow through with everything it has started?

g. There is the potential for competition with the Democratic Initiatives (DI) project. When the DI project was designed the DI board took great pains to develop a thorough process of project identification, development and review. The SCS activity, on the other hand, deliberately avoided an extensive design, development and review process and instead instituted an open-ended process that permitted NGOs to get assistance from GAD on a quick turn-around basis to support needed pre-electoral activities.

We interviewed two organizations that had experience getting funding both from GAD and under the DI project. Both volunteered that, whereas getting funding from GAD was fast and relatively painless, obtaining funding from the Democracy Initiatives project was a laborious and longer-term process.<sup>5</sup>

h. Notwithstanding the above, if it plays its cards appropriately, the evaluators believe that GAD can be a positive force in: lobbying for reform, preparing for and supporting the 1998 elections, supporting the new government in its reform efforts, and assisting in strengthening political parties. However, achieving this requires maintaining a delicate balance...

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<sup>5</sup> Subsequent to carrying out the evaluation, the evaluators were informed that the DI project, due in part to the "competition" between the two activities, has now opened a fast-track window that permits Dominican NGOs to receive small amounts of assistance in a relatively short period of time.

### Structure/Organization

a. The evaluators would like to start this section by commending GAD on the excellent quality of the quarterly reports it has submitted to USAID and to its Executive Committee. Written in a substantive and easy to read style, each report clearly lays out the targets set for the period, lists accomplishments, and sets out targets for the next reporting period.

b. Having stated the above, the evaluators would like to express their concern over the uneven internal communications that existed during the time of their visit between the Operating Unit and members of the Executive Committee; between the Operating Unit and the municipal GADs, and within the Operating Unit itself. One of the members of the Executive Committee, up until three days before the October 12 municipal GAD planning workshop, did not know what the workshop was all about.

When we asked two of the municipal GADs, three days before the workshop, what the workshop objectives were they also said they didn't know. (Presumably for such a workshop one would want to advise the participating municipal GADs well in advance so that the individuals representing each municipal GAD at the workshop could set aside time before the workshop to obtain input from their member organizations.)

Internal interviews within the GAD Operating Unit revealed a vertical communications structure with information primarily going up and little cross-communication between the three sub-units. Correctly or not, these weak communications links are being interpreted by some as an attempt on the part of the PUCMM Operating Unit to manipulate.

c. The PUCMM Operating Unit apparently does not see itself as accountable to the Executive Committee. Several of the committee members interviewed indicated that, while they receive technical reports on progress in implementing the grant, they do not receive financial reports. One volunteered that he had repeatedly asked for notes of Executive Committee meetings but had not received them. In an internal planning workshop held on September 14 several founding members of GAD concluded that the informal structure that has been followed to date (meetings held with little advanced warning, lack of a clear leadership structure in the meetings) no longer serves GAD's needs. What began as an ad hoc group of organizations working together to deal with an immediate need (assure implementation of the Democracy Pact and a free and fair Presidential elections in 1996) needs to become more structured and formalized.

d. GAD's financial sustainability is a key challenge. GAD took a major risk when it began what is a major institution building project with one year of assured funding from USAID. GAD assumed that other sources of external funding would be forthcoming when USAID funding came to an end. Now, less than a month before USAID funding runs out, GAD has no assurances that it will be able to obtain external funding in the near future.

GAD started discussions with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) a few months ago. However, IDB funding, if forthcoming, will not come on stream until at the earliest March of 1997 and the IDB is not allowed to cover operating expenses. GAD's Operating Unit is preparing a proposal to USAID for assistance in the Judicial Sector with the hope that this funding could be made available immediately. In the evaluation debriefing on October 15 the GAD representatives were informed that this funding, if forthcoming, would also not be available until next Spring at the earliest. This leaves a vacuum of 4-6 months without external financing. For an organization that has, up until now, depended on external financing to cover all of its expenses (including its recurrent expenses) this represents a real challenge.

### National Agenda

GAD received high marks from almost everyone interviewed who was in any way involved with the National Agenda process for the participatory process followed in preparing the Agenda. Concerns expressed related to: (a) The delay between the time the National Agenda was prepared (March, 1996) and the formal issuance of Volumes I and II of the Agenda (October, 1996); (b) The absence of detailed implementation strategies for each of the ten Agenda items in Volume I; and (c) Lack of clarity on what steps GAD intends to take next to make sure the current government implements the Agenda.

### Civic Education

Significant contributions were made by the media, in both the time of personnel who developed GAD's TV and radio spots and free TV and air time. However, the TV spots received mixed reviews from an IIDH/CAPEL technical advisor and from a member of GAD's Executive Committee. Several people from the Dominican press who we interviewed also had concerns with both the format and content of the TV spots. Other than acquainting ourselves with the civic and electoral education courses offered by GAD and its sub-grantees, we did not have time to evaluate their quality or effectiveness.

### Articulación Sociedad Civil

In addition to reviewing documents provided by the GAD Operating Unit, the evaluators were able to meet with focus groups from three municipal GADs--San José de las Matas, Moca, and Bonao. San José de las Matas is the most "advanced" of the three, having already started organizing itself with funding from a Democratic Initiatives grant before it was approached by GAD to become part of the municipal GAD network. While benefiting from assistance from the GAD Operating Unit, this municipal GAD is moving ahead on its own with its own activities. The municipal GAD in Moca, while off to a good start, still depends on external assistance from the GAD Operating Unit. The municipal GAD in Bonao is the last of the three to be organized and is having difficulties getting launched.

The evaluators were impressed with the enthusiasm expressed by members of the municipal GADs in San José de las Matas and Moca. Both GADs were pleased with the contents and participatory methodology used in the courses they had received from the GAD Operating unit. The "Boletines" issued by the GAD Operating Unit were also

given high marks. Individuals in both municipal GADs indicated that they had read them and found their contents (each bulletin has a different theme focusing on democracy) very instructive.

In one municipal GAD, San José de las Matas, the members have taken the initiative to develop, in preparation for the 1998 legislative elections, a "profile" of the characteristics that a legislator from their district should have. When we arrived the GAD was beginning a vetting process through which they intended to get feedback on the profile from individuals in communities throughout their municipality. This will culminate in the municipality's presenting the profile to political parties for use as a guide in selecting their candidates.

When we asked this municipal GAD what would have happened had they not been approached to form a part of the municipal GAD network the response was follows:

*"Had we never been asked to become a municipal GAD we would probably be working together on an infrastructure project. Becoming a member of the municipal GAD network has broadened our horizons. We are now, as a group of organizations, focusing on promoting democratic reform in our municipality, something we would not have done without assistance from GAD."*

By way of contrast, when we asked the municipal GAD in Moca (a group that is just now as a result of this initiative beginning to organize itself) what they would do if assistance from the central GAD Operating Unit were to suddenly cease, their response was as follows:

*"We were born with a silver spoon in our mouths. Everything we have wanted--funding for carrying out seminars, funding to print documents, funding to xerox papers--we have received. We are still in the process of organizing. Were support from the GAD Operating Unit to cease tomorrow, we would have a very difficult time operating and might well fall apart."*

The above would seem to imply that, while GAD is off to a good start in forming municipal GADs, the work is just beginning. Were funding to cease, some (such as San José de las Matas) would probably proceed on their own, albeit less effectively. Others (such as Moca) are currently very dependent on the central GAD Operating Unit, both for technical guidance and funding. Their future, without funding and external support, is dubious. The third, Bonaó, would undoubtedly disappear.

To date GAD has used a standard methodology of short (one to two day) courses with some individualized follow-up. As the municipal GADs get better organized, their needs and demands will become more varied. A stock menu of courses may no longer be viable. In addition, as the existing municipal GADs expand in membership and as new municipal GADs are added, the burden on the central Operating Unit is likely to expand exponentially. Courses, complemented with individualized follow-up, may no longer be the most cost effective way of delivering assistance to the municipal GADs.

### GAD Support for PC/RED

While the arrangement through the PUCMM apparently served as an effective conduit for getting funds to PC/RED when needed, the evaluators were left with the impression that GAD could have been more supportive of PC/RED. Component 2 of the Strengthening Civil Society activity specifies that, in addition to covering the costs of implementing elections monitoring and quick count, the GAD was to *"complement and coordinate the work of other civil society groups in support of Participación Ciudadana's primary role in the implementation of this component"*. The GAD was also to *"sponsor an education program for the establishment and promotion of the observer network"*. To the evaluators' knowledge the GAD did neither. When the going was rough with the Cardinal, the GAD waited two weeks to come out with an endorsement of Participación Ciudadana's activities that was considered by many as tepid.

During the interviews the evaluators asked both GAD and PC/RED personnel what they thought their relationship should be in the future. GAD personnel were open to the idea of incorporating PC/RED as one of its organizations. PC/RED, as an association of individuals, on the other hand, was less enthusiastic about developing a long-term relationship with GAD. Both organizations have similar interests for the future--organizing for the 1998 elections, pressing for key reforms, civic education. While the two organizations do not necessarily need to unite forces, given their similarity of interests they need to be clear on their respective roles, both at the national and local levels.

## **5. Recommendations**

### Institutional

a. GAD needs to be seen as an independent entity with the interests of no one group prevailing over that of others. In this regard, organizational schemes assuring that this takes place should be adopted immediately.

b. In keeping with the outcome of a September 14 workshop where this was discussed, the GAD cupula needs to be restructured and expanded to include participation of the municipal GADS which were not in existence when GAD was first created. In addition, the evaluators highly recommend that GAD consider adding more national organizations of NGOs (only two are currently represented on the cupula), at least one national organization of women (none are currently on the cupula) and consider the advisability of seeking representation from the press.

c. While GAD is an association of organizations, it is ultimately the individuals representing the organizations whose voices are heard. As GAD's membership expands (GAD currently has more than 1,000 organizations) GAD needs to be vigilant regarding the individuals that represent its member organizations. It only takes one or two individuals (who have political aspirations and would like to use GAD as a political launching board; or who have dubious reputations) to give GAD the appearance of having a mission other than that of promoting democratic reform.

d. GAD, in keeping with agreements reached by members of its cupula at the September 14 workshop, needs to formalize its internal structure. Roles and responsibilities need to be clarified. GAD needs, as soon as possible, to establish a system of internal accountability to its Executive Committee. Lines of internal communications (within the GAD Operating Unit, between the Operating Unit and the Executive Committee, between the Operating Unit and the Municipal GADs) need to be improved.

e. GAD needs to give immediate priority to developing and implementing a plan for obtaining local funding and assuring its institutional sustainability. Sometime between November 15 and 30 GAD will run out of USAID funding. External funding (from the IDB, USAID, and possibly the EU), if forthcoming, will not be available until at the earliest March/April of 1997. There will be a great deal of pressure exerted on GAD, the IDB, and USAID to demonstrate that it has a sustainable means of funding its recurrent costs. How (and if) GAD continues operating after November and its possibilities for getting external funding will depend on how rapidly GAD can develop and implement a plan for obtaining funding locally. In this regard, GAD should examine closely the experience of other organizations in the Dominican Republic (EDUCA, APEC, FINJUS) and elsewhere, that currently receive funding on an ongoing basis from local sources.

f. GAD has the potential of becoming a very powerful, and effective, association of organizations lobbying for democratic reform. However, this very potential can be a double edge sword. To avoid its being seen as an all powerful monopoly, the evaluators encourage GAD to take visible steps to portray itself as one of several potential groupings of civil society organizations that has democratic reform as its objective. GAD may even want to actively encourage the formation of other similar groupings of civil society organizations.

#### Articulación Sociedad Civil

a. Given that Santo Domingo represents 40% of the country's population, GAD should give immediate consideration to how to incorporate Santo Domingo into the municipal GAD network.

b. Before expanding its activities (including adding new municipalities) GAD should stop and take stock of what it has on its plate; whether the strategy being followed is the most appropriate/cost effective (including taking advantage of this opportunity to explore other options); the financial and institutional implications of its current commitments; and what would be required (both institutionally and financially) in order to expand.

c. GAD should start taking steps to assure the cross-fertilization of initiatives (such as the San José de las Matas legislator profile) between municipal GADS. A first step has been taken with the issuance of a recent GAD bulletin that has a section that features activities of specific municipal GADs. This is a good start, but a lot more can be done.

### Civic Education

The evaluators did not have time to delve in detail into the many activities carried out under this component. Their impression is that some activities were excellent and others might benefit from some rethinking. The evaluators highly recommend that GAD, before expanding its activities in this area, take a close look at what has been done to date in this area (including the cost effectiveness of activities carried out). At the same time GAD might want to explore additional approaches that might be more cost-effective, including the use of radio and other mass media (following the example of Radio Santa María and other organizations in the Dominican Republic).

### 1998 Elections

a. This is an area that is clearly within GAD's scope of action. The municipal GADs played a useful role in the 1996 elections. Further strengthened and organized, they can play an even more useful role in the 1998 elections where the focus is on the municipal and district level.

b. Given the increased importance that the municipal JCE's will be having in the 1998 elections, GAD headquarters working with the municipal GADs should take steps to assure that the municipal JCE's are composed of individuals with the same reputation for integrity that members of the national JCE currently have.

### GAD Relationship with PC/RED

Given the similarity in their missions, and to avoid future problems, the evaluators highly recommended that GAD and PC/RED clarify their respective roles and the nature of their collaboration.

## **B. PARTICIPACIÓN CIUDADANA/RED DE OBSERVADORES (PC/RED)**

### **1. Background:**

Participación Ciudadana (PC) was established in November, 1993 by a middle class group of academics and professionals who felt that civil society should have an independent voice different from that of the political parties, with the ability to express its points of view on national problems. Of particular interest to the founding members of PC was addressing judicial, social and political reforms.

PC currently has 168 members, 68 of whom pay quotas of between \$3.50 and \$11.00 a month. In 1995 PC had an income of \$10,895 of which 45% came from quotas and the remainder from donations and special events. PC has a Consejo Nacional of 19 members, of whom 12 are elected annually and 7 belong to fixed working committees. The Consejo Nacional, in turn elects a five member Coordinating Committee which oversees PC's day to day operations. Members of the Consejo Nacional are limited to a two year term. Five of the current members of the Consejo Nacional are eligible to be re-elected this November when the Assembly meets to elects its Consejo Nacional. The Red Nacional de Observadores

(RED), an offshoot of PC which was created to monitor the 1996 Presidential elections, has its own Executive Committee of five members.

PC does not have a full-time staff. The Red Nacional de Observadores has, to date, received approximately \$700,000 in donations--\$70,000 from the National Endowment for Democracy and the remainder from USAID. Full-time staff on the RED have varied from month to month depending on the activities of the RED. In March, 1996 they were at an all time high of 30. At the time of the evaluation the RED had seven full-time staff on its payroll.

When the Dominican national elections took place in 1994, PC was the only civil society group that came out visibly to denounce the irregularities that took place demanding a new election. PC published several articles in the press denouncing the fraud. They also organized a meeting, at the end of May 1994, with NGOs and community groups to protest the fraud. While PC was not successful in its quest, PC's voice was one of many factors that led to the signing of the Pact for Democracy under which President Balaguer agreed to serve a two, instead of four, year Presidency and not run again for elections in 1996. PC's stance on the 1994 elections won it the reputation, in some sectors, of being composed of a biased group of individuals who were against Balaguer and his PRSC party and in favor of opposition PRD candidate José Francisco Peña Gomez.

When the opportunity presented itself for civil society organizations to sign the Pact for Democracy as witnesses, PC opted not to sign arguing that the terms which had been negotiated between Balaguer and Peña Gomez had been changed at the last minute.

During the latter half of 1994 PC saw an opportunity to play a role in the 1996 elections and began organizing itself as an electoral observation group. PC requested, and received, \$70,000 in financial assistance from the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) to carry out a limited elections monitoring effort. The President of PC, at the invitation of NDI, visited Paraguay to attend a meeting of elections monitors. NDI also sent another member of PC to Peru to become acquainted with Transparencia, an elections monitoring group that PC/RED eventually modeled itself after. In August of 1995 PC received funding from USAID/Dominican Republic through its Strengthening Civil Society activity to carry out elections observation in the 1996 elections and to do a quick count. These funds, along with funds for GAD, were channeled through the PUCMM.<sup>6</sup>

PC's initial elections observation work plan included four tasks:

1. Revise the voters list prepared by the JCE in order to detect inconsistencies or omissions.
2. Prepare biographies on each of the members of the municipal electoral boards, for wide distribution among the Dominican populace.

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<sup>6</sup> At that time PC did not have its personería jurídica and thus was not eligible to receive funds directly from USAID.

3. Recruit and train electoral observers.
4. Carry out the actual elections observation in May/June, 1996 and doing a quick count of votes.

PC, unlike GAD, experienced a number of problems in the months leading up to the elections. Widely viewed, especially by members of the PLD and PRSC parties, as harboring a large number of PRD sympathizers, PC was under suspicion as being a biased group. The JCE, while open to the notion of having local elections monitoring, severely limited PC's actions at the beginning. The JCE did not grant permission to PC to either review the voter registry or prepare biographies of members of local elections boards.<sup>7</sup> While the JCE permitted PC to participate as elections observers in the May and June presidential elections, the JCE severely limited the number of observers PC was allowed to have at the polls on elections day. In a high mass in late February Cardinal Lopez declared publicly that he possessed information that, with the assistance of the United States, PC was supporting one of the candidates. It wasn't until PC performed its role during the May 16 elections that the JCE and others acknowledged that PC was a professional group capable of serving in a neutral elections observation role.

PC launched its elections observation program in April 1995 with the establishment of the "Red de Observadores" (RED), a program of PC to handle elections observation. Volunteer regional coordinators started recruiting volunteer elections observers for the May/June, 1996 elections by visiting NGOs in provinces.<sup>8</sup> The recruitment process got a considerable boost in late February, 1996 when Cardinal Lopez made his declaration about PC. Because of PC's reputation, the RED deliberately maintained its distance from the PC.

## 2. Activities/achievements to date

- a. Between April of 1995 and the May, 1996 elections PC/RED recruited 5,000 individuals who were willing, on a voluntary basis, to serve as elections observers in the 1996 presidential elections. Although the JCE ended up limiting their formal participation as observers to a maximum number of 1,140, PC/RED was versatile enough to assign functions on elections day to most of those not approved.
- b. As part of the recruitment process, PC/RED issued several TV spots motivating individuals to join the RED de elections observers. Members of the RED who worked with the press (TV, radio, newspapers) also, on their own, used their access to mass media to promote the RED.
- c. PC/RED with assistance from IIDH/CAPEL, developed a comprehensive set of materials for use in training personnel and guiding the elections observation process. These materials were used to train all 5,000 elections observers.

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<sup>7</sup> The idea of preparing bibliographies is a good one as it promotes accountability by permitting citizens to know who in their respective districts will be counting their votes and gives citizens the opportunity, if anything goes wrong, of fingering these individuals.

<sup>8</sup> To be eligible to join the RED one could not have a party affiliation.

d. Again with IIDH/CAPEL assistance, PC/RED put in place a methodology for carrying out a quick count based on a random sample of polling sites. This quick count was piloted on April 28 in a simulation and was subsequently applied in both the May and June Presidential elections. Given the anticipated closeness in the race, PC/RED doubled its sample for the June elections.

e. The Red de Observadores issued 12 monthly bulletins that were distributed to the members of the PC/RED nuclei, congressmen, members of the Electoral Commission, the Juntas Municipales, the Supreme Court, political party leaders, universities, private voluntary organizations, intellectuals and the media. The last two bulletins, in particular -- numbers 11 and 12 -- provide a detailed qualitative review of the May and June elections process based on observations made by RED volunteers at the polling sites.

f. While there are no hard data, it is estimated that some 1,200 individuals who were not elections observers received training in the elections process through PC/RED.

### 3. Future Plans

PC's future plans are currently unclear. PC has within its mandate focusing on judicial, social and political reform. As a result of the RED's recent successful efforts, three other potential areas have been identified that could take advantage of the RED volunteers, should they decide to join PC: civic education, vigilance of institutions, and preparing for serving as observers in the 1998 Congressional and Municipal elections. What PC decides to do next, and the specific role it will play in the 1998 elections, will depend on the outcome of internal elections to take place on November 23.

Experience from other local observation groups suggests that there are opportunities for Participación Ciudadana to play an important role between elections:

-- Transparencia in Peru, around whom Participación Ciudadana's electoral observation campaign program was modeled, has signed an agreement with the Peruvian Electoral Tribunal (with IFES support) to develop a data bank on electoral assistance (including information on Peruvian electoral laws, laws and activities in other countries, establishment of a home page on Internet). Transparencia has also submitted a proposal to USAID/Peru for financing a program to continue the work in civic education that it began in connection with the 1995 elections. Under this proposal Transparencia will establish civic education programs through radio and the written media. Through a USAID/Peru-funded agreement with IFES, Transparencia is initiating a process to discuss with civil society (and then share more broadly through the media) civil society views on proposed initiatives relating to the electoral code; decentralization (including municipal and regional elections), political parties, and reforms to the law on control of citizen participation. NDI, with USAID funding, is providing technical assistance to Transparencia's Board of Directors and has organized several conferences on civic awareness.

-- Poder Ciudadano in Argentina has specialized in establishing a data bank on politicians which is generating pressure for increased accountability among politicians.

-- Participa in Chile, CAPEL's first program with civil society that started in the mid 1980's, played an important role in organizing for a referendum which resulted in Pinochet's stepping down as President. Today Participa provides specialized assistance in citizen participation including elections monitoring and civic education campaigns.

#### 4. Evaluators' Comments

##### Structure/Organization

a. Although the RED began as a specific off shoot of PC to address the 1996 elections, an unnecessary dichotomy has developed between PC and the RED. While it may have made sense, given PC's past history, to initiate the RED with as much autonomy from the PC as possible, this is no longer necessary. Indeed, incorporating RED volunteers as formal members of PC could strengthen PC's image of neutrality.

b. While PC currently receives quotas from its membership, this source of income is limited. Depending on what PC decides to do in the future, these quotas may not be sufficient to cover its expenses.

c. Internal tensions exist between the founding members of PC and its present leaders. These tensions appear to be based on a combination of personality differences, differences in operating style, and apprehensions regarding perceived differences in political preferences (although there seems to be a strong commitment within PC to political neutrality regardless of what party sympathies PC members might have).

d. The RED has attracted a wide gamut of "plain and ordinary" people who are highly motivated to continue pushing for reform and who have the trust of the Dominican populace. If properly channeled, these individuals have the potential of playing a significant role in citizen education and influencing reform in the judicial, social and political areas.

e. The current lack of clarity regarding where PC is headed is impeding PC's ability to take advantage of the good will and enthusiasm of the RED volunteers. Significant further delays could result in losing this good will and human capital.

##### Elections Monitoring

a. PC/RED, by all accounts, did an outstanding job in the elections monitoring and quick count process. The RED volunteers received high marks from everyone we interviewed for their competence and impartiality. PC/RED's quick count turned out to be .026% points off from the official JCE count. The results of the quick count, in addition to giving members of the Dominican society further confidence with the official

elections results, contributed to establishing PC/RED's image as an impartial and neutral entity.

b. PC/RED adopted an effective strategy for targeting and recruiting volunteers to serve as elections observers. The individuals who volunteered had very good credentials, the volunteers were well organized, and the training they received was excellent. The evaluators were particularly impressed with the high quality of the training materials that were developed by PC/RED personnel with assistance from IIDH/CAPEL advisors.

c. PC/RED put in place a relatively sophisticated and physically well-integrated communications system. One of the measures of the effectiveness of the communications/training aspect of the program was the efficiency of the data transmission on election day. About 90% of the sample points had reported data within five hours of the closing of the polls. Neil Nevitte, a world renowned elections monitoring expert who provided technical assistance to the PC/RED, called this as a "remarkable effort". He characterized the overall quick count effort as "clearly one of the most successful domestic observation efforts undertaken in Latin America in the last decade".<sup>9</sup>

d. From our field interviews (and other information gathered) it is clear that there is a mystique out there. RED volunteers are empowered: they are proud of what they did and they feel appreciated within their communities for their role in the elections. A high proportion are young people in their 20's.

## 5. Recommendations

### PC/RED Relationship

While there may have been a rationale for establishing the RED independently of the PC, this is no longer necessary. Incorporating RED volunteers in the PC would add fresh blood to PC. It would have the added benefit of narrowing whatever distances may exist between PC's current leadership (which is mainly professional and middle class) and the "common, ordinary people", many of whom make up the RED. The evaluators understand that PC is in agreement with this recommendation and is contemplating opening up its November 23 elections to members of the RED.

### Relationship between PC/RED and GAD

PC/RED and GAD, while having similar objectives, have a different composition and different philosophies. Given the similarity in their objectives, however, it is important that they coordinate their activities so as not to create confusion in the minds of the Dominican populace.

### Funding for PC

While it is clear that PC quotas alone are not sufficient to carry out

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<sup>9</sup> Nevitte, Neil, Evaluation: Participación Ciudadana June 30<sup>th</sup> Election Observation, July 15, 1996.

electoral observation, it may be possible to finance some limited programs (civic education, lobbying for judicial and constitutional reforms) prior to the next elections by supplementing membership quotas with small amounts of additional funding. Efforts should be made to seek funding from the Dominican private sector either through donations or fund raising events. The evaluators also understand that funding might be available through the Democratic Initiatives project.

### PC Leadership

Existing tensions among the leaders of PC, based on a desire for neutrality and impartiality, can be counterproductive. Potential differences in political orientation (which are not unhealthy) should be dealt with in an open atmosphere where communications are encouraged.

### What next

PC's leadership needs to "get its act together" as soon as possible and chart out its medium term objectives. If it doesn't, it risks losing the good will of a large number of highly motivated RED volunteers who are anxious to continue playing a role in assuring the democratization of the Dominican society.

In the meantime, PC should maintain a skeleton staff until a new source of funds become available. PC should also re-establish contact with the municipal REDs. There are a number of enthusiastic but highly perplexed volunteers out there who haven't heard from PC headquarters since an evaluation post-mortem of the elections carried out in July and are eager for some word about what's happening.

PC should also acquaint itself with actions taken by like-minded groups in the region (such as Transparencia in Peru, Participa in Chile, Poder Ciudadano in Argentina, and others) to keep their programs operational between elections.

## **C. INSTITUTO INTERAMERICANO DE DERECHOS HUMANOS/ CENTRO DE ASESORÍA Y PROMOCIÓN ELECTORAL (IIDH/CAPEL)**

### **1. Background**

The Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos (IIDH) was created in 1980 as an independent entity under an agreement between the Corte Interamericano de Derechos Humanos and the government of Costa Rica. IIDH created the Centro de Asesoría y Promoción Electoral (CAPEL) in 1983 as one of four areas of focus: political rights and free and fair elections. The other three are: public institutions, education and human rights, and civil society. CAPEL, under the rubric of electoral support, has three action areas: technical assistance to electoral tribunals; political participation, and international cooperation. Since it was founded IIDH/CAPEL has carried out 42 programs of institutional strengthening/technical assistance to electoral tribunals and 19 civic campaigns.

CAPEL serves as the Executive Secretariat to three international associations: the Asociación de Organismos Electorales de Centro America y el Caribe (otherwise known as the Protocolo de Tikal) which was founded in 1985; the Asociación de Organismos Electorales de America del Sur (otherwise known as the Protocolo de Quito) which was founded in 1989; and Union Interamericana de Organismos Electorales (which includes all of the Protocolo de Tikal and Quito countries plus Mexico, Canada, and Puerto Rico--the United States currently has a request in for membership) which was founded in 1991. To date CAPEL has organized 19 conferences in its role as Executive Secretariat for these three entities. In its Secretariat role CAPEL has also organized 85 international electoral observation missions, composed of renown experts in the electoral field.

IIDH/CAPEL's linkage with the Dominican Republic, and specifically the Strengthening Civil Society activity, had its origins in an invitation issued by USAID/Dominican Republic to several international elections technical assistance providers, including IIDH/CAPEL, to come to the Dominican Republic to see what possible activities could be undertaken to support the 1996 Presidential elections. Only IIDH/CAPEL responded to this invitation. Between October, 1994 and January, 1995 IIDH/CAPEL carried out three exploratory missions to the Dominican Republic. After a mission in February, 1995 IIDH/CAPEL submitted a formal proposal to support the 1996 Dominican presidential elections. In August, 1996 IIDH/CAPEL signed a grant agreement for \$517,000 with USAID/Dominican Republic to assist Participación Ciudadana and the Grupo de Acción por la Democracia to prepare for the 1996 elections by providing technical assistance, organizing observation tours to other countries in the region, and bringing specialists to the Dominican Republic to participate in conferences and seminars.

Also in August, 1995 IIDH/CAPEL sponsored a seminar entitled "New Profiles and Mechanisms for Civil Society Participation in Latin America and the Caribbean". The seminar--which was attended by the Dominican Electoral Tribunal, PC, and GAD--served as a kick-off to the Strengthening Civil Society activity. It provided PC and the GAD the opportunity to become acquainted with the experiences of civil society organizations in other countries that have undertaken electoral observation activities.

## **2. Activities/achievements to date**

Under the grant agreement with USAID/Dominican Republic, IIDH/CAPEL has:

a. Sent consultants on 22 missions to the Dominican Republic to: assist PC in developing its campaign (2 consultancies), assist PC in developing the Red de Observadores (8 consultancies), assist in the design and execution of the quick count (11 consultancies), and assist in strengthening civil society organizations (one consultancy).

b. Organized and/or participated in 8 GAD and PC/RED conferences and workshops by identifying and bringing in international experts. Among the conferences which IIDH/CAPEL provided experts for were: a conference on civil society organized for the Dominican association of Evangelical churches and a series of weekly gatherings, carried out with Participación Ciudadana and INTEC, with technical personnel

from the key political parties focusing on social, economic, and political topics which culminated in an event attended by all Presidential candidates.

c. Carried out three studies on political risk and, with Gallup, two public perception polls. The studies on political risk have been used to guide CAPEL's technical assistance and were of great assistance to USAID in understanding the political situation as elections grew near. The first Gallup poll, carried out in March 1996, provided useful information to the JCE on what the public thought of Participación Ciudadana. It confirmed that the JCE was perceived to have done a fairly good job of cleaning up the electoral registry. Finally, it brought to the JCE's attention that a significant portion of the Dominican populace was not familiar with the new electoral system (colegios cerrados, doble vuelta). With this information, the JCE was able--six weeks before the May elections--to successfully carry out a last-minute electoral education campaign.

d. Sent two Dominicans as observers in the Peruvian elections in November of 1995 and three Dominicans (a JCE judge and two directors of the RED) to participate in IIDH/CAPEL's Seventh Interamerican Course on Elections in San Jose, Costa Rica in December of 1995.

In addition, IIDH/CAPEL took advantage of its technical advisory visits to the Dominican Republic to meet informally, on average once a month, with the members of the JCE. These meetings provided the President of the JCE and his fellow magistrates with an opportunity to receive feedback on what the JCE was doing to prepare for the 1996 Presidential elections. Among others, these meetings helped the JCE to reconfirm that it was headed in the right direction.

### **3. Evaluators' Comments**

#### General

While not widely publicized, a key contribution of IIDH/CAPEL was having served as a neutral bridge between JCE, on the one hand, and GAD and PC on the other. This was particularly critical in the early days of the activity when members of the JCE were unsure of the motives of these organizations.

On a different note, and of concern to both the evaluators and USAID staff, is that IIDH/CAPEL fell behind on its quarterly reports to USAID. When the evaluators arrived in Santo Domingo in late September there was only one quarterly report from IIDH/CAPEL in the USAID mission's files. The remaining quarterly reports were submitted by IIDH/CAPEL to the USAID mission just as the evaluators were getting ready to leave the Dominican Republic. Having stated the above, it is important to note that IIDH/CAPEL was very good about sending all of its consultant reports to USAID immediately upon receiving them from the consultants. IIDH/CAPEL also went out of its way to have its consultants brief USAID and Embassy staff at the end of their visits to the Dominican Republic.

### Assistance Provided to Participación Ciudadana/RED de Observadores

While IIDH/CAPEL receives high marks for the quality of the technical assistance it provided to PC/RED, it was seen by PC/RED staff as rigid, especially at the beginning. IIDH/CAPEL is credited by all involved in the implementation of the elections monitoring activity as having been responsive to PC/RED's needs. When Participación Ciudadana indicated that it wanted technical assistance from Transparencia in Peru, IIDH/CAPEL readily complied. It identified the correct individuals from Transparencia to provide technical assistance to Participación Ciudadana in: quick count, developing the Red de Observadores structure including identifying and training volunteers, designing forms, and preparing a press strategy. Finally, when funding for PC under the grant to PUCMM began to run out, IIDH/CAPEL made available some \$90,000 of its \$517,000 grant from USAID/Dominican Republic to finance several PC regional seminars in the Dominican Republic and, from January to June 1996, fund the salaries of several key RED personnel. Several PC members volunteered that they would seek assistance from IIDH/CAPEL should a future opportunity arise.

### Assistance provided to the Grupo de Acción por la Democracia

IIDH/CAPEL receives mixed reviews from individuals involved with GAD. IIDH/CAPEL is credited with providing high quality advisors. The August, 1995 seminar that brought key actors (JCE, GAD, PC/RED) together and, in essence, launched the activity was seen across the board as a big success. Also spoken highly of was a seminar that IIDH/CAPEL organized for members of the evangelical association.

One seminar on civic education received critical reviews from both the IIDH/CAPEL technical advisors (GAD was not as well organized as it should have been) and GAD (IIDH/CAPEL advisors were not what they wanted). IIDH/CAPEL tried to provide advise on the TV spots to GAD but this advise was ignored.

Ultimately, due to lack of interest from GAD, the funds set aside for technical assistance to GAD were reprogrammed for PC/RED.

## **4. Recommendations**

a. IIDH/CAPEL is in the process of preparing its final report for USAID. Given its mixed experience in delivering technical assistance to the two organizations, the evaluators recommend that this report provide not only a good synthesis of IIDH/CAPEL's experience providing technical assistance to PC/RED and GAD under the grant but focus on lessons learned that might be taken into consideration in future assistance, should such assistance be forthcoming.

b. IIDH/CAPEL should give more attention to its quarterly reports: both in assuring their timeliness and their content. With regard to the latter, the format of the quarterly report in USAID's files was lengthy and difficult to read (the last three reports submitted after one of the evaluation consultants provided this feedback to IIDH/CAPEL, were

much improved).

## D. UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID)

### 1. Background

One of USAID/Dominican Republic's four strategic objectives is that of *"Increased Participation in Democratization"*. The thrust of USAID activities carried out under this Strategic Objective is to "enhance broad-based, active participation of Dominican NGOs, public interest groups, foundations, labor unions, community organizations, and the general public in various aspects of democratic political life".

In the strategy submission that the USAID mission presented to AID/Washington in March of 1996, the mission specified that the immediate emphasis was to *"support civil society for a free and fair electoral process in 1996"*. Building on the momentum gained in this process the mission intends to "continue strengthening civil society's capacity for continued and growing participation with a view toward the legislative and municipal elections scheduled for 1998". The USAID mission states as its longer term emphasis that of *"supporting civil society's efforts to more actively engage the Government of the Dominican Republic and the public in promoting and shaping various democratic reforms and in practicing democratic values"*.

The mission's support for the Strengthening Civil Society activity under results package two--*"Strong public pressure for free and fair elections exerted"*--has its origins in the 1994 elections where USAID provided technical assistance to the JCE under the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). This technical assistance, however, was unable to counterbalance a weak and biased JCE and a series of external factors which resulted in what is now widely acknowledged to have been a fraudulent election.

With \$800,000 remaining from the 1994 electoral project plus an additional \$1.5 million in new funding, and with the lessons learned from attempting to support the Junta, USAID determined that for the 1996 election it would take a much different approach. Rather than directly supporting the new JCE, which indicated it would accept external technical assistance if it needed it but then never requested technical assistance, USAID decided to take a more indirect approach by supporting the electoral process from outside of the government. Working in a low key fashion behind the scenes and taking advantage of civil society's determination not to have another electoral fiasco in 1996, USAID served as a catalyst and supporter of what became an effort on the part of Dominican civil society to assure a free and fair election in 1996.

Two organizations were invited to present grant proposals to USAID: PUCMM in representation of the GAD and PC (neither of which at that time had their personería jurídica); and IIDH/CAPEL, a regional electoral assistance organization based in Costa Rica. Under the former GAD and PC were to implement a set of activities designed to involve civil society in preparing for the 1996 elections; establish a network of national

electoral observers and arrange quick count and monitoring of balloting; conduct citizen education campaigns; and formulate a national agenda from the perspective of civil society. IIDH/CAPEL was to provide experts from Latin America to assist in elections monitoring and quick count and support, as well as provide technical assistance and faculty for seminars and workshops focusing on elections promotion.

## 2. Evaluators' Comments on USAID's role

USAID clearly played an instrumental role in setting the stage for the Strengthening Civil Society activity. USAID brought together key civil society groups that were interested in assuring free and fair elections in 1996 and served as a catalyst in helping them to think through what they needed to do to accomplish this objective.

USAID and the Embassy, especially the Mission Director and the Ambassador, were lauded by the individuals that the evaluators interviewed for following a perceived "medio paso atrás" philosophy. Without exception, USAID and Embassy officials were seen as respectful of the Dominicans. They were commended for not pushing their views.

USAID was also lauded for building into both grant agreements sufficient flexibility so that funds could be quickly reprogrammed to meet unanticipated needs. This was considered critical for the success of USAID support for the 1996 electoral effort.

The evaluators have only three critical observations. The first is that USAID could have been more vigilant of the activities of the GAD Operating Unit in PUCMM: particularly its activities in civic education with the municipalities (and the commitments that were been built up with municipalities) and the difficulties identified in Section IV.A. regarding GAD's internal operations and communications (which culminated in major friction at the time that the evaluation took place). While USAID met with GAD and PC on a monthly basis to review progress in implementing the grant with the PUCMM, due to extensive workload on the part of the USAID activity manager and the urgency of addressing high visibility activities directly related to the elections, the USAID activity manager and his staff were not able to visit any of the municipal GADs. USAID should consider adding an additional staff member to the democracy strategic objective team to assist in monitoring programs such as this one.

The second is that USAID permitted GAD, under a one year grant with the PUCMM<sup>10</sup>, to initiate some extensive institution-building activities (e.g. establishment of the network of 44 municipal GADs) where it was clear that, at the end of the grant period, these activities would not be either institutionalized or self-sustainable. This is not usually the way USAID operates. However, as USAID staff explained to the evaluators, the USAID mission decided to take this risk because there was a value to providing kick-off support to an organization with a strong civil society orientation that was just getting itself started. In addition, given the past track record of the grantee in obtaining follow-on funding for its initiatives, it was believed that the grantee would be able to secure the funding it needed after USAID's one year of grant assistance expired.

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<sup>10</sup> USAID, at the time, could only commit to one-year funding.

The third is that USAID, in its desire to have a neutral party participate that could serve as a bridge, brought in IIDH/CAPEL. Intense negotiations apparently took place between USAID, IIDH/CAPEL, and GAD in order to come up with the right mix of technical assistance for GAD's activities. The urgency of reaching an agreement quickly resulted in agreements between IIDH/CAPEL and GAD on the nature of technical assistance that some members of GAD, especially in the Operating Unit, did not fully buy in to. While the relationship between IIDH/CAPEL and PC/RED proved to be quite successful, there were significant tensions from the start in the IIDH/CAPEL-GAD relationship. Eventually the technical assistance set aside for the GAD was reprogrammed for use with the PC/RED.

### **3. Recommendations**

a. CAPEL and GAD, for the reasons explained in section (2) above, ended up in what might be called a "forced marriage". Should USAID assist in the future in supporting elections in the Dominican Republic consideration should be given to how to avoid having this happen again.

b. To expedite what was a dynamic and evolving set of electoral activities, USAID signed open ended agreements with both the PUCMM and CAPEL that contained illustrative activities but had no specific targets for each of the components. There was never clarity with GAD/PUCMM on the level of effort that would go into electoral vs. non-electoral activities, leaving the door open for GAD/PUCMM to place more attention on the latter. In the future clearer understandings regarding mutual expectations of both parties (USAID and the grantee) should be clearly established up front.

## **V. PROJECT OUTREACH AND IMPACT**

The evaluation scope of work called for the evaluators to comment on the extent to which the Strengthening Civil Society activity met anticipated targets, the attention given under the activity to women and youth, and impact of the activity on the 1996 elections. This section addresses these three topics.

### **A. EXTENT TO WHICH THE STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY ACTIVITY MET ANTICIPATED TARGETS**

In its desire to design a flexible program, the USAID mission designed the Strengthening Civil Society program description in such a way that it sets out, for each of the four activity components, general objectives as opposed to specific targets. Section II.C. of the Program Description sets out desired activity results. The mission's FY 1995-1998 Results Review and Resources Request (R4) submitted to USAID/Washington, in February of 1996 sets out under the mission's Strategic Objective Number 3, "*Increased Participation in Democratization*", a set of indicators and targets to be met more broadly under the mission's strategic objective (and to which the SCS activity is to contribute) as well as specific indicators related to the SCS activity. Summarized below, to the best of the evaluators' ability (and taking into account the limitations of a two week assignment with many objectives), is an assessment of progress in achieving these targets and indicators.

**1. Achievement of objectives under each component of the SCS activity**

Objectives under the four SCS activity components are listed in Table 1 below. These objectives, were for the most part, met:

<i>Table 1 Strengthening Civil Society Activity Objectives</i>	
<b>Component 1:</b> <i>Integrating the Elements of Civil Society</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Network of local action committees created to support municipal electoral boards and help recruit members for polling sites.</li> <li>ii. Support for citizen education and definition of the national agenda.</li> <li>iii. Support provided for a network of electoral observers</li> <li>iv. Establishment of a permanent network for analysis and advocacy of public interest issues</li> </ul>
<b>Component 2:</b> <i>Network of national Electoral Observers and Arranging Quick Count and Monitoring of Balloting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. National network of electoral observers established, local civil activities trained to serve as elections monitors and a network of civil society organizations defending citizen participation in the 1996 elections established.</li> <li>ii. Quick count of ballots using a random sample and qualitative observation of balloting procedures at selected polling sites carried out.</li> </ul>
<b>Component 3:</b> <i>Citizen education campaigns</i>	Mass media campaign carried out and awareness instilled among Dominican citizens of their rights and duties.
<b>Component 4:</b> <i>Formulate national agenda from the perspective of civil society</i>	Dominicans given the opportunity to participate in determining the issues and their solutions through their participation in formulating a national agenda.

a. Under Component 1--Integrating the Elements of Civil Society --a network of local actions committees was created to support municipal electoral boards and help recruit members for electoral polling sites (objective 1. i.); GAD received support for citizen education and definition of the national agenda (objective 1.ii.), and support was provided for a network of electoral observers (objective 1. iii.). Not achieved, to the evaluators' knowledge, was the establishment of a permanent network for analysis and advocacy of public interest issues (objective 1. iv.), although the ground has been laid for this, through both PC and GAD, and both organizations are interested in taking on this role .

b. Under Component 2 --*Network of National Electoral Observers and Arranging Quick Count and Monitoring of Balloting*--a national network of electoral observers was established, local civil activists were trained to serve as elections monitors, and a network of civil society organizations defending democratic citizen participation in the 1996 elections was established (objective 2.i.). In addition, a quick count of ballots using a random sample was carried out and a qualitative observation of balloting procedures at selected polling sites was carried out (objective 2.ii.).

c. Under Component 3--*Citizen Education Campaigns*--a mass media campaign was carried out by GAD and its sub-grantees to instill awareness among Dominican citizens of their rights and duties and conferences, seminars, workshops, and retreats were carried out to both increase awareness of citizen rights and duties and to increase participation in the 1996 elections. PC also carried out a number of training seminars for RED observers which were attended by individuals outside the RED.

d. Under Component 4--*Formulate National Agenda from the Perspective of Civil Society*--Dominicans were given the opportunity to participate in determine the issues and their solutions through their participation in formulating a national agenda.

**2. Achievement of desired results as specified in the SCS program description.**

Table 2, below, lists the desired results as specified in Section II.C. of the SCS Program Description

*Table 2  
Strengthening Civil Society Activity  
Results*

<b>Overall</b>	Citizens understand their rights and responsibilities and gain confidence on the workings of a participatory democratic electoral process.
<b>Civil Society Network</b>	Local communities gain experience working with municipal electoral boards in recruiting qualified, motivated and politically polling sites.  Grass roots and community organizations are encouraged to mobilize in order to influence all aspects of the democratic electoral process in their areas.
<b>Election Observer Network</b>	Transparency of the electoral process is improved..  Citizens are reassured regarding the quality of the elections; a trustworthy, independent assessment of the quality of the electoral process—including pre-and post-election day period—is provided; irregularities are identified and denounced..

<b>Citizen Education</b>	<p>Citizens are better informed on the electoral process in general, and their rights with respect to elections in particular; they understand the voting process and they are motivated to vote</p> <p>Businesses contributed to a non-partisan civic education campaign</p>
<b>National Political Agenda</b>	<p>Communities throughout the country have the opportunity to determine and express their own local priorities and to participate in identifying and debating national public interest issues.</p> <p>The Action Group network vigorously advocates core elements of the National Agenda in order to help focus the election campaign on these .</p>

a. Overall:

Data to assess the achievement of the first half of the overall result—“*citizens understand their rights and responsibilities*”—are not available. With regard to the second half—“*gain confidence in the workings of a participatory democratic electoral process*”—72% of a sample of 1,200 voters who participated in a Gallup/CAPEL survey carried out in October, 1996 indicated that , gauging by the way the electoral process took place in 1996, the Dominican political system will change for the better.

b. Civil society network

While there are no hard data available, the first result—“*local communities gain experience working with municipal electoral boards in recruiting qualified, motivated and politically neutral polling site personnel*”—clearly took place. The second result—“*grass roots and community organizations are encouraged to mobilize in order to influence all aspects of the democratic electoral process in their areas*”—appears to have taken place in some of the municipal GADS. However, in the absence of an in-depth survey it is not possible to tell in how many and to what extent. On the PC/RED side, grass roots and community organizations clearly mobilized to propose volunteers for the elections observation process.

c. Election observer network

The first result—“*transparency of the electoral process is improved*”—clearly took place. The fact that over three quarters (76%) of those participating in the October, 1996 Gallup/CAPEL survey thought that, as a result of the way the electoral process took place in 1996, the Dominican political system will change for the better speaks indirectly to this result.

The second result has three sub-items. There are no data for the first—“*citizens are reassured regarding the quality of the elections*” However, the fact that 76% of those polled in the October, 1996 Gallup/CAPEL survey indicated that, as a result of

the 1996 electoral process, the Dominican political system will change for the better speaks positively of how Dominicans viewed the quality of the 1996 elections. Everyone we interviewed enthusiastically endorsed the second sub-item—*“a trustworthy, independent assessment of the quality of the electoral process, including pre- and post- election day period, is provided”*.

Regarding the third—*“irregularities are identified and denounced”*--the RED observers identified irregularities on both election days but were not involved in identifying or denouncing irregularities before the elections. There are some indications, however, that in some cases during the elections RED observers were able to notify individuals manning the polling tables of problems at the polling sites and, as a result, have these problems attended to. PC/RED did identify and publicize irregularities through RED bulletins published after the elections. Dominican electoral authorities would be well advised, in preparing for the next elections, to study the contents of these bulletins and take preventive steps to address the irregularities identified in the bulletins.

d. Civic education

The first result—*“citizens are better informed on the electoral process in general, and their rights with respect to elections, in particular; they understand the voting process and they are motivated to vote”*--can be inferred due to high voter turn-out and lack of confusion at the polls. The second result—*“businesses contribute to a non-partisan civic education campaign”*--was clearly achieved. The GAD received contributions, both in person time and air time, from local radio and TV stations as well as free space in the written media. PC, through several of its members who were from the news media, got their messages out free of charge

e. National political agenda

The first result—*“communities throughout the country have the opportunity to determine and express their own local priorities and to participate in identifying and debating national public interest issues”*--is currently taking place. However, it is not yet clear how effective it is. The second result—*“the Action Group network vigorously advocates core elements of the National Agenda in order to help focus the election campaign on these issues”*--took place through the issuance by the GAD of the Governability Pact in April of this year. The big question is what will be done by the current government to put the National Agenda into effect.

**3. Achievement of results as specified in the USAID/Dominican Republic FY 1995-1998 Results Report & Resources Request ( R4):**

Table 3, below, lists four indicators at the Strategic Objective level to which the SCS activity is to contribute and four indicators at the Results Package level which are to directly reflect achievements under the SCS Activity.

**Table 3**  
**Strengthening Civil Society Activity**  
**R4 Indicators**

<p><b>Strategic Objective 3:</b> <i>Increased Participation in Democratization</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Eligible voters who votes</li> <li>2. Eligible voters intending to votes.</li> <li>3. Citizens involved in lobbying for democratic reforms.</li> <li>4. Citizens active in NGOs and/or community groups.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Results Package 2:</b> <i>Strong Public Pressure for Free and Fair Elections Exerted</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Polls monitored by national network of trained electoral observers.</li> <li>2. Active municipal citizens' election coalition committees supporting electoral process.</li> <li>3. Broad societal support for citizen's coalition.</li> <li>4. Citizens' election coalition advocated engaging respected neutral, trained citizens to man the polls..</li> </ol>

a. Indicators at the Strategic Objective level::

With regard to the first indicator—“*eligible voters who voted*”—, a Gallup/CAPEL opinion survey carried out in October of 1996 indicated that 83% of eligible voters voted in both elections. A March, 1996 Gallup/CAPEL survey indicated that 80% of eligible voters said that they planned to vote (indicator 2). With regard to the third indicator—“*citizens involved in lobbying for democratic reforms*”— there is no information as of yet, but there is the potential of having this happen through possible future activities of both the GAD and PC. With regard to the fourth indicator—“*citizens active in NGOs and/or community groups*”— 5,000 elections observers were active in the RED de Observadores. There is also the potential for this to take place through the GAD municipal groups, once they get up and running.

b. Results Package Indicators:

With regard to the first indicator—“*polls monitored by national network of trained electoral observers*”—1,140 RED observers monitored the polls on May 16 and June 30. It is too early to make a determination on the second indicator—“*active municipal citizens' election coalition committees supporting electoral process*” as these municipal coalition committees are just now getting started under GAD. It is also too early to make a determination on the third indicator—“*broad societal support for citizen's coalition*”—as GAD is still in process of establishing itself. Finally, the last indicator—“*citizens' election coalition advocates engaging respected, neutral trained citizens to man the polls*” (assuming this refers to the RED de Observadores), was clearly achieved.

## B. ATTENTION TO GENDER AND YOUTH

### 1. Attention to women

The evaluation scope of work asks two gender-related questions: (a) has the project reached women; and (b) has the project helped women to improve their electoral rights, including the right to elect and be elected?

#### a. Has the project reached women?

The answer is mixed.

-- In the case of PC/RED, a little less than half (44.5%) of the election observers were women. Two of three key actors responsible for implementing the RED, including the Project Director, were women. Two out of seven members of PC's Comite Coordinador are women and 5 out of 17 members of the Consejo Nacional are women.

-- In the case of the GAD, women were the key beneficiaries of television spots which were aired in the afternoons during the time soap operas were being shown. Nearly half (48%) of recipients of municipal courses were women. A lower proportion of women were participants in workshops on the National Agenda (29%), in leadership positions in municipal GADS (22%), and in electoral education courses provided through labor unions (18%). There was negligible to no representation of women in the GAD cupula (1 out of 22) and there are no women either in the GAD Executive Committee or in leadership positions in the GAD Operating Unit. GAD did, however, sign an agreement with an association of women's NGO's, CIPAF, to provide electoral education for women

#### b. Has the project helped women to improve their electoral rights, including the right to elect and be elected?

The answer to both portions of the question is no. Regarding the former—improvement of women's electoral rights-- CIPAF has received funding under the Democracy Initiatives project to promote women's right to be elected (including proposing that minimum of 30% of Congressional delegates be women).

### 2. Attention to youth

The evaluation scope of work asks for information on impact of the SCS project on adolescents and the role of youth in the RED de Observadores.

23% of members of RED were under 21 and another 22% were between 21 and 24. While in the Dominican Republic we received several testimonials, from young people and their parents, about how participation in the RED changed the lives of young people: their feeling of self-worth, appreciation of the importance of playing a role in the political process.

Of particular interest was the role of adolescents in the PC computer center during both elections. During the May 16 election 77 youth ages 13-17 served as receptionists in the PC computer center, receiving elections data from elections observers and transmitting the data to individuals who inputted the information into the computer. Another 18 did the data input. During the June 30 election, 110 adolescents served as receptionists and 21 did data input.

As the mother of a 14 year old who participated in the computer center told one of the evaluators, her daughter threw her heart and soul into the process and has come out of it a changed person. As a result, she is politically "turned on" and enthusiastic about continuing to be an active participant in the democratic reform process.

GAD also played a part in promoting participation of youth in the elections through a grant to FUNDEJUR (a prominent group that supports the rights of youth in the Dominican Republic) to promote educating youth in elections.

### **C. ROLE OF THE STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY ACTIVITY IN MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE 1996 ELECTIONS.**

To answer this question it is necessary to put the SCS activity in the broader context of the U.S. Government role in making a difference in the 1996 elections. There is no doubt that USG, and as part of that the SCS activity, made a difference:

-- The fact that Dominicans knew that the U.S. Government was looking at what would happen, and intended to be neutral, undoubtedly influenced Balaguer and the political parties to keep the election on track.

-- USAID financial support for the Red de Observadores made the role of the JCE Junta more effective. Individuals running the polling stations on both election days, as well as the political parties, knew they were being watched. The tremendous success of the quick count, which provided data within .026% of the official elections returns provided a great deal of credibility to the official elections returns..

-- There is also little doubt that the events leading up to financing the SCS activity served as a catalyst for the formation of GAD. GAD member organizations, both individually and as a group, were widely recognized to have placed pressure on the Balaguer government to go through with the 1996 Presidential elections.

-- Finally under the SCS activity, assistance was provided in recruiting and training the individuals who managed the electoral tables.

## VI. MUSINGS AND LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

### A. KEY LESSONS LEARNED

A number of lessons were learned by USAID, the Embassy, and USAID's Dominican counterparts in designing and implementing this activity.

#### 1. **The importance of taking a participatory and collaborative approach:**

USAID/Dominican Republic played multiple roles in the design and implementation of this activity. It served as a catalyst. It identified civil society groups with common interests and got them together. It brokered the design of a comprehensive program of civil society support for a free and fair election in 1996. It brought in IIDH/CAPEL to serve as a neutral bridge between PC/RED and GAD, on the one hand, and the JCE on the other. It played a proactive role behind the scenes in advising PC/RED in the design and implementation of the elections monitoring and quick count activity. Finally, USAID financed an agreement that represented what the Dominicans wanted to do and which USAID coincided with. And it did all this in such a respectful low key way that in all instances where the topic of USAID's role came up, USAID was lauded for taking a "medio paso atrás" approach

#### 2. **The importance of providing a flexible framework for implementation that permits rapid responses to unanticipated situations.**

USAID/Dominican Republic, anticipating that preparing for and implementing the 1996 elections would call for quick responses to a number of unanticipated fast-breaking events, deliberately built a great deal of flexibility into the design of the Strengthening Civil Society activity. Thanks both to this flexibility and the fact that the USAID project officer bent over backwards to move the internal USAID paperwork when needed, both GAD and PC/RED received the assistance they needed on a timely basis. It is not often in a USAID project that the host country counterparts go out of their way to laud USAID for being so responsive.

#### 3. **The importance having political parties and government authorities seeing themselves under surveillance during the electoral process.**

This lesson cannot be overemphasized. The fact that, from the day the Democracy Pact was signed, the political parties and the government knew they were being watched closely, both from within (organizations and individuals throughout civil society) and without (U.S. government, OAS, other countries), was decisive in keeping what turned out to be a clean, fair, and transparent 1996 Presidential election on track.

**4. The value of contracting with a Latin American, as opposed to U.S. technical assistance provider:**

The U.S. government, and particularly USAID, learned an important lesson from the 1994 elections where the U.S. role was blown out of proportion by both the press and the political parties. USAID's capability to gain permission to be a player in the 1996 Presidential elections rested in its down-playing its role. This meant not bringing in a U.S. technical assistance provider, no matter how capable this provider might have been. IIDH/CAPEL provided the special benefit of being a Latin American technical assistance provider that, due to its experience with assisting Latin American Electoral Tribunals, had the trust of the Dominican Electoral Tribunal. This permitted IIDH/CAPEL, especially in the early months of the Strengthening Civil Society activity, to serve as a bridge between the JCE, on the one hand, and two relatively unknown civil society organizations (PC and GAD), on the other. While outside technical assistance was definitely in order (without outside TA Participación Ciudadana would never had been able to carry out its monitoring/quick count role), a U.S. technical assistance provider would not have been permitted to play this role.

**B. WHAT IF's**

Prior to initiating their consultants the evaluators were asked several "what if" questions, both by personnel in USAID/Dominican Republic and in USAID/Washington. This section attempts to address these "what if" questions. The answers represent the opinion of the evaluators, based on less than two weeks in the Dominican Republic. Both "what if's" were raised in a number of the interviews they carried out.

What if serious irregularities had occurred: Would GAD and PC/RED had been willing and able to take a strong stand?

The jury is out on this question since, as it turns out, other than the attack from the Cardinal against PC/RED, there were no serious irregularities or threats in the 1996 Presidential elections. When we asked this question we got a mixed response. Approximately half of those queried on this topic—several prominent and highly respected Dominicans—responded by saying "thank god we didn't have to face this" or "I don't know". Another half responded by saying that, had irregularities occurred, they were confident that civil society would have been able to take on the challenge.

What if the next JCE isn't of the same calibre as the JCE that oversaw the 1996 Presidential elections?

On this question, there was more optimism. The responses tended to be either "this won't happen because we will assure, as we did in 1996, that the next Junta has the same caliber among its members" or "if it happens, we will stand firm and—if necessary—lobby for their removal." It is the evaluators' opinion that the more optimistic response to this question, which focuses on the present and future rather than the past, reflects a different atmosphere and situation. The Dominicans are proud of the role they played in assuring a fair and transparent Presidential election in 1996. They see the current government as more open than the last government to being challenged.

### C. BROADER IMPLICATIONS

USAID's experience supporting the 1996 Presidential elections in the Dominican Republic has implications that go beyond the Dominican Republic. The approach taken by the mission of nurturing and supporting a coalition of civil society organizations that worked alongside an independent elections monitoring group has roused a great deal of interest among individuals in Washington, both within and outside of USAID. The viability of taking a "medio paso atras" approach, in the context of a time-sensitive elections activity, has also been called into question. Again, the evaluators provide their considered response based on the interviews they carried out, reviewing an extensive literature made available to them while in the Dominican Republic, and long conversations among themselves.

#### Possibility of having a coalition work effectively in a polarized environment.

USAID/Dominican Republic decided to take a "hybrid" approach in supporting elections monitoring in the 1996 Presidential elections. It supported a local group of individuals that, while in existence for over a year, did not yet have its "personería jurídica". This group had no prior experience with elections monitoring and, at the time USAID provided support, had never had a full-time staff. In addition, USAID decided to support an emerging coalition of civil society organizations that wanted to play a role in assuring fair and transparent elections in 1996. Since neither entity had its "personería jurídica", USAID channeled funding to both entities through a grant with the Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra (PUCMM), a known institution through whom USAID is currently channeling assistance for its Democratic Initiatives project. The idea was that the coalition (GAD), in addition to carrying out its activities in support of the 1996 elections on its own, would serve as an "umbrella" to the specific organization (PC/RED).

While not perfect (see discussion on the experience with GAD and PC/RED in Sections IV.A. and IV.B. of this report), this approach not only worked but, in the case of the 1996 Dominican Republic Presidential elections, was necessary. GAD had the power to influence events in a way that PC couldn't. Without GAD's clout, a number of key actions that were critical to the success of the 1996 elections would not have taken place (such as keeping the government on course in assuring that the election took place in 1996 and assisting in selecting and supporting member of the JCE). PC, on the other hand, had the ability to recruit thousands of volunteers and, in a short period of time, successfully prepared them to be elections observers.

The evaluators are not as clear on GAD's role in serving as an umbrella for PC/RED. Had GAD come out more quickly and decisively in favor of PC/RED when the Cardinal launched an attack on PC/RED in late February, 1996, the evaluators may have concluded that an umbrella indeed existed and that it was effective. Since GAD delayed in responding and, when it did, came out with a watered down statement, the evaluators would venture to observe that the umbrella, if it existed, was full of leaks.

The evaluators are optimistic that if GAD and the PC survive their internal difficulties and collaborate (albeit as independent entities), the coalition (GAD) and the

organization (PC) can play an even more effective role in assuring fair and transparent congressional and municipal elections in 1998. They will undoubtedly have the full support of the current government for whom it is very much in their interest to have civil society playing a watchdog role. These elections, if anything, will be trickier than the 1996 elections to carry out .

Extent to which the “medio paso atrás” approach works in the context of an elections support program.

There is some question within the USAID/Dominican Republic mission as to whether a “medio paso atrás” approach was really followed in designing and carrying out the Strengthening Civil Society activity. As is described in Section IV.D. of this report, USAID (albeit in a very low key fashion) played a very proactive approach in serving as a catalyst in the design of the program and, during implementation, provided ongoing advise to PC/RED on elections monitoring and the quick count. The fact, however, that Dominicans, when asked about USAID’s role, volunteered unequivocally that USAID had done an extremely effective job of following a “medio paso atrás” approach <sup>11</sup> speaks very highly for the sensitivity of the USAID mission in keeping a low profile while at the same time clearly influencing the course of events.

In the opinion of the evaluators, this was the only way that the USAID mission could have gone. After a 1994 election where the U.S. Government and USAID played a very high profile and were severely criticized for doing so, and given the history of U.S. occupation of the Dominican Republic which to this day is a sore topic, the Dominicans would not have permitted USAID to play any other role.

#### **D. FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR GAD AND PC/RED**

It is premature to discuss in detail what lies in store for GAD and PC/RED in the future. Both entities face major challenges—both in terms of getting their internal houses together and securing sustainable sources of financing. Assuming both conditions occur, both organizations have the potential of playing key roles in: (1) setting the stage for and overseeing the conduct of the 1998 elections; (2) getting civil society to lobby for reforms, and (c) continuing with civic education activities.

Specific recommendations for next steps for both GAD and PC/RED are included in Section IV of this report.

#### **E. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POSSIBLE FUTURE USAID SUPPORT**

This is a historic opportunity to support strengthening civil society in the Dominican Republic. As one member of the GAD Executive Committee put it, “The cork has been taken out of the champagne bottle and its contents are bubbling up”. USAID played

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<sup>11</sup> Indeed, a key counterpart lauded USAID first for being effective in taking a “dos pasos atrás” approach and then increasing the anti to say it was actually a “cinco pasos atrás” approach.

an important role in assuring a fair and transparent electoral process in 1996. Under the right conditions USAID and the USG can play a valuable role in helping the Dominican Republic to prepare for the 1998 elections (a MUCH bigger challenge than the 1996 elections), in helping to push for needed reforms, in educating civil society.

USAID should continue with its successful collaborative and participatory approach; where possible building in the type of flexibility provided for in the Strengthening Civil Society activity. In outlining its program of support, USAID should start by examining what activities most appropriately should be implemented through the Democratic Initiatives project. If there are some that are not best channeled through the Democratic Initiatives project, consideration should be given to supporting more than one organization. Given their complementarity (and assuming each gets its act together), USAID should consider providing support both to the GAD (an association of organizations) and PC (an association of individuals), with caveat that the two organizations work out their relationship.

USAID support for GAD should be predicated on GAD having:

- established itself as an independent organization with its own personería jurídica (with USAID funding channeled directly to the GAD).
- a structure which clearly defines roles and responsibilities; establishes internal accountability; and provides for clear lines of communication between the operating unit and its membership both at national and local levels.
- outlined a role over the medium term that is both appropriate and doable.
- demonstrated its ability to obtain funds locally.

USAID should also consider supporting PC but should, before doing so, await the outcome of the November elections to see what goals the new PC leadership has, what PC takes on as its medium term work-plan, how PC plans to go about accomplishing its medium term work-plan, and how PC and the RED straighten out their currently complicated relationship.

Finally, USAID and the U.S. Government should be looking closely at the 1998 elections. The challenges are many as are the opportunities. If GAD and PC play their cards right, and if they survive the organizational and financial challenges currently facing them, both GAD and PC can be key actors in assuring smooth, open, and transparent elections in 1998.

**ANNEXES**

- A. Evaluation scope of work
- B. Interviews carried out
- C. Documents reviewed
- D. Interview protocol for individual interviews
- E. Interview protocol for focus groups
- F. List of abbreviations and acronyms

**ANNEX A**

**STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY EVALUATION**

***EVALUATION SCOPE OF WORK***

## STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY EVALUATION SCOPE OF WORK

### BACKGROUND

The Strengthening Civil Society Project (517-073) was authorized August 14, 1995, for sixteen months and \$2.4 Million Dollars in grant funds. The goal of the Project is to increase participation in democratization in the Dominican Republic. The Project purpose is to ensure broad-based, informed, citizen participation in fair and transparent election in 1996. To date amendments to the Authorized Life of Project funding have brought this amount to \$2.45 Million.

On August 14, 1996, USAID entered into a Grant Agreement (517-0273-G-00-5249-00) with Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra (PUCMM) for \$1.883 Million and another (517-0273-G-00-5248), with the Interamerican Institute for Human Rights (IIDH/CAPEL) for \$519,000.

Both Grant Agreements have been amended, to: 1)lend office equipment to PUCMM to be used by Participación Ciudadana, 2)correct some errors on the grants and extend their termination dates through the PACD; and 3)increase the activity's LOP by over \$50,000

### OBJECTIVES

The general objective of this engagement is to conduct a final evaluation of the USAID/DR Strengthening Civil Society Project, No. 517-0273. Specific objectives are to assess the following:

1. Examine assumptions made during the project design to determine whether they are still valid, how have they affected the project.
2. Examine adequacy of both progress and impact indicators.
3. Actual versus planned progress toward achieving the impact of the activity as well as its purpose. Identify problems and delays, and their causes.
4. Performance of PUCMM as Grantee, as well as administrator of Participación Ciudadana (PC/RED) funds. Achievement of IIDH/CAPEL technical assistance provided to GAD and PC, including the appropriateness of foreign technical assistance provided. Performance of PC in the implementation of the Network of National Observers activity.
5. Measures taken to promote the activity across the country and to ensure sustainability of key activities aimed at maintaining civil society participation in political processes after the election period.
6. Adequacy of the Gallup survey as a means of measuring the impact of the activity.

7. Gender impact of the activity.
8. Activity impact on adolescents, the future voters. Role of youth in the National Observers process.
9. Lessons learned.

### **SCOPE OF WORK**

An evaluation team will conduct the project evaluation and respond in a written report to all of the points and questions included in the following Scope of Work. The team will consist of specialists on democracy/elections as follows: The team shall consist of two individuals:

1. A U.S. citizen who has background and experience in Latin America, has experience carrying out process and impact evaluations, is familiar with USAID and with the USAID/Dominican Republic civil society program.
2. A Latin American elections expert who has in-depth knowledge/experience in observing elections where civil society has been asked to play a prominent role.

Following are illustrative questions and issues, they are not exclusive.

1. Review original assumptions in the activity design and check their validity and how they have affected project implementation.
  - a. Was the reengineered way in which the activity was designed appropriate?
2. Review current progress and impact indicators, as revised in the DR Action Plan FY96-FY97, to determine how effective they are in the following aspects:
  - a. Are the indicators identified appropriate for measuring activity impact?
  - b. Were reasonable mechanisms established to gather information/data needed measure progress and impact indicators?
  - c. Can the indicators accurately measure the activity impact on civil society participation in the Dominican electoral process?
3. Review actual versus planned progress toward achieving the purpose, outputs and impact of the activity, identify problems and delays, and answer the following questions:

- a. Did the project reach the desired target groups nationwide and in Santo Domingo?
  - b. How has the project included the participation of women?
  - c. How well did the activity contribute to the current Mission Strategic Objective No. 3 of "Increased Participation in Democratization."
  - d. To what extent has the activity improved actual and perceived USAID links to low-income group, grass root organizations, and community groups working with civil society in democracy issues?
4. Review the role and performance of PUCMM and IIDH/CAPEL as Grantees to determine the following:
- a. How committed was the Group Action for Democracy (GAD) to the activity? Did they meet as required to manage the activity and resolve problems? Is the group's broad coalition too diverse to permit effective and timely responses to fast-breaking threats to the electoral process?
  - b. Did the GAD give appropriate emphasis to the various components of its grants? Did certain components receive greater attention than others, and, if so, why?
  - c. How well did PC/RED work? Is Participaci\u00f3n Ciudadana recognized by the Dominicans as the institution that carried out the National Observers Network? Did the GAD provide support to PC to the degree contemplated in the Mission's civil society strategy? GAD and PC/RED worked within the positive scenario of an Electoral Board highly respected and professional, what are the prospects in the future for GAD and PC/RED if a new Electoral Board does not enjoy the strength and credibility enjoyed in the 1996 electoral process?
  - d. To what extent was PC viewed as politically impartial? How much of a factor was PC's public image and the identification of certain of its leaders with political parties? Was GAD support for PC affected by PC's perceived political partiality?
  - e. Were the GAD Operational Unit staff composition, duties and level of effort sufficient to comply with activity's requirements?
  - f. To what extent was the GAD Operational Unit's monitoring system

- adequate for assessing performance and measuring impact?
- g. Were CAPEL's "networking" activities implemented to gain experience from other countries' similar institutions?
  - h. Was IIDH/CAPEL technical assistance provided to Participación Ciudadana and the GAD, timely appropriate and effective?
  - i. What needs to be improved and/or changed if a second phase of this project is to be carried out? Which areas of future assistance can be identified for the strengthening of the Dominican organizations that worked under the project?
5. Evaluate measures taken to promote the SCS project across the country and to ensure sustainability of key activities aimed at maintaining civil society participation in political processes.
- a. How well is the activity known among the community groups and the civil society organizations active in the field of democracy/elections? In Santo Domingo? All over the country?
  - b. What measures is Participación Ciudadana taking to improve their financial capability as a result of its participation in activity? Can they be considered as a self-sustainable NGO?
  - c. What measures are the participating institutions (GAD and PC) taking to keep the activities being funded by the activity going after the USAID's financing ends?
  - d. To what extent are the technical assistance and training being provided by IIDH/CAPEL to the participating institutions being helpful to them? What other kinds of TA and training could be needed?
6. Review the content and methodology of the Gallup survey to determine to what extent this study has gathered enough and accurate data to measure project impact
7. Examine the GAD and PC activities to determine gender impact of the project.
- a. Has the project reached women? Has the project helped women to improve their political rights including their right to elect and be elected?
  - b. Has the project promoted women participation in the direction of NGOs,

community groups and other organizations?

8. Examine the SCS project impact on adolescents, the future voters. Role of youth in the Citizen Electoral Observers Network.
9. Identify lessons learned and determine the following :
  - a. Which lessons learned so far regarding the philosophy, strategy and methodology used under the Strengthening Civil Society activity can be used in future USAID project design?
  - b. What did the project do in the 1996 elections that made the difference? What else could the project have done?

#### **DOCUMENTS TO REVIEW TO PROVIDE PROJECT PERSPECTIVE**

The evaluation Team will have access to background information on the project design, amendments and implementation progress. The information available, upon request, in the Mission include but are not limit to:

- a) Creative Associates assessment
- b) Original SCS activity design paper (Project Description)
- c) IIDH/CAPEL and GAD Grant Agreements
- d) Agreement Amendments
- e) Copies of Mission R4
- f) Copies of all TA reports issued by IIDH/CAPEL
- g) Copies of the Grantees quarterly reports
- h) List of GAD members (including CVs)
- i) Red de Observadores support materials
- h) Aide-Memoire of the committee meetings

#### **DELIVERABLES**

The evaluation team shall attend an entrance meeting at USAID with members of the SO3 Team, Front Office and others to be invited.

The evaluation team will be responsible for the following deliverables:

Immediately prior to departure from the Dominican Republic:

1. A detailed outline of evaluation findings, conclusions, lessons learned, and

recommendations. This outline will be used as the basis for one or more verbal debriefings to be given to USAID personnel as well as representatives of the Strengthening Democratic Institutions project grantee and key stakeholders immediately prior to the team's departure from the Dominican Republic.

Within two weeks of departing from the Dominican Republic:

2. A comprehensive draft of the technical report (30-50 pages) in English. This draft shall include: an executive summary, methodology used to carry out the evaluation, evaluation findings on topics addressed in the scope of work, conclusions, lessons learned, and recommendations for possible follow-on activities under the mission's new strategy.

The evaluation findings portion of the technical report shall address the specific objectives detailed in this Scope of work.

After two weeks of receiving USAID/DR comment on the comprehensive draft:

A final version of the evaluation report incorporating comments provided for the SO3 Team, a two-page "catchy" report for publicity purposes. Both documents must be submitted on a diskette using wordperfect 5.1.

**AUDIENCE:**

In USAID/W: USAID/LAC/RSD/DHRT, G/DG, PPC, CDIE, LPA.

In USAID/DR: SO team members (including Embassy representative), Director and Deputy Director, PDO and related projects personnel.

**ANNEX B**

**STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY EVALUATION**

***INTERVIEWS CARRIED OUT***

**USAID/DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

Marilyn Zak, Mission Director  
Mike Deal, Deputy Mission Director  
Colette Cowey, PDO Director  
Manuel Ortega, Head of SO3 Team  
Marina Taveras, PDO and member of SO3 Team  
Maritza Rodriguez, CONT and member of SO3 Team

**USAID/WASHINGTON**

Larry Garber, DAA/PPC  
Amy Young, G/DG/E  
Erin Soto, G/DG/E  
Robin Brinkley, LAC/CAR

**UNITED STATES EMBASSY/DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

Donna Hrinak, Ambassador  
Dennis Linskey, former Political Counselor

**CAPEL**

Ricardo Valverde, Program Director for the Dominican Republic

**NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE**

Ken Wollack, Executive Director  
Santiago Cantón, Director for Latin America  
Darren Nance, Program Assistant for Latin America

**INTERAMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK**

Leonardo de Silva, Dominican Republic Resident Representative

**DEMOCRACY ACTION GROUP (GAD)**

Executive Committee:

Monsignor Agripino Nuñez, PUCMM Rector  
Radames Mejía, PUCMM Vice-Rector  
Rafael Torribio, INTEC Rector

Annex B  
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Braulio Portes, Conferencia de Iglesias Evangelicas  
Jose Manuel Paliza, President of CONEP  
Frank Castillo, Executive Director of CONEP  
Eugenio Perez Cepeda, Secretary General of the CTU  
Operating Unit:

Jose Oviedo, Executive Director  
Jorge Suncar, Civic Education  
Juan Llado, Agenda  
Rolando Perez Uribe, Articulation  
Rafael Alba, Administrator

Municipality of Moca (focus group)

Vinicio Sanchez, CODECO  
Roberto Tavares, Asociación de Odontología de Moca  
Polibio Callado, CORAAMOCA  
Jose Sanchez, Club Rotario 2 de Mayo  
Carmen Rosa Sosa, Nucleo de Apoyo a la Mujer y Centro de Ayuda a Sobrevivientes de Violencia  
Pedro Pompeyo Rosario, Grupo Participación Ciudadana  
Dorca Barcadel Cejoda, Universidad Tecnológica de Santiago  
Omar Hernandez, Club Rotario Moca  
Bruno Cespedes, Asoz Pastores  
Rafael Santes Perez, Asociación para el Desarrollo de la Provincia  
Jose Alberto Cruceta, Asociación de Abogados de la Provincia Espaillat

Municipality of San Jose de las Matas (focus group)

Grecia Goris, Foro de Desarrollo de San Jose de las Matas (FORDESA)  
Maria Elena Rodriguez, Asociación Dominicana de Profesores  
Gina Wilia Brisita, Iglesia Católica-FORDESA  
Lorenzo Espinal Bisono, FORDESA  
Ramon Maz Espinal, FORDESA  
Fernando Antonio Santana, Club Rotario Sojarra  
Mariana Nicasíou Valerio, Liceo Canada

Municipality of Bonao (focus group)

Nicanor Antonio de la Cruz Baez, Abogado  
Marcy Abreu, Hotel Restaurant Plaza Nouel

## **PARTICIPACIÓN CIUDADANA/RED DE OBSERVADORES**

### Current or former Participación Ciudadana board

Juan Bolivar Díaz, Channel 2TV  
Antonio Isa Conde (former director, now head of Azucarera)  
Petro Catrain, lawyer  
Doroteo Rodriguez, engineer  
Pen Sien Sang Ben, businessman  
Isidoro Santana, Eco Caribe/Siglo XXI

### Red de Observadores

Carmen Amelia Cedeño, Executive Director  
Isis Duarte, Technical Director  
Jose Ceballos, Technical Director

### Nucleo de La Vega (focus group)

Apolinar Ramos  
Juana Nuñez  
Heriberta Fernandez Liriano  
Janet Zarzuela  
Altagracia Herrera  
Paula Rufina Delgado

### Nucleo de San Francisco de Macorís (focus group)

Guillermina Sanchez Hierro  
Luis Emilio Taveras Rojas  
Ana Antonia Bonilla  
Pastor Ramon David Phipps

### Nucleo de Santiago (focus group)

Juan Castillo  
Luis Ortiz  
Xenia Ortiz  
Rosa Blanco  
Maria del Carmen Rosario  
Miguel Angel Ramos

## **DEMOCRATIC INITIATIVES PROJECT**

Mu Kien Sang Ben, Executive Director

## **JUNTA CENTRAL ELECTORAL**

Cezar Estrella Sadhalá, President  
Luis Arias, Suplente

## **POLITICAL PARTIES**

Milton Ray Guevara, PRD and Executive Director of FINJUS  
Lidio Cadet, PLD Executive Secretary  
Hilda Barinas, PRI

## **CHURCH**

Monsignor Agripino Nuñez, Catholic Church \*  
Braulio Portes, Evangelical Church \*

## **PRESS**

Juan Bolivar Díaz, Press Director, Channel 2 TV \*  
Margarita Cordero, Deputy Press Director, Channel 2 TV  
Bienvenido Alvarez, Sub-director of Revista Hoy  
Anibal de Castro, Director of Revista RUMBO

## **NGOs**

Jacqueline Malagón, EDUCA  
David Scott Luther, IDDI  
Magaly Pineda, CIPAF

## **BUSINESS SECTOR**

Jose Manuel Paliza, President of CONEP \*  
Frank Castillo, Executive Director of CONEP (and board of GAD) \*  
Luis Heredia Bonetti, lawyer and member of EDUCA Board

## **LABOR**

Eugenio Perez Cepeda, Secretary General of the CTU \*

**GALLUP/DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

Rafael Acevedo Perez, President

**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO**

Neil Nevitte, Department of Political Science \*\*

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\* Already mentioned

\*\* Responsible for providing technical assistance on the quick count

**ANNEX C**

**STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY EVALUATION**

***DOCUMENTS CONSULTED***

Agripino Nuñez Collado. Testigo de una Crisis...Diez Años Después.Taller Isabel la Católica. 1996.

Asociación de Abogados de Santiago: Temas: Número Especial Contentivo de las Ponencias del III Congreso Sobre Poder Judicial y sus Conclusiones

Brea, Ramonina; Isis Duarte, Ramon Tejada y Clara Baez Estado de Situación de la Democracia Dominicana (1978-1992)

CONEP: Segunda Gran Convención Nacional de Hombres de Empresa. November, 1995

Creative Associates, Intl. Mid-Term Evaluation of USAID/Dominican Republic's Democratic Initiatives Project. June, 1996.

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Nevitte, Neal. Evaluation: Participación Ciudadana, June 20<sup>th</sup> Election Observation, July 15, 1996

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#### **IIDH/CAPEL**

Quarterly reports to USAID

with Gallup/Dominican Republic: Estudio de Opinion Pública, Marzo, 1996

#### **CIPAF**

Revista Quehaceres, Año XV, Números 1 y 3

Presentación sobre mujeres y sus derechos

Poster "Reclama con Tu Voto Democracia en el País y en la Casa"

## **GRUPO DE ACCION POR LA DEMOCRACIA**

Quarterly reports to USAID

Gran Encuentro de la Agenda Nacional de Desarrollo, March 1966

Paliza, José Manuel. Discurso "Más Alla de Junio", June, 1996

Solidarios: Propuesta de Agenda Nacional de Desarrollo Economico, Político y Social Desde la Perspectiva de las ONGs.

Proyecto de Fortalecimiento e Institucionalización Democrática de la República Dominicana a Través de la Sociedad Civil

Documento de Trabajo: Agenda Municipal de Desarrollo, Grupo de Acción por la Democracia, Provincia Sanchez Ramirez

Estadísticas Varias: Agenda, Articulación, Educación

Formulario para Sondeo de Alcances y Expectativas

Taller de Planificación, Municipio de Moca

Taller de Concertación: Agenda Municipal de Desarrollo de Moca

Boletines Informativos 1 a 6

Proyecto de Fortalecimiento e Institucionalización Democrática de la República Dominicana a Través de la Sociedad Civil (borrador de propuesta al BID), Agosto, 1996.

Las Reformas Sociales Prioritarias, 1995

Reformas Economicas Prioritarias, 1995

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16 Prioridades de la Agenda Nacional de Desarrollo Propuestas por el Comité de Redacción, 1996

Propuesta de Agenda Nacional de Desarrollo Economico, Político y Social Desde la Perspectiva de las ONGs, 1995.

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Construyendo Entre Todos la Democracia Municipal

### **JUNTA CENTRAL ELECTORAL**

Instructivo Para las Elecciones Presidenciales del Año 1996

Disposiciones Referidas a la Observación Electoral Para los Comicios del Año 1996

### **NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE**

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1990 Elections in the Dominican Republic: Report of an Observer Delegation

Handbook: How Domestic Organizations Monitor Elections: An A to Z Guide, 1995

### **PARTICIPACIÓN CIUDADANA/RED NACIONAL DE OBSERVADORES**

Quarterly reports to USAID

Boletines de la Red. Organismo de la Red Ciudadana de Observadores Electorales Numeros 1 a 12

Participación Ciudadana: Movimiento Cívico No Partidista (folleto)

Que es la Red de Observadores (folleto)

Que es la Red de Observadores - one page handout

Ficha de Inscripción para Voluntarios/as de la RED

Inventario de Infraestructura Municipal

Formulario del Local de Votación y Colegio Electoral

Manual de Educación Electoral

Manual de los Nucleos Municipales y Zonales

Manual del Observador: Tanda de la Mañana

Manual del Supervisor: Tanda de la Mañana

Manual del Supervisor: Tanda de la Tarde

Manual del Relator: Tanda de la Mañana

Manual del Relator: Tanda de la Tarde

Manual de la Observadora

Que Observe en el Local: Tanda de la Mañana

Que Observe en el Local: Tanda de la Tarde

Que Observe en el Colegio en que Vote: Tanda de la Mañana

Que Observe en el Colegio en que Vote: Tanda de la Tarde

Que Observe: Tanda de la Mañana

Que Observe: Tanda de la Tarde

Relatoria de la Mañana

Relatoria de la Tarde

**UNIVERSIDAD CATOLICA MADRE Y MAESTRA**

Proyecto para el Apoyo a Iniciativas Democraticas.: Los Primeros Cuatro Años de un Proyecto Novedoso, 1992-1996, Marzo, 1996

Cultura Política y Democracia en República Dominicana: Informe Final de la Encuesta (DEMOS 1994)

La Cultura Política de los Dominicanos: Entre el Autoritarismo y la Democracia (Síntesis del Informe Final DEMOS-94)

**USAID/Dominican Republic**

Results Report and Resources Request: FY 1995-1998

A Strategy Toward Achieving Fair Elections in the Dominican Republic: An Assessment and Concept Paper, January, 1995

Grant to PUCMM for a program in Strengthening Civil Society Action Group for Democracy. August 1, 1995.

USAID/PPC/CDIE. Proceedings of the Democracy and Governance Performance Measurement Workshop, September, 1996.

**FUNDEJUR**

Cuaderno Electoral, 1996

El Voto, Paso a Paso (one page handout)

**IDDI**

Elecciones 1996

Que son: Elecciones 1996 (one page handout)

**ANNEX D**

**STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY EVALUATION**

*PROTOCOL FOR INTERVIEWS WITH  
REPRESENTATIVES FROM  
BUSINESS, LABOR, CHURCHES, PVOS,  
POLITICAL PARTIES, JUNTA ELECTORAL*

**1. 1996 ELECTIONS:**

- Were they clean
- If so, what were key contributing factors
- Were there any limitations

**2. GAD**

- Familiarity with
- Membership: who are they, is it a representative, neutral group?
- Role in supporting 1996 elections
- Extent to which a broad coalition of this nature permits timely responses to fast-breaking threats to electoral process.
- Relations with JCE, political parties
- Effectiveness in establishing National Agenda:
  - Familiarity with
  - Views on participatory nature
  - Views on significance/extent to which will be used.
- Effectiveness in establishing municipal action groups
  - Familiarity with
  - Views on participatory nature
  - Views on potential significance of groups once operational
- Effectiveness in civic education
  - Familiarity with GAD's activities
  - Views on quality/effectiveness of effort
- Prospects for financial sustainability
  - External financing
  - Internal financing (business sector, other)

- GAD's future role
  - In support of 1998 elections and beyond
  - Other (strengthening civil society, pushing for reform)

**3. PC/RED**

- Familiarity with
- Membership: who are they, is it a representative, neutral group?
- Role in supporting 1996 elections
- Relations with JCE, political parties
- Role/effectiveness as local elections observers
  - Quality/effectiveness with quick count
  - Quality of qualitative reporting
- Prospects for financial sustainability
  - External financing
  - Internal financing (business sector, other)
- PC/RED's future role
  - In support of 1998 elections and beyond
  - Other

**4. GAD - PC/RED relationship:**

- Current
- What is should be in future

**5. IIDH/CAPEL TA (where applicable):**

- Familiarity with
- Opinions of quality/relevance of assistance provided

**6. USAID SUPPORT FOR 1996 ELECTIONS (where applicable):**

- Awareness of
- Did USAID support make a difference in 1996 elections
- What aspects of our support made a difference

**7. BIG PICTURE:**

- Was the system really put to test: what would have happened had there not been a credible JCE, would PC/RED and GAD have been outspoken in reporting irregularities; if so would they have been effective?
- If had to do it again, what would be different?
- Key lessons learned
- Where is assistance most needed to improve the electoral process in the Dominican Republic?

**ANNEX E**

**STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY EVALUATION**

***INTERVIEW PROTOCOL***

***FIELD TRIP OCTOBER 9 AND 10 TO VISIT***

***MUNICIPAL GADS AND NUCLEOS OF THE RED DE OBSERVADORES***

## QUESTIONS FOR MUNICIPAL GAD

1. Membership
2. How were members selected and is it representative of key organizations in municipio
3. Relationship municipal GAD and PC/RED (assuming there is one in the municipio).
4. Role of municipal GAD:
  - What do they see as their principal role(s) both locally and at national level?
5. What assistance have they received from GAD headquarters:
  - Agenda Nacional
    - Role of municipal GAD in contributing to
    - Do they feel their views were adequately taken into consideration in putting together the national agenda?
  - Agenda Municipal
    - How was it put together and who participated (including role of local authorities)?
    - Are they satisfied with what they came out with?
    - What do they plan to do with it?
  - Training
    - What training courses have they received from GAD?
    - What did they think of them: quality/utility?
  - Other assistance from GAD headquarters (financing for a seminar, for example)
6. 1996 elections
  - Did they participate in identifying people for the mesas electorales
  - Did they receive any training from GAD in elections and, if so, what did it include?

7. GAD Boletines

- Have they received them and read them?
- How have they used them?

## QUESTIONS FOR LOCAL PC/RED

### Related to PC/RED

1. Membership of PC/RED al nivel municipal
2. How were members of PC/RED selected?
3. What kind of communication have they had with PC/RED headquarters, both during and since elections?
4. What kind of training did they receive and what was the quality/adequacy?
5. After receiving accreditation did they have any problems?
6. Did they experience any problems during the actual elections?
7. What do they see as their future role:
  - In the 1998 elections
  - Other

### Related to Municipal GADS

8. What knowledge do they have of the local municipal GAD.
9. Nature of relationship between PC/RED and local GAD (assuming there is one in the municipio).
10. What is their understanding of the role that the local GAD is supposed to play? Are they in agreement with this role?
11. What relationship do they see in the future between the local PC/RED and the GAD?

**ANNEX F**

**STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY EVALUATION**

***GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS***

CAPEL	Centro para Asesoría Electoral
CASC	Confederación Autónoma Sindical Clasista
CGT	Central General de Trabajadores
CIPAF	Centro de Investigación para la Acción Femenina
CNTD	Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores Dominicanos
CONEP	Consejo Nacional de Hombres de Empresa
CTU	Confederación de Trabajadores Unitarias
DI	Democratic Initiatives Project
D.R.	Dominican Republic
FUNDEJUR	Fundación de Desarrollo para la Juventud Rural
GAD	Grupo de Acción por la Democracia
IDB	Interamerican Development Bank
IDDI	Instituto Dominicano de Desarrollo Integral
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IIDH	Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos
JCE	Junta Central Electoral
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PC	Participación Ciudadana
PLD	Partido de la Liberación Dominicana
PRD	Partido Revolucionario Dominicano
PRSC	Partido Revolucionario Social Cristiana
PUCMM	Pontificia Universidad Católica Madre y Maestra
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
RED	Red de Observadores
R4	Result Review & Resources Request
SCS	Strengthening Civil Society Activity
UGTD	Unión General de Trabajadores Dominicanos
U.S.	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development