

**QUARTERLY REPORT NUMBER TWENTY-TWO
DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE:
DELIBERATIVE BODIES IQC**

Submitted to:



U.S. Agency for International Development
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Authors:

Development Associates Staff

Submitted by:



*1730 N. Lynn Street
Arlington, VA 22209*

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DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATES, INC.
MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNMENTAL CONSULTANTS
1730 NORTH LYNN STREET
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22209-2023, USA
TEL: (703) 276-0677 • FAX: (703) 276-0432
E-MAIL: DEVASSOC@DEVASSOC.COM • WEB SITE: WWW.DEVASSOC.COM

October 28, 2005

Mr. Keith Schulz
Democracy Center, Global Bureau (G/DG)
Room 6.07-071, Ronald Reagan Building
Agency for International Development
Washington, D.C. 20523-2052

Dear Mr. Schulz:

The Deliberative Bodies IQC (CLIN 007) that Development Associates is currently implementing for USAID stipulates that we provide a Performance Monitoring Report to our COTR on a quarterly basis.

Development Associates herewith submits our report covering the quarter just ended. We believe this meets our responsibility under Section G.9 (a) of the contract. Included in it is the Quarterly Financial Report required under Section G.9 (b). A copy also is being sent to the USAID/W Contracting Officer.

If you have any questions or comments about this submission, please be in touch.

Sincerely,



John H. (Jack) Sullivan
Executive Associate

cc: Joseph Lentini, USAID/M/OP/G/DGHCA

Enclosure: As stated

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**QUARTERLY REPORT (JULY 1 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2005) ON THE
DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE
DELIBERATIVE BODIES IQC (CLIN 007)
AEP I-00-00-00004-00**

I. BASIC DATA ON THE ACTIVE TASK ORDERS

- ▶ **Uganda/Legislative Support Activity.** *Contract No. OUT-AEP-I-00-00-00004-00, Task Order No. 804. Period of Performance: 5/1/02 – 6/30/06. Amount: \$3,143,642.*

The 7th Parliament of Uganda took office on July 3, 2001, for a five-year term. Its most serious problems include size (it has 305 members) and management (made more difficult by size and by lack of political party representation); lack of skills; lack of information; poor legislative drafting; and poor credibility, both with the public and with the Executive Branch. All of these problems are compounded by the fact that over half of the MPs are newly-elected, and cannot rely on the institutional memory and informal networks that helped their predecessors.

Development Associates and its partner, Development Alternatives, were competitively awarded this Task Order under our Deliberative Bodies IQC, in order to advance the Mission's Strategic Objective of More Effective and Participatory Governance. The TO assigns five tasks to the contractor: 1) building human and institutional capacity through training; 2) fostering increased constituent services and dialogue; 3) strengthening legislative drafting; 4) promoting ethics and anti-corruption measures; and 5) fostering systems for free and fair elections. Approximately half of the total effort is to be devoted to the first task. The tasks will be carried out through short and long-term technical assistance; organization of in-country and third-country workshops, conferences, training, and observation tours; collection and dissemination of information on legislative norms, standards and practices from democratic countries; procurement and installation of necessary information systems hardware and software; and organization of conferences and seminars to bring together MPs and civil society and local government representatives.

DA has an office in Kampala staffed by an experienced American professional and a skilled Ugandan staff of six. On March 21, 2005, the project was extended from March 24, 2005, to June 30, 2006, and the contract value was increased from \$1.94 million to \$3.14 million.

Client references: Marie-Claire Sow, Contracting Officer, USAID/Uganda, tel. 256-41-387-387, email mcsow@usaid.gov, and Susan Cowley, Cognizant Technical Officer, USAID/Uganda, tel. 256-41-387-387, fax 256-41-387-293, email scowley@usaid.gov.

- ▶ **Armenia/Legislative Strengthening Program II.** *Contract No. OUT-AEP-I-00-00-00004-00, Task Order No. 805. Period of Performance: 9/1/04-8/31/07. Amount: \$2,483,853.00.*

This project focuses on:

Task One — Facilitating and institutionalizing the involvement of Armenia’s legislative community to advocate, lobby and advise the National Assembly on policy and legislative issues;

Task Two — Improving the functioning of key committees and departments of the National Assembly by having them work closer with the legislative community in jointly analyzing, researching, commenting on and drafting legislation;

Task Three — Improving the ability of select units and individuals within the National Assembly to be more transparent, representative and responsive to citizen priorities, interests and concerns; and

Task Four — Developing the National Assembly’s ability to improve oversight of the executive branch through existing mechanisms and, to the extent possible, through assisting in the creation of new mechanisms via Constitutional and legislative amendments.

This activity supports the USAID/Armenia’s 2004-2008 Strategy, specifically Strategic Objective 2.1, “Improved Democratic Governance.” This activity will directly contribute to IR 2: “Targeted Governance Institutions Strengthened” and sub-IR 2.1.2: “More Responsive and Effective Parliament”. It will also contribute to IR 1: “Civic Participation Expanded”.

It is recognized that certain constraints on legislative strengthening exist in Armenia. In particular, working to improve the ability of the National Assembly to practice better oversight of the executive will probably yield only limited results until constitutional amendments and new or modified legislation allows for more oversight mechanisms. Opportunities for large-scale improvements in the National Assembly’s ability to be more representative and accountable to the Armenian people are also limited. Nonetheless, the project has identified targets for increasing openness and improving representation and especially in increasing public participation in the legislative process.

Employing a mix of technical assistance, training, and limited inputs of commodities, and one-on-one consultations with National Assembly deputies and staff, Armenian policy analysis centers, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), the Armenian diaspora community, and other USAID implementing partners, the Development Associates/Development Alternatives team in Armenia works with the elected deputies and appointed staff to increase public participation, increase transparency of the legislative process, and develop a capacity for legislative analysis to improve legislation and oversight. These efforts will build internal capacity and promote sustainability. ALSP Phase II conducts its activities in close coordination with the other international organizations providing assistance to the Assembly in order to avoid overlap and duplication of efforts.

The client references are: Technical Officer, Bella Markarian, email: bmarkarian@usaid.gov, and Contracting Officer, David Brown, email: dbrown@usaid.gov, USAID/Yerevan, Phone: 37410-52-99-75, 58-61-63, 543-835, fax 374-10-543-874.

II. ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT AND PROGRESS MADE

UGANDA

A. PROGRESS THIS QUARTER

1. Introduction and Summary

During this quarter, Development Associates/Uganda Legislative Support Activity (DA/LSA) continued to implement the Task Order in close partnership with the USAID/Uganda Mission and the Planning and Development Coordination Office (PDCO) of Parliament.

Legislative Support Activity (LSA) planned, coordinated, organized, facilitated, attended and participated a number of activities: a) Persons With Disabilities (PWDs), Central Region Consultative Workshop, b) PWDs, Western Region Consultative Workshop, c) Training for Parliament's Public Relations' Office Staff, d) Sustainability Plan (initial draft to USAID), e) Parliamentary School Visiting Programme, f) Parliamentary Interns (extended for two months), g) Parliamentary Briefer (s), h) Concept Paper submitted to USAID (Re: PWDs), i) LSA printed, copied, and distributed two (2) activity reports, j) HIV/AIDS Newsletter (draft) submitted to USAID, k) LSA held meetings for discussions concerning collaborations with USAID implementing partners: SCOPE, Land O' Lakes, UPHOLD, and AIM, l) LSA held a meeting with MEMS (Re: PMP), and m) LSA met with monitoring MEEPP regarding FY6 Country Operational Plan, Partner Reporting Form). LSA submitted its FY6 Country Operational Plan, Partners Reporting Form to MEEPPS and USAID.

2. Significant Activities During This Quarter

a) Persons With Disabilities (PWDs), Central Region Consultative Workshop

LSA, PDCO, persons with disabilities, and the Parliamentary Committee on Equal Opportunities organized a consultative workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to review, discuss, analyze and provide input to the Persons With Disabilities Bill 2005.

The workshop was held at Hotel Africana, in Kampala, from July 29 – 31, 2005. Individuals from 13 districts (Masaka, Rakai, Ssembabule, Kalangala, Mukono, Kayunga, Kampala, Mpigi, Luwero, Mubende, Kiboga, Wakiso, and Nakasongola) attended the lively and productive workshop. The workshop's theme was: "Towards a Comprehensive Law on Disability".

The workshop was the first of the four regional workshops, designed to afford Persons With Disabilities to provide input to the Persons With Disabilities Bill which is now before Parliament. Key presenters at the workshop were: Mrs. Ndibegama Ndawula, Chief Legislative Counsel, Parliament of Uganda, Mr. Jackson Mirembe, Senior Rehabilitation Officer, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Hon. Dora Byamukama, Chair, Parliamentary Committee on Equal Opportunities and Hon. Alex Ndeezi, Deputy Chair Parliamentary Committee on Equal Opportunities. A total of 120 persons attended the workshop. Mrs. Ndawula gave an overview of the Persons With Disabilities Bill, No. 18 of 2005. Mr. Mirembe provided an analysis of the National Council for Disability Act 14 of 2003.

b) Persons With Disabilities (PWD), Western Region Consultative Workshop

Persons With Disabilities Bill 2005, Western Region Consultative Workshops (Parliamentary Committee on Equal Opportunities) September 28 – 30, 2005, held at Lake View Regency Hotel Mbarara.

Persons With Disabilities Bill 2005, Western Region Consultative Workshops (Parliamentary Committee on Equal Opportunities) was held at Lake View Regency Hotel, Mbarara on September 28 – 30, 2005. 83 individuals from 15 districts (Kabale, Kisoro, Bushenyi, Ntungamo, Kanungu, Rukungiri, Mbarara, Kasese, Kamwenge, Kyenjojo, Bundibugyo, Hoima, Masindi, Kibaale and Fort Portal) attended the lively and productive workshop. The workshop's theme was: "Towards a Comprehensive Law on Disability". The workshop, the second of four regional workshops, was designed to afford Persons With Disabilities to provide input to the Persons With Disabilities Bill which is now before Parliament. Key presenters at the workshop were: Mrs. Ndibegama Ndawula, Chief Legislative Counsel, Parliament of Uganda, Mr. Samson Masiga, Principal Rehabilitation Officer, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Hon. James Mwandha, Chair, Persons With Disability Parliamentary Group and Hon. Alex Ndeezi, Deputy Chair, Parliamentary Committee on Equal Opportunities. Mrs. Ndawula gave an overview of the Persons With Disabilities Bill, No. 18 of 2005. Mr. Masiga provided an analysis of the National Council for Disability Act 14 of 2003.

c) Training for Parliament's Public Relations Staff

Training for Public Relations Office/staff at Parliament was conducted by the Management Training and Advisory Center (MTAC) on August 4 – 31, 2005. LSA contacted MTAC for the purpose of providing enhanced capacity for the staff of the Public Relations Office of Parliament. Strategic training was provided for nine (9) staff members. The training included such topics/subjects as:

- Guest Relations – International Protocol and Etiquette
- Effective Communication Practice
- Effective Public Relations Practice
- The Art of Public Speaking
- Desktop Publishing
- Web Management

PDCO communicated to LSA on September 26, 2005 stating that:

"MTAC has now submitted to Parliament the training completion report on the activity. We have reviewed the report (a copy of which is attached) and we are satisfied that the objectives of the training were achieved".

d) Sustainability Plan (initial draft submitted to USAID)

On August 31st 2005, LSA submitted its initial sustainability plan draft document to Development Associates home office and USAID (Susan Cowley) for comments. The rationale for the Sustainability Plan is intended to consolidate DA/LSA's capacity building program with the Parliament of Uganda, enhance Parliamentary ownership of the different initiatives supported by DA/LSA, promote best practices in the operations of Parliament, and provide practical strategies for United States Agency for International Development (USAID) support activities for Parliament after USAID's direct support is no longer available.

e) Parliamentary School Visiting Programme

LSA, PDCO, and the Parliamentary Committee on HIV/AIDS planned the Parliamentary School Visiting Programme to four (4) districts in Eastern and Central Uganda (Bugiri, Iganga, Kayunga and Mukono) engaged HIV/AIDS Committee, Ministry of Health, District Officials and schools.

The purpose of the visit was to:

- Monitor and evaluate some of government's HIV/AIDS activities in selected schools in the country.
- Mount sensitization campaigns to be based on the recently adopted HIV/AIDS Information Tool Kit for members of Parliament.

The expected results:

- Report on the status and performance of HIV/AIDS programme in secondary schools.
- Schools sensitization exercise on HIV/AIDS through dialogue.
- Establish the level of awareness of HIV/AIDS in the secondary schools.

Recommendations:

- Government should declare Universal Secondary Education to cater for orphans in the secondary school.
- ARVs should be brought to school to cater for the infected schools staff and students.
- Straight Talk should feature articles from students in different parts of the country to enable them become part of the publication and give them opportunity to feature their article photographs.
- There is need to train all teachers on counseling and guidance skills.
- There is need to provision of more scholastic materials, Straight Talk magazines and text books to meet the large numbers of students.
- There is need to integrate life skills into all subjects such that every teacher teaches.
- There is need for schools to liaise with NGOs for effective support of the needy and other persons infected with HIV/AIDS.
- The District administration through DDHS office should organize outreach VCT services to regularly visit schools and the local communities.
- There is need to specify and increase on the number of youths friendly services in the district health units to demystify fears.
- The Ministry of Education and Sports should develop IEC messages with the district to target specific communities.

f) Parliamentary Interns (extended for two months – September and October 2005)

In response to a request from Parliament, and review by LSA, the current Parliamentary session for interns was extended for two additional months. The intern (s), continue to work closely with the Parliamentary Committee on Equal Opportunities and the Parliamentary Caucus for persons with disabilities.

g) Parliamentary Briefer (s)

LSA compiled information and data for printing and developing the Parliamentary Briefer. The Briefer is designed to give stakeholders an overview of the business of Parliament. There were four (4) Briefers printed and distributed during this quarter. The Briefer is distributed to 209 Organizations, institutions, programs and projects. (See comments on following page).

h) Concept Paper to USAID (Re: PWD)

After discussions with Parliament (PDCO) and USAID, LSA developed and submitted a Concept Paper to USAID Uganda (Re: Persons with Disabilities). The Concept Paper provided background information and concerns, while seeking additional financial support for PWDs (\$15,219.66). After considerable review, USAID gave a favourable recommendation for additional financial support to USAID/Washington.

i) LSA, printed, copied, and distributed two (2) activity reports to 208 individuals, organizations, and institutions.

LSA printed, copied and distributed 173 copies of the report of the HIV/AIDS Orientation for Parliament: HIV/AIDS Communication Tool Kit which was organized by LSA and held on May 9th 2005.

LSA also printed, copied and distributed 35 copies the report of the Training Workshop for the Department of Clerks of the Parliament of Uganda held on May 19 – 21, 2005.

j) HIV/AIDS Newsletter (draft) submitted to USAID

In response to recommendations by USAID, an HIV/AIDs draft Newsletter was drafted and submitted to USAID for review and feedback. After strategic discussions with USAID, it was agreed that the draft newsletter would be submitted to PDCO. The objective to have Parliament own the newsletter. The Director of PDCO agreed to approach the Parliamentary Committee on HIV/AIDS concerning the newsletter. The Parliamentary Committee on Social Services will be consulted as well.

Readers Comments about the Parliamentary Briefer: Comments from individuals to LSA about the Briefer are received via e-mail.

From the Private Sector:

“Thanks for the update. Please keep it up”

George Nuwodu
August 29, 2005
Parliamentary Briefer No. 10 of 2005

“Thank you so much. Good service. I appreciate!”

Odrek Rwabogo
August 30, 2005
Parliamentary Briefer No. 10 of 2005

“Thanks for all the good work of keeping the private sector informed on Parliamentary Business. This is a good effort you are doing”

Babra Adoso Vanhelleputte
August 30, 2005
Parliamentary Briefer No. 10 of 2005

From the development community:

“Thank you for your dedication in producing the Parliamentary Briefers, which I most appreciate”. “I hope you continue to send the Briefers to me as this is one of the sources of information on what is happening toward democracy in Uganda. Whilst I am no longer IFES Country Director, I still have a strong interest in what is happening there”.

Don Campbell
Australia
August 27, 2005
Parliamentary Briefer No. 10 of 2005

K) Other Activities

- On August 16, 2005, LSA held a meeting collaborations with USAID implementing partners: (Strengthening Competitiveness of Private Enterprise) SCOPE, Land O' Lakes, Uganda Program for Human and Holistic Development) UPHOLD, and The AIDS/HIV Integrated Model District Program (AIM).
- On August 3, 2005, LSA held a meeting with Monitoring and Evaluation Management Services (MEMS) and USAID [Re: PMP]. The purpose of the meeting was to crystalize and finalize LSA's PMP.
- On Tuesday, September 6, 2005, LSA met with Monitoring & Evaluation of Emergency Plan Progress (MEEPP) regarding FY6 Country Operational Plan, Partners Reporting Form. LSA submitted its FY6 Country Operational Plan, Partners Reporting Form to USAID and MEEPP on Friday September 9, 2005.

STRENGTHS

- Liasing and networking with Parliaments' Planning, Development and Coordination Office, DA, and USAID.
- Continuing to build on good working relationships with the Planning and Development Coordination Office (PDCO) of Parliament, Members of Parliament and staff, CSOs, and vendors.
- Having a clearly defined guide, "Program, Policies and Procedures for Conducting Capacity Building Activities" (Revised June 2005).
- Holding regular staff meetings and having each staff member actively engaged, share experiences – positive and negative - and providing input.
- Holding regular meetings (average weekly) with USAID.
- Holding/scheduling regular meetings (as many as needed) with Parliament's Planning, Development and Coordination Office [PDCO].

WEAKNESSES (Internal)

- Not recognizing and consistently following LSA's guide "Program, Policies and Procedures for Conducting Capacity Building Activities". (Revised June 2005).
- Lack of sufficient in-house editing skills.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- Publish and distribute Persons With Disabilities Information Guide.
- Engage Social Services Committee (health, education, mapping, family planning).
- Publish Citizens Guide to Parliament (Re: Know Your Parliament).

- Engage Civil Society Organizations and Parliament (PDCO and Public Relations Office) for the purpose of establishing a formal network between the two.
- Engage Civil Society Organizations to work with the private sector and other USAID's democracy and governance activities: International Republican Institute (IRI), National Democratic Institute (NDI), and International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES).

- Collaborate with other USAID implementing partners (SCOPE), Land 'O Lakes, International Republican Institute (IRI), National Democratic Institute (NDI), and International Election for Election Assistance (IFES).

Point of Information

According to PDCO, Parliament is expected to go on recess around the end of November 2005 – until mid January 2006.

B. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AND REMEDIAL ACTION

Problem: Lack of necessary staff to carry out program activities

**Remedial
Action Taken:** LSA brought two interns into the office to assist with administrative and logistical issues and activities

Problem: LSA need to be able to identify, recommend, and hire support staff timely

**Remedial
Action Taken:** Will try and sort out this issue of concern with USAID

Problem: Lack of sufficient advanced computer skills and techniques

**Remedial
Action Taken:** In-office training (1 – 2 hour sessions is being organized)

C. UNRESOLVED ISSUES OR CONSTRAINTS ON THE PROJECT

Need to be afforded more flexibility from USAID in order to timely hire needed personnel to carry out project activities.

TABLE 1

LSA PMP QUATERLY REPORT JULY 1, 2005 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2005

LSA PMP QUATERLY REPORTING FORM						
	BASELINE FY 05	TARGET FY 05	ACTUAL Jan- March 05	ACTUAL April- June 05	ACTUAL July- Sept 05	ACTUAL Annual FY 05
SO -9 LEVEL						
1. Number of CSOs submitting written comments to parliamentary committee hearings	42	50	51	5	14	
2. Number of Parliamentary Committees responding to CSOs with briefings and dialogue	4	6	1	1	0	
3. Number of laws amended by Parliament	5	5	-	6	2	
4. Number of target CSOs having legislative agenda items reflected in Parliamentary Bills	13	18	11	11	10	
IR-9.1 LEVEL						
5. Number of bills substantively reviewed by Parliamentary Committees before Enactment	10	6	6	8	0	

6. Number of legislative bills introduced in the legislature that are substantive as percentage of total number of bills introduced	* 1%	-	-	1%	0.16%	
7. Percentage of legislative bills drafted by the executive that are substantially amended by the legislature	* 5%	-	-	0.14%	0	
8. Number of Parliamentary Committee reports tabled at Parliament which generate responses from the Executive	* 10	-	-	6	0	
IR 9.1.2 LEVEL						
9. Number of target CSOs having a legislative agenda with Parliament	* 28	40	20	20	20	
10. Number of meetings legislators hold with CSOs	* 20	15	-	70	5	
11. Number of Parliamentary Committees holding public meetings at the local level	* 5	5	-	0	1	
1R 9.1.3 LEVEL						

12. Number of Parliamentary Committees that request technical information from PBO	11	13	11	11	11	
13. Number of Parliamentary Committees that request technical information from the Parliamentary Research Service	8	12	6	5	5	
14. Number of Bills on which budgetary impact analysis is drafted by PBO	9	11	4	2	7	

The CSOs may not be the same in all quarters or years

* Reflects new indicators as of May 2005 (3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11)

- Significant indicator dropped in May 2005

Number of Private Members Bills introduced by MPs

TABLE 2

LSA PMP QUARTERLY REPORT FOR THE PERIOD OF JULY 1, 2005 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2005

No.		ACTUAL
1	Number of Civil society Organizations submitting written comments to Parliamentary Committee hearing: 1) Inter political Parties Forum 2) DEMGROUP 3) Action Party 4) Youth Analysis Board 5) Conservative Party 6) National Freedom Party 7) Human Rights Network (HURINET) 8) Uganda Law Society 9) Uganda Women’s Network (UWONET) 10) Forum for Promoting Democratic Constitutionalism 11) Uganda Local Authorities Association 12) Uganda Urban Authorities Association 13) Uganda Manufacturers Association 14) Forum of Vice Chancellors of Private Universities	14
2	Number of Parliamentary Committees responding to CSOs with briefings and dialogue	0
3	Number of laws amended by Parliament. 1) The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 2) The Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act	2
4	Number of target CSOs having legislative agenda items reflected in Parliamentary Bills 1) Action Party 2) Youth Analysis Board 3) Conservative Party 4) National Freedom Party 5) Uganda Law Society 6) Forum for Promoting Democratic Constitutionalism 7) Uganda Local Authorities Association 8) Uganda Urban Authorities Association 9) Uganda Manufacturers Association 10) Forum of Vice Chancellors of Private Universities	10
5.	Number of Bills substantively reviewed by Parliamentary Committee before enactment:	0
6	Number of substantive legislative bills introduced in Parliament, as a percentage of the total number of bills introduced:	0
7	Percentage of legislative bills drafted by the executive that are substantially amended by the legislature	0
8	Member of parliamentary committee reports tabled at Parliament which generate responses from the Executive:	0

9	Number of target CSOs having a legislative agenda with Parliament: 1) Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE) 2) Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) 3) Uganda Women’s Network (UWONET) 4) Uganda Law Society 5) The Uganda Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA-U) 6) Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE) 7) Women’s International Cross Cultural Exchange (ISIS WICCE) 8) Law and Advocacy for Women in Uganda (LAW-U) 9) Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE) 10) Hope After Rape 11) Human Rights Network (HURINET) 12) Council for Economic Empowerment of Women in Africa (CEEWA) 13) MIFUMI 14) Action Aid International 15) Action for Development (ACFODE) 16) Akiika Embuga Women’s Self Help Association 17) Akina Mama wa Africa 18) Associates for Change 19) Association of Women Medical Doctors (AUWMD) 20) Association of Women Judges	20
10	Number of meetings legislators hold with CSOs 1) Committee on Social Services 2) Trade Tourism and Industry	3 2
11	Number of Parliamentary Committees holding public meetings at the local level 1) Committee on HIV/AIDS	1
12	Number of Parliamentary Committees that request information from the Parliamentary Budget Office 1) Social Services Committee, 2) Public Service and Local Government Committee, 3) Trade, Tourism and Industry Committee, 4) Natural Resources Committee, 5) Defence and Internal Affairs Committee, 6) Finance, Planning and Economic Development Committee, 7) Agriculture, Animal, Industry and Fisheries committee, 8) Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee, 9) Works, Housing and Communications Committee, 10) Presidential and Foreign affairs Committee, 11) Budget Committee	11
13	Number of Parliamentary Committees that request information from the Parliamentary Research Service: 1) Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs 2) Committee on Equal Opportunities 3) Committee on Finance, Planning and Economic Development 4) Committee on Local Government and Public Service 5) Committee on National Economy	5
14	Number of Bills for which budgetary impact analysis is drafted by Parliamentary Budget Office 1) Finance Bill, 2005 2) Income Tax Amendment Bill, 2005 3) Excise Tax Amendment Bill, 2005, 4) Customs Tax Amendment Bill, 2005 5) Value Added Tax Amendment Bill, 2005 6) The Constitution (Amendment) Bill No. 3, 2005 7) The Constitution (Amendment) Bill No. 2, 2005	7

ARMENIA

A. PROGRESS THIS QUARTER

1. Introduction and Summary

The traditional summer hiatus in the activities of the National Assembly of Armenia was interrupted as a result of the on-going constitutional reforms process. During this period the second and third readings on the amendments to the constitution took place. Partly as a result of the intervention of international organizations and diplomatic entities, the opposition deputies also took part in the debates. The result was the passage of the coalition parties' draft of amendments which had been considerably enhanced as a process of vetting with the Council of Europe Venice Commission, as well – to some degree – due to the incorporation of some of the concerns of Armenian civil society experts. ALSP continued to be engaged in the process – offering comparative perspectives on issues in the drafts related to legislative-executive relations as well as facilitating the initiatives of Armenian civil society organizations to engage National Assembly deputies to discuss and debate the constitutional reform issues outside the nation's capital.

In July, the NA Citizen Letters Division issued its first comprehensive report on the receipt and handling of letters from citizens that are sent generically to the National Assembly drawing on their ability to process the citizen appeals using the Public Inquiry Tracking System. The report shows that the ability to classify, sort, and track this correspondence offers deputies an opportunity to better understand the issues and problems of citizens. A staffer of the Information Department trained by ALSP in the use of MS Excel to enhance legislative research reports used her skills to create tables for the presentation of the report which was published in the National Assembly Bulletin (issue 6).

During this quarter, several National Assembly staff had an opportunity to participate in training programs outside Armenia as a result of ALSP's cooperation with other programs and donors. Two NA staff, one from the technical service (IT) department and one from the NA Library, participated in a two-week training on advanced use of the ISIS database (the free UNESCO shareware which is used in five departments in the National Assembly). Upon their return to Yerevan, the participants committed themselves to continuing to build their expertise by maintaining correspondence with their trainers in Warsaw, Poland as well as to training their fellow staff at the National Assembly. As a result of ALSP's collaboration with the British Embassy in Yerevan, two NA staff, Deputy Chief of Staff Zargaryan and Head of the NA Legislative Analysis Department Ashot Khachatryan participated in the Parliamentary Libraries and Research Group annual meeting during the IFLA conference in Oslo, Norway. ALSP COP participated in the conference as well as USAID CTO Bella Markarian. The conference provided an excellent opportunity to observe the legislative practices in Norway, to learn of comparative experiences of other parliaments and to build a professional network of colleagues at other parliaments.

NA committee staff participated in a study tour at the Lithuanian parliament organized under the Participant Training Program implemented by AED. The Lithuanian example of committee operations was the focus of this program. Participants found the example particularly interesting in terms of the coordination of the work of committees and the support of central staffing structures to that work.

The ALSP continued to convene the Committee Staff Working Group on Public Participation of the National Assembly to draft a manual on Public Participation in the Work of Standing

Committees of the National Assembly. Elements of the manual including examples of “best NA practices” as well as the background concept papers which have been drafted during the past three years and procedural guidelines were reviewed by the group.

In cooperation with the British Embassy, a meeting was convened with NGO, government ministry representatives and NA staff representatives to discuss the Gender Impact Assessment examples from Northern Ireland which were translated and distributed to those who had participated in the GI training in March 2005. The group agreed on next steps including identifying what further training might be required to apply the principles of gender impact assessment to their work. Specifically, in the NA, a gender initiative working group identified two pieces of legislation which lend themselves to a gender impact assessment.

Working with an NA Staff, ALSP presented to the speaker of the National Assembly a proposal for the initiation of a competitive internship program. At the end of the quarter, the policy, procedures and application forms were ready to be launched as soon as the speaker’s concurrence was obtained.

ALSP continued to support the activities of the regional Citizen Information and Communication Centers (CICC) in various communities. CICC’s in Lori and Ararat Marzes engaged in activities to promote discussion of the draft amendments of the Constitution; new CICC sites were identified in Gyumri and Aparan. ALSP supported introductory internet connections for the sites in Vanadzor and Masis.

A tender to solicit local specialists to conduct a feasibility study on the potential for the National Assembly to employ webcasting as an outreach approach was issued. The Armenian team chosen to conduct this assessment is expected to submit its report at the beginning of the next quarter.

The third “Parliament to the People” concert was held in cooperation with the Armenian Tourism Development Association for the occasion of the 15th anniversary of independence in Armenia. ALSP assisting in the organization of the “third annual event,” also developed the procedures for future initiatives for conducting this public outreach event.

This quarter marked the beginning of the second year of ALSP II activity. The Work Plan for the second year was submitted to USAID for review and translated for sharing with counterparts at the National Assembly.

Three local STTA’s continued their work with the project team on a part-time basis. Tigran Zagaryan continued to work with National Assembly staff in the design and maintenance of informational databases using the ISIS systems. Mihran Grigoryan worked with the National Assembly staff in addressing bugs in the existing design of the National Assembly website (www.parliament.am) and how best to incorporate new features – especially those required by recent changes in the Rules of Procedure. Broncoway consultants Samvel Markosyan and Gohar Sargsyan were engaged to conduct a feasibility study regarding the National Assembly’s expressed wish to initiate a webcasting of National Assembly proceedings. ALSP facilitated the training of NA HRM staff in training provided by local Armenian Business Support Center.

ALSP continued its regular meetings with the National Assembly leadership, including National Assembly Chief of Staff Haik Kotanian, Deputy Chief of Staff Hovanness Zargarian, and Head of the Secretariat Tatul Soghomonian, as well as meetings and consultations with the Chief of the Human Resources Department Varduhi Khachatryan, Chief of the Public Relations Department Anahid Adamian, Chief of the Legislative Analysis Department Ashot Khachatryan, Deputy Chief of the Regional Analysis Department Hovik Ohnanjyan, and Chief of the Information

Department Marusia Assatryan, as well as the Heads of the Divisions of the Social Policy Analysis Department Ashot Harutiunian, Rasmik Grigorian, and Hasmik Hayrepetian. At the same time, working meetings were held with the Web Division of the Secretariat, the IT Division, the Citizen Letters Division and standing committee staff of the National Assembly. These meetings varied in nature; however, they all served the overall purpose of facilitating program activities, and many also related to specific activities.

At the end of this quarter, ALSP's Chief of Party Eleanor Valentine was preparing to move on to a new assignment. The candidate for her replacement was approved by USAID and she will mobilize to Armenia within the first month of the next quarter.

2. Significant Activities/Events

▶ Cross-Cutting Tasks

DA submitted its draft ALSP II Work Plan for Year 2 to USAID for its review and approval. Approval was still pending at the end of the quarter.

USAID is preparing to sign an MOU with the National Assembly. ALSP is discussing with USAID questions and changes to the monitoring and evaluation plan submitted for USAID approval. The signing of the MOU is tentatively schedule for October 10.

Discussions are ongoing with the National Assembly to establish the Legislative Strengthening Advisory Group to guide institutional development and capacity building for the Armenian parliament. The first annual report of ALSP II activities has been drafted for presentation to the LSAG. A copy of the House of Commons Commission Annual Report was distributed to selected potential members of the LSAG to illustrate one example of how such a multi-party body works to strategically plan and monitor the work of the legislature.

The plan for the USAID procurement for the National Assembly was reviewed with the various departments of the NA and will be submitted shortly for USAID review and approval before presentation to the LSAG. Procurement processes of a much needed collator for the NA Secretariat are underway. It has been problematic to find suppliers willing to make the product available either in Armenia or the NIS. Only two local suppliers have the capability and willingness to supply the collator. ALSP is carrying out source-origin research on the proposed component and a waiver may be required before purchasing.

ALSP presented to USAID the feasibility study of the National Assembly's need and capacity to maintain an in-house printing facility. Comments and questions of the CTO were addressed and incorporated into the report and the report was translated and edited for presentation to the National Assembly.

- ▶ Task 1:** Facilitating and institutionalizing the involvement of Armenia's legislative community to advocate, lobby and advise the National Assembly on policy and legislative issues;

NA staff Mary Alyumyan (Library) and Ashot Klekchyan (IT) were able to participate in a two-week training in Warsaw Poland on the use of ISIS and web-based applications through the auspices of the USAID Participant Training Program. Upon their return, the two trainees identified ways in which they could share their knowledge and skills and apply this to the National Assembly's ISIS use in various departments. Together with local STTA Tigran Zagaryan, they mapped out a plan for rolling out the use of ISIS databases in other units of the

National Assembly, most significantly to introduce the Public Inquiries Tracking System into the work of Standing Committees.

On Thursday, June 30, 2005 the members of Committee Staff Working Group on Public Participation had a regular meeting with ALSP staff and met Kristina Midyan, Leading Specialist with the NA Information Department. Ms. Midyan had a short presentation on the external resources database maintained by Information Department, mentioning that information on NGOs therein is classified by areas of activity. Ms. Midyan explained to the committee staff how new entries to the database of external resources are solicited. Ms. Valentine suggested that the committees' experts could arrange a meeting in Information Department, to actually search the database and learn more about the information it contains. This information could be used later, e.g. for distribution of the draft law inserts for analysis by different groups and/ or for preparing a list of participants for a public hearing. A suggestion was made to increase the categories in the database and include contact information and information on areas of activities of international organizations, independent experts, "think tanks", individual researchers, scientific institutions, etc. It is also being expanded through contacts with the CICC in Vanadzor, and two newer CICC's in Masis and Goris.

With ALSP assistance, the Citizen Letters Division is now using the Public Inquiries Tracking System (PITS) to manage their case load of citizen letters. The CLD staff confirmed the effectiveness of the system and mentioned that using PIST helps in preparing quarterly, semiannual and annual reports on citizens' letters traffic. The CLD staff is using the majority of functions and options available in the system. ALSP has installed the software in the Standing Committee on Science, Education, Culture, Youth and Sports Affairs to pilot the system at the Committee level. The staff of the committee is being trained by the Citizen Letters Division staff and the NA IT staff. *The biannual report of the Citizen Letters Division was incorporated into an article in the September issue of the National Assembly Bulletin (issue 6).*

ALSP's Anna Hovhannesyanyan collaborated with the NA Information department head Maro Asatryan and staff Kristina Midoyan and NA IT staff member Ashot Klekchyan to make adjustments to the External Contacts Database (ECD) to use it as a line of communication with the NGO community and civil society. A distribution list was developed and linked to the ECD. The distribution list is intended to

1. Alert NGOs to events at the NA
2. Announce opportunities for collaboration with committees and departments at the NA pipeline and
3. Disseminate the information which could be helpful for civil society to facilitate their involvement to the policy making process and to make NA work more accessible and transparent.

It also enlarges the network of public actors involved in collaboration with the NA. At the same time it also creates interesting network governance possibilities for the NGO community registered at the NA External Contacts Database. It joins and strengthens NGOs' internal links.

Connected to its efforts to assist Standing and Ad Hoc Committees in conducting public committee meetings ALSP is working with the staff of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs to produce a summary report of March public informational hearings on the Karabakh issue and as well as with the Standing Committee on Social Policy, Health and Environmental Affairs after their hearing on the draft Health Law June 15. The Standing Committee on Social, Health and Environmental Affairs created a working group with assistance of PA Consulting on

drinking water and waste water with the goal to draft a law addressing those issues. ALSP will assist the committee with future hearings on these issues.

Of the 46 recommendations from the Civil Society Initiative on Constitutional Reforms (CSICR), a group of civil society and academic specialist on constitutional reform issues, 40 recommendations found their way into the third-reading draft law on Constitution Amendments passed by the National Assembly September 28. While some of the most significant recommendations were not accepted, it can still be understood as a “value added” for the process despite the difficulties for civil society to actively participate in the process.

ALSP is working with the Regional Policy Analysis Division to identify effective ways to solicit feedback from regions on the implementation of legislation and potential legislative gaps. Currently under discussion is how to promote such feedback from citizens in smaller communities. ALSP is also discussing with the department how their reports can reach a larger audience within the National Assembly. ALSP is reviewing the department’s informational brochure and helping to design a poster that can be used in communities to encourage feedback to the National Assembly from communities.

On Thursday, July 21, ALSP staff met with the representatives of NGOs who participated in public hearings at the NA within the last 9 months within the framework of Coordinating Council of Constituency Groups (CCCG) at ALSP office. The NGOs representatives answered to a series of questions on organizational and conceptual issues of holding public hearings at the NA, evaluated the public hearings held at the NA within the last 9 months and provided feedback on those in which they had participated. The NGO representatives mentioned that they would attend any public hearing on issues which are in the scope of their mission, and if they are invited, even these public hearings are held outside the NA. They also feel free to make suggestions to standing and ad hoc committees at the NA on having public hearings on some issues.

ALSP worked with the NA Regional Policy Analysis Division to identify effective ways to solicit feedback from regions on the implementation of legislation and potential legislative gaps. ALSP discussed with the Department their collaboration with the Union of Community Finance Officers to produce a compendium of annotated laws for local governments to guide them in their work. This will be especially important once the changes to the Constitution are passed which will require further amendments in the Law on Local Self-governance.

On September 27, 2005 the Committee Staff Working Group on Public Participation (CSWGPP) was convened by ALSP. ALSP presented the folder with public hearing guidelines to the standing committees’ experts. The document included some of the comparative and background documents developed by ALSP staff and external experts on the principles of public hearings, as well as some of the practical tools and NA “best practices.”

- ▶ **Task 2:** Improving the functioning of key committees and departments of the National Assembly by having them work closer with the legislative community in jointly analyzing, researching, commenting on and drafting legislation;

ALSP worked with the Human Resources Division to analyze what training and preparation the National Assembly may need during the fall to consider the state budget which will be presented earlier this year to the National Assembly, with the expectation that the National Assembly will approve the proposed budget by the end of November. At the end of the

quarter, ALSP engaged local STTA Budget Analyst to support the committee staff and Economic Analysis Department staff's support to the deputies during this budget season.

The NA HRM staff continued the development of policy and procedures manuals in consultation with ALSP, including working with individual departments on policies and procedures specific to their unit.

The reports of the seven participants in the NA Staff Innovations Fellowship program who returned from their visits to the State Duma in Russia were translated and analyzed by ALSP staff to identify possible follow-on activities and to identify with the NA staff the innovations which might be introduced into practice at the National Assembly.

Director of the NA Human Resources Department, Varduhi Khachatryan has summarized the "lessons learned" from her participation in the USA Study Tour to the Maryland General Assembly and offices of the US Congress regarding Human Resource Policies for legislatures. ALSP will work with her on follow-up items. One specific outcome of her visit was the ability to link the National Assembly with the newly formed "Democracy Commission" which had just been formed in the US Congress at the time of her visit. The NA Speaker, during his visit in the United States in September, in the recommendation of Ms. Khachatryan, met with the chair of the Democracy Commission and established contacts for future collaboration.

ALSP is reviewing the informational brochures drafted by NA staff departments (Social Policy Analysis, Regional Policy Analysis, Information Department and External Relations Department) to increase awareness of the resources available within parliament.

Additional materials on Gender Impact Assessment and Gender Proofing translated by the British Embassy were distributed by ALSP to the NA Staff Working Group on Gender Analysis. The British Embassy and ALSP hosted a September 28th follow-on meeting with government ministry staff, NA staff and NGO representatives to discuss next steps regarding incorporating Gender Impact Assessment and Gender Proofing into their work. Draft laws in big and session agenda were discussed with the gender group members (Legal analysis both the economic and legal subdivisions, Social analyses departments to identify best candidates for the gender expertise and utilization of knowledge's received during the spring Gender training. The NA Staff Working Group on Gender Analysis has decided to analyze the Draft Law on Social Benefits from a gender perspective applying the tools of gender impact assessment. As a result of this process, the practical steps for further development of this tool will be identified.

ALSP is following up with two NA staff members who were trained in ISIS database management issues in Warsaw, Poland about how they can provide end-user training for NA staff as well as deeper program training for those staff who are primary contributors to the systems. This training will provide the staff with in-house capacity to maintain and expand these services. Already, standing committee staff is being trained in the program's use.

During this quarter ALSP's Anna Hovhannesyanyan participated in regular meetings of two standing committees (Social Committee, Education Committee). The main goal of the participation is

1. to evaluate the current practises and identify "targets of opportunity within the National Assembly for increased transparency, improved representation and more effective legislative oversight"
2. to advise the committee experts and members the new modules and advanced methodology for more effective committee work

3. to evaluate the agenda items and advise on the best opportunities for draft law insert publications and public hearings
4. to provide personal professional expertise to assist the committee staff to do the analyses of the draft legislation for the presentation to the Deputies (especially in the social sector).

The main committee counterpart during this quarter was the Standing Committee on Social, Health and Environmental Affairs as the number of draft laws for which this committee was assigned the lead were more than in the Standing Committee on Science and Education. Additionally the NA leadership had declared that the first month's work of the National Assembly will have the "social face" and will be associated with the adjustments of the social sector, system of payments to the different funds including pension, revision the system of benefits, encouraging the development of the SME development etc). One major code was presented in the agenda (the Forest Code) but it did not elicit major interest among the civil society or NGO community (or was considered to be a draft which was already quite well elaborated and did not need to have further delays in its passage). The draft laws on social issues were mostly amendments to the existing legislation. However, preparation for the budget review was an important consideration as the Ministry of Finance had promised that the 2006 Budget will have "social face."

ALSP's Hovhannesyan in collaboration with the Committee identified the Draft Law on Drugs is the best candidate which to be published as a draft law newspaper insert and as a possible candidate for a public hearing. The draft is the result of collaboration of three factions and independent deputies. The government had begun actively to participate in the development and adjustment of the new draft law at the early stages, and it has many components which are crucial and will have impact on different groups of population. First it is interesting for

1. General population as it should safeguard their right to have access to good quality and reasonable priced medication
2. Importers as it bans the unregulated import
3. Pharmaceutical specialist (licensing provision)
4. International community and charity organisations (ban on import of medication with less than one year expire date)
5. Environmental NGOs (disposal of expired medications has potential harmful effects on the environment and is costly).
6. The new draft has its opponents and proponents already both in Government and in NA.

ALSP worked with the NA research department to solicit feedback on their reports and services from deputies and other staff units. During the last 6 months the Information Department has undertaken compiling a digest of the Russian language press soliciting the materials on Karabakh issue. A special page was opened on the department's intranet page to make it available to all NA deputies and staff. The Department staff also applied to ALSP with a suggestion to recommend better modus of starting the digesting on different regions in the intranet on daily/weekly basis. This proactive initiative was an encouraging development and recommendations were made on potentially focusing their efforts on gathering information resources on Armenian domestic issues might have more impact, in assisting the NA to become a more key player in the domestic policy development. Anna also continues regular monitoring with the NA info staff the resources available at the ECPRD site to catch those issues which might be relevant for the NA.

ALSP continued to assist a working group at the National Assembly to draft the policy, application and recruitment announcement for a competitive session or year-long student internship program. The ALSP staff with the NA Human Resources Division drafted and

finalized the guidelines for a competitive student intern program at the National Assembly for 2005-2006. The team also developed the NA Pilot Internship Program Policy, the announcement on launching the program and the Application Form. The ALSP staff had meeting with deans of various universities, both in Yerevan and marzes to discuss the program in more detail and in particular to hear their views on this potential opportunity for students from their faculty. The deans were positively predisposed to the idea. The ALSP staff also prepared the timeline for activities on implementation of the program in Fall 2005 and Spring 2006. Overall, the assessment of needs of the NA standing committees and departments showed that there is a need for 8-10 interns. The job descriptions of interns' position were prepared and sent to the corresponding committees and departments and to the Human Resources Division. The program announcement awaits the NA speaker's approval in order to launch this competitive program.

In August the "Guide to Reading the NA Sitting Agenda" which was developed by ALSP staff, was disseminated through the following NGOs networks:

- Counterpart International
- Junior Achievement Armenia
- Project Harmony
- AED

The guide was reviewed by the Head of the NA Secretariat and may be considered for posting on the NA Website.

ALSP's Ellie Valentine worked with NA staff (Deputy Chief of Staff Zargaryan and Head of the Legal Analysis Division Ashot Khachatryan) on their report of participation in the IFLA Parliamentary Library and Research Centers section meeting in Oslo, Norway in August. Among the issues which the participants thought were particularly impressive and relevant to the National Assembly were:

- Team Work of the organizing Committee (of IFLA and the Storting) – some of the principles can be applied to organization of events in the National Assembly:
 - Volunteers
 - Informality of meetings (no presidium)
 - Little things make a big difference (water on a table for the speakers and participants)
 - Using Outdoor space (concerts, tents)

Some of the innovations of the Norwegian parliament which might be suggested in the National Assembly, for example, mailboxes for MPs with free access, access to archived materials from the session, prominence of the record of legislative proceedings (the "Hansard").

Met professional colleagues from around the world and compared similarities and discuss differences and joined a professional network for future development.

- ▶ **Task 3:** Improving the ability of select units and individuals within the National Assembly to be more transparent, representative and responsive to citizen priorities, interests and concerns; and

Citizen Information and Communication Centers (CICC)

ALSP staff have assessed potential sites for Citizen Information and Communication Centers (CICC's) in Gyumri and Aparan. The CICC's serve as the NA's communication and interaction point with citizens of various communities. ALSP has proposed to the NA two sites in Gyumri, Armenia's second largest city, and one site in Aparan (which would be go "on line" only after the local elections in October since it is under the management of the municipality). The sites will be located in the Aparan Citizen Service Center, Shirak Regional Branch of A.D. Sakharov Armenian Human Rights Protection Center and Gyumri Public Library. The site at the Sakharov Center will mainly target local NGOs and other civil society organizations, while the public library will serve general public.

Currently there are CICC's in Vanadzor, Masis and Goris. The Vandzor CICC submitted a proposal to ALSP in June to on provide six months of internet access to the site. The justification for the internet connection was that it is necessary to have access to the National Assembly and government's website to provide information to the citizens and organizations on the NA sittings agenda, as well as draft law and adopted legislation texts, public hearings announcement and reports, and others. The marzpetaran covered the costs associated with installation of a new phone line for the CICC room. Vanadzor CICC signed an agreement with ALSP that the internet connection will be used only for navigating the resources available at NA and government websites and do not provide any internet services to the third parties. ALSP signed a contract with a local internet provider, providing internet access to Vanadzor CICC for the next six months on July 14, 2005. After expiration of the contract, the Vanadzor CICC should find external sources for covering the internet connection.

Vanadzor CICC provided a short report on their achievements during the first six months of operations. Their experience as the first "pilot site" was particularly helpful as new sites were selected in Goris and Masis and will be used in future location.

ALSP organized an introductory visit to the National Assembly on Wednesday, July 27, 2005 for the eight persons who will staff the Ararat Marz/ Masis and Syunik Marz/ Goris CICC's as volunteers. During the National Assembly visit, the CICC volunteers accompanied by ALSP staff conducted discussions on how best to structure and focus the ensuing work of the CICC with the Heads or Deputy Heads of the Secretariat, Regional Policy Analysis Department, Library, Information Department, Legislation Analysis and Development Department, Citizen's Letters Division, and the Web Division. Informational and reference materials on the function and operations of the National Assembly were provided for the CICC's (including posters on the legislative calendar and the legislative process printed in the National Assembly Print House). The volunteers were able to grasp in a short time the basic functions of the National Assembly and to which staff departments they might turn to regarding various questions.

Prior to the orientation meetings with the key NA departments, Masis and Goris CICC's volunteers met with ALSP staff. In addition to the information on ALSP mission and goals and major functions of the NA, ALSP staff presented and explained the results of survey on Armenian NGOs' knowledge on and their attitudes about the National Assembly and its functions. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed to CICC's volunteers with the request to distribute them among local NGOs as a way to set a baseline of the level of knowledge and awareness of NGOs about the work of the National Assembly at the time that the CICC was established.

Other activities under Task 3

ALSP continues to identify ways to assist National Assembly deputies in conducting constituency relations events. These events include local initiatives, which can be supported by ALSP in terms of substantive consulting and logistical and planning and execution support. ALSP discussed with Habitat for Humanity how this summer's Parliament Build initiative might lead to future connections with the NA in the future. HfH has agreed to invite NA Deputies from the specific districts where there are projects to the public build events as well as to home openings. Habitat will follow-up by keeping deputies informed and inviting them to events within their districts.

A feasibility study has been approved by USAID and a contract has been put in place with BroncoWay, Business Consultant Services. The analysis will determine the technical feasibility for web-casting within the current structure of computing resources available to the NA. It will also provide insight into the potential benefits regarding constituency benefit as well as costs such as equipment, staff, server space and bandwidth. The results of the analysis will allow the ALSP to proceed forward in its relations with the National Assembly with respect to the web-casting issue in a manner that is supported by critical evidence and unbiased conclusions. In this manner, the analysis will facilitate the National Assembly's continuing confidence in the ALSP as a program that is bringing the greatest possible benefit to the National Assembly given budgeting realities.

The scope of work envisions a desk study which will analyze and address:

- Potential users and target groups
- Applicability of web-casting at the NA
- Current NA resources and facilities
- Technical requirements, including equipment, software and expertise
- Data archiving options and requirements
- NA website interfaces, requirements and feasibility
- Costs including; equipment, usage, maintenance, and staff
- Availability of resources in the local market
- Comparative information on the use of Web-Casting in other parliaments and the publics' access to such communication

BroncoWay was chosen for the study having presented a particularly detailed proposal including highly competent, knowledgeable, and experienced consultants. A preliminary report is expected no later than October 7, 2005.

ALSP continued working with the NA Foreign Relations Committee on issuing a committee report on the March Public Hearings on Karabagh. The transcripts of the session were prepared by the NA Secretariat and submitted back to the committee for review. ALSP's Anna Hovhannesian is working on the transcripts together with the Committee staff to prepare them for submission to the NA publication division for final editing. One of the problems encountered were that the transcript files prepared by the secretariat are verbatim transcript. Much work remains to be done to prepare the two-day transcript for publication. The Committee Chair and deputies, experts resisted the idea of printing the pure transcript (though the full transcript will be preserved for those who would want to access it), but rather to present it in a manner which is most appropriate for the public and deputies. The Chair of the Committee signed a letter to the head of Publishing service with request to assist the working group with the editing work. Throughout this process, ALSP's Hovhannesian is documenting the process so that

“Guidelines for Preparing Committee Hearing Reports” can be issued to all committee staff based on the experience of the Foreign Relations Committee.

The process of accreditation of journalists for the fall session at the National Assembly was announced at the beginning of August and continued through early September. The bulk accreditations were done at the end of the deadline and closer to the start of the first session. In general 164 journalist received accreditation. Of them, 37% are newly accredited. Practically no application were received from marz-based media outlets. The orientation for these new journalists was postponed until October in order to identify specific training needs based on the journalists’ first few weeks of activity.

The Public Inquiry Tracking System was installed at Standing Committee Science, Education, Culture and Youth by Tigran Zargaryan in July 21, 2007. A permanent staff of the committee was assigned responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the database and initial training was provided.

ALSP continued to support STTA Mihran Grigorian to work on debugging and improving the NA Website. This is arduous work, but the process of debugging is also a training process for the Web Division staff.

- ▶ **Task 4:** Developing the National Assembly’s ability to improve oversight of the executive branch through existing mechanisms and, to the extent possible, through assisting in the creation of new mechanisms via Constitutional and legislative amendments.

Constitutional Amendments Activities

The Constitutional Amendments passed in the third reading on September 28th as well as amendments to the Law on Referendum bringing it in line with the revised Electoral Code. A roundtable September 30 at the National Assembly in which members of the Council of Europe’s Venice Commission participated encouraged the Armenian public to participate in the November referendum vote on the document. Responding the need for public participation in the process of constitutional reforms, ALSP staff facilitated two regional events that were aimed at raising public awareness of the constitutional amendments process in respective regions as well as soliciting public input before the second reading. The first event was held in Ararat Marz/Masis Araratyan Ashkharkh NGO.

Araratyan Ashkharkh NGO in Masis provided a forum for representatives of various sectors of the society (local self-governance bodies, students and the private sector) to discuss the main developments of and changes in the Draft of Constitutional Amendments. The Masis Mayor office greatly supported the event. The speakers introduced the constitutional reforms in light of political changes taking place in the Post-Soviet countries and highlighted the importance of representative democracy. During the Q&A session participants referred to a number of articles, particularly those on local self-governance as well as independence of the judiciary. They expressed their concern over the fact that there is no organization or an authorized body which helped citizens with their queries relating to interpretation of Constitution. Therefore the events that are aimed at educating people were regarded quite relevant. As an outcome of the event, specific comments and recommendations were developed and presented later to the authors and the NA Ad-Hoc Committee on Matters of European Integration, which is a Lead Committee on Constitutional Amendments.

The other event took place in Lori Marz/Vanadzor, where Constitutional Right Protective Center in cooperation with Vanadzor Resource Center organized a round table discussion on constitutional amendments. The initiative was also supported by OSCE and UNDP. Last minute urgent issues prevented three deputies who had confirmed their participation from attending the forum. To make the seminar more effective and focused, two meetings were held beforehand with the participation of representatives of several Lori Regional NGOs, Mass Media, LSG and as a result twenty-six proposals were prepared and put for a broader discussion during the seminar. The participants, mainly representatives of local NGOs, noted the lack of transparency, absence of mechanisms to ensure public input and therefore gatherings of that sort were obviously important. The 26 proposals were thoroughly debated and clarified. In the end, 28 proposals in total were prepared for the submission to the Lead Committee on Constitutional Amendments. That evening, an on-air TV program was also broadcast by “Lori TV” Channel on the aforementioned theme.

ALSP staff continued to monitor the debates on the Constitutional Amendments through the quarter. State Institutions Specialist Lilit Hakobyan attended the second (August 29-September 1) and third reading (September 27-28) of the draft constitutional amendments in the regime of extraordinary session. The extraordinary session of the second reading lasted for four days throughout which ALSP staff observed and took notes of the proceedings and discussions. ALSP shared the summarizing procedures with the USAID Armenia Mission. Hakobyan prepared an analytical paper on reflection of the recommendations proposed by the ALSP to the draft constitutional amendments. The oversight functions of the National Assembly were enlarged in the draft of constitutional amendments. Particularly, provisions for interpellations, enlargement of the number of standing committees expansion of the authorities of the parliamentary committees to the consideration of issues (not specified though) other than preliminary review of draft laws, formation of government and one on relationship between the Control Chamber and the National Assembly and audit powers, as well as procedures of discussing the budget oversight outputs have been defined.

ALSP continued cooperation with and assistance to the “Civil Society Initiative for Constitutional Reforms” (CSICR), a coalition of Armenian NGOs, and provided expertise for drafting the CSICR comments and suggestions on the constitutional amendments relative to the powers of the National Assembly and legislative-executive relations and assisted in submitting the CSICR comments and suggestions to authors of the draft constitutional amendments and factions in the National Assembly. As a result, out of forty-six recommendations presented by the CSICR forty were reflected in the final text of the constitutional amendments. The six recommendations which were not included in the draft include one on human rights, one on balance of power and four on independence of the judiciary. The suggestion regarding the balance of power was not to limit the scope of authorities of RA National Assembly committees to submission of recommendations and to stipulate the committees to exercise parliamentary control/oversight. Although the suggestion was not fully reflected in the final draft, the amended article provides for a larger number of parliamentary committees and expands the authorities of the latter to “consideration of other issues,” which can be interpreted as a potential opportunity for widened authorities, including oversight functions.

Standing Committee Chair Hranush Hakopyan thanked ALSP for assistance in the publication of a small volume on “Different Functions of Parliament”. She shared with ALSP COP Valentine that the volume’s publication just as the constitutional amendments were being addressed really helped the principal authors and those engaged in the discussion of the drafts in understanding the importance of a strong and responsible legislature in a democratic society. The volume was

distributed to all deputies of the National Assembly, government officials, NGOs and other civil society organizations.

Other Activities under Task 4

The installation of the expanded Local Area Network at the Control Chamber was completed.

The final edited English translation of the Control Chamber 2004 Annual Report submitted to the National Assembly has been posted on the Control Chamber's Website (www.parliament.am/controlchamber). The summary report incorporates the concept of more concise and focused reporting which ALSP has encouraged the Control Chamber to employ.

A first draft of a paper on the recent changes to the National Assembly Rules of Procedure and the role of committees in the budget process in the National Assembly was prepared.

Interviews were conducted with six deputies, who have been active during the question and answer sessions in the fall 2004 and spring 2005. A discussion paper was developed reflecting the feedback received from the deputies and the international best practice of Q&A and interpellations, which is envisaged in the constitutional amendments through a newly added provision. The paper is being expanded on to provide to deputies as they consider what rules changes will be necessary after the constitutional referendum will have passed.

3. Summary of this Quarter's Milestones and Outputs

▶ **Cross-Cutting Tasks**

USAID finalized its proposed Memorandum of Understanding with the National Assembly and scheduled a signing ceremony for October 11.

- ▶ **Task 1:** Facilitating and institutionalizing the involvement of Armenia's legislative community to advocate, lobby and advise the National Assembly on policy and legislative issues;

ALSP's database consultant Tigran Zagaryan introduced the Public Inquiries Tracking System (PITS) to the Standing Committee on Science, Education and Cultural Affairs.

A mailing list was created based on the Information Department's External Contacts Database and used as a way of disseminating important information and announcements to the Civil Society Community in Armenia who have contacted the National Assembly about their interest in cooperation with NA committees, factions and departments.

Staff representatives from six standing committees members of the Committee Staff Working Group on Public Participation (CSWGPP) within the National Assembly met review the collected materials for the "Procedures Manual on Public Committee Hearings in the National Assembly."

ALSP assisted NGOs in Masis and Vanadzor to engage in discussions on constitutional amendments and put forward their remarks to the authors of the drafts.

ALSP discussed with the Standing Committee on Social, Health and Environmental Affairs a strategy for soliciting public input to the Draft Law on Drugs and Pharmaceuticals which includes disseminating the draft broadly (as a newspaper insert) and public hearings on the draft.

- ▶ **Task 2:** Improving the functioning of key committees and departments of the National Assembly by having them work closer with the legislative community in jointly analyzing, researching, commenting on and drafting legislation;

With the support of ALSP, NA HR staff participated in a training program of the Local Business Support Center on changes to the Labor Code of Armenia and implications for Human Resource Management.

Reports of the seven participants of the NA Staff Innovations Fellowship program were reviewed by ALSP staff to identify potential areas for follow-on.

With the British Embassy, ALSP convened the trainers of the March Gender Impact Assessment training to discuss next steps towards building the capacity within Armenia to apply Gender Impact Assessment to their policy and legislative development work.

ALSP with the National Assembly working group, mapped out the program, application, announcement, potential assignments and recruitment plan for the launch of the pilot of the competitive student intern program to be implemented at the National Assembly. All documents were submitted to the Chief of Staff and the Speaker for their approval.

ALSP participated in the debriefing at AED of two National Assembly staff specialists who attended a training program in Poland for the ISIS database development. ALSP helped identify with the staff potential projects in which they might apply their newly honed skills.

ALSP continued to prepare reports on key agenda items under consideration at the NA sittings/sessions and the outcome of the deliberations for dissemination to USAID and implementing partners.

- ▶ **Task 3:** Improving the ability of select units and individuals within the National Assembly to be more transparent, representative and responsive to citizen priorities, interests and concerns; and

As part of its efforts to assist National Assembly deputies in conducting constituency relations events ALSP provided assistance to the NA and the Armenia Tourism Development Agency in organizing the third “Parliament for the People Concert” on the eve of Armenia’s celebration of 15 years of Independence. The event was opened by the speaker and was live telecast on Channel 1 Armenia and over satellite TV.

ALSP provided internet connectivity to the CICC’s in Vanadzor and Masis for an initial six-month period.

ALSP selected three more CICC sites, 2 in Gyumri City and one in Aparan. NA informational materials were provided to both sites.

The Committee on Foreign Relations completed the began the process of editing the transcripts for the committee report of the March public hearing on Karabakh.

ALSP renewed the contract for continued support of an STTA to work with the National Assembly Web Division to make adjustments to the website (www.parliament.am). This includes especially the roll out of enhancement committee web pages.

ALSP worked with the Public Relations staff on strategies for accreditation of newly accredited journalists in the NA.

- ▶ **Task 4:** Developing the National Assembly's ability to improve oversight of the executive branch through existing mechanisms and, to the extent possible, through assisting in the creation of new mechanisms via Constitutional and legislative amendments.

ALSP attended the second and third-reading debates on the constitutional amendments at the National Assembly and advised deputies on improvements to the articles addressing the authority of the National Assembly to exercise oversight over the executive branch.

Continued support was provided to members of the "Civil Society Initiative for Constitutional Reforms" (CSICR) in further stages of consideration of the draft constitutional amendments. CSICR recommendations were provided to all authors of the draft constitutional amendments and to members of the lead committee.

Deputies of the National Assembly were interviewed regarding their participation in the Government Question Period in parliament on the basis of which a series of comments and recommendations were drafted for distribution among the Deputies and NA staff on how this oversight tool can be improved upon.

A paper on the Rules of Procedure and recommendations on how the work of committees can be improved for increased legislative effectiveness during the non plenary weeks was drafted by ALSP State Institutions Specialist and reviewed by STTA Jack Sullivan.

The installation of the expanded Local Area Network at the Control Chamber was completed.

4. Results This Quarter

A specific reportable results framework with measurements reflecting significant progress made during the course of the three years of the ALSP (2004-2007) and results attained due to the combined efforts of the ALSP team and the work of the National Assembly has been submitted to USAID for approval in its Performance Management Plan (PMP). Data for this reporting framework is primarily collected annually. The table of these measurable results is presented here with the data which has been collected to date. New data added since the last reporting period is highlighted in yellow.

ALSP II MEASURABLE RESULTS REPORTING FRAMEWORK				
SO 2.1 IMPROVED DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE				
IR 2 Targeted Governance Institutions Strengthened				
RESULTS Indicator	Measurement	Baseline 2004	Target 2005	ACTUAL 2005
<i>1. Rating of legislative authority – basic tenets of legislative authority, responsiveness, and accountability in normative acts and guidelines</i>	NDI Legislative Assessment Tool	As Per Appendix 1	As Per Appendix 1	Will be based on Constitutional Amendments August 2005
<i>2. Ratings of Citizen Access</i>	USAID administered Scorecard (35 Points Total)	14.4 pts. or 41.14%	20 pts. or 57.14%	(for Fall 2004 Session) 12.37 pts. or 35.34% (For Spring 2005 Session 12 points or 34%)
<i>3. Ratings on Legislative Process</i>	Scorecard (55 Points Total)	28.5 pts.	35 pts.	(for Fall 2004 Session) 28.81 pts. or 52% (For Spring 2005 Session) 29.7 points or 54%)
<i>4. Number of Public Meetings Conducted at the National Assembly According to Established Criteria</i>	Number of Hearings	1	12	Assessment ongoing
<i>5a. Percentage of Deputies who consider that the National Assembly has adequate oversight authority, and information to conduct oversight.</i>	Deputy Survey	52% (Authority) 40% (Information)	70.0% 50.0%	Data Available Fall 2005 Data Available Fall 2005
<i>5b. Percentage of NA Staff Aware of the Oversight Role of Parliament</i>	Staff Survey	62.0%	78.0%	Data Available Fall 2005
<i>6a. Percentage of Deputies who believe that the public has a good understanding of the role of the National Assembly</i>	Deputy Survey	20.0%	35.0%	Data Available Fall 2005
<i>6b. Percentage of Deputies who indicate they use the media to inform constituents</i>	Deputy Survey	19.0%	50.0%	Data Available Fall 2005
<i>6c. Percentage of NA Staff Aware of the Representative Role of Parliament.</i>	Staff Survey	25.0%	35.0%	Data Available Fall 2005

<i>7a. Percentage of activist NGOs aware of the oversight role of parliament</i>	Measured in annual polling (Last Used: ALSP Report on Analysis of NGO Questionnaires - Jan. 2005, Question 2)	24.0%	29.0%	<i>Data Available Fall 2005</i>
<i>7b. Percentage of activist NGOs aware of the representative of parliament</i>	Measured in annual polling (Last Used: ALSP Report on Analysis of NGO Questionnaires - Jan. 2005, Question 2)	11.0%	16.0%	<i>Data Available Fall 2005</i>
<i>7c. Percentage of activist NGOs satisfied with the information the receive from parliament</i>	Measured in annual polling (Last Used: ALSP Report on Analysis of NGO Questionnaires - Jan. 2005, Question 8)	18%	25.0%	<i>Projected Fall 2005</i>
<i>8a. Percentage of the general population indicating an awareness and understanding of the representative role of the National Assembly</i>	Survey (Annual LGP Household)	26.4% (2003)	35%	58% (March 2005)
<i>8b. Percentage of the general population indicating an awareness and understanding of the oversight role of the National Assembly</i>	Survey (Annual LGP Household)	7.8% (2003)	12%	16% (March 2005)
<i>9a. Use of the NA Website Legislation page</i>	Website Statistical Report	Apr-04 40,322 Hits per month	50,000/month	70,170// month (Apr-05)
<i>9b. Use of the NA Website Draft Legislation Page</i>	Website Statistical Report	Apr-04 16,629 Hits per month	20,000/month	19,623 /month (Apr-05)
<i>9c. Use of the NA Website Committee Information Page</i>	Website Statistical Report	Apr-04 3,933 Hits per month	5,000/month	4,063 /month (Apr-05)

With the passage of the Constitutional Amendments, it provides ALSP an opportunity to review the targets for legislative development as they are reflected in that document and projected to the National Assembly Rules of Procedures.

SEPTEMBER 2005 UPDATE

APPENDIX 1. Selections/adaptations from National Democratic Institute’s “Outline for a Baseline Assessment of the Legislature”

	Question	Status as of July 2002	Status as of November 2004	Target for September 2005	ACTUAL for September 2005	Target for September 2006	Target for August 2007
1	DOES THE LEGISLATURE VOTE TO APPOINT/APPROVE/CONFIRM MEMBERS OF THE CABINET? DOES IT HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO DISMISS OR CENSURE (REPRIMAND) CABINET MEMBERS AND/OR THE ENTIRE CABINET?	No, it does not appoint individual members of the cabinet. According to Article 85 (par. 3) of the Constitution of RA the President approves the cabinet proposed by the Prime Minister. Yes, according to Article 84 of the Constitution by the simple majority of all Deputies can express the vote of no confidence to the Government.	NO CHANGE	The Constitution will require the parliament’s active involvement in the process of appointing the Prime Minister either by initial nomination of the PM candidate or shifting that authority to the Parliament when President’s nominee is not approved by the Parliament.	YES: The Constitution will require the parliament’s active involvement in the process of appointing the Prime Minister either by initial nomination of the PM candidate or shifting that authority to the Parliament when President’s nominee is not approved by the Parliament.		Parliament will have participated in the review of ministerial positions and the approval of the Prime Minister.
2	DOES THE CONSTITUTION GIVE THE LEGISLATURE THE AUTHORITY TO CONVENE ITS SESSIONS OR IS THIS A POWER OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH?	Yes, Article 69 of the Constitution: two regular sessions. According Article 70 only the President has the right to convene extraordinary sessions of the Parliament due to initiative of the at least of 1/3 of Deputies or due to government initiative.	NO CHANGE	Changes in the Constitution will allow a majority of deputies to convene extraordinary sessions of parliament without presidential consent	YES: Changes in the Constitution will allow a majority of deputies to convene extraordinary sessions of parliament without presidential consent		

	Question	Status as of July 2002	Status as of November 2004	Target for September 2005	ACTUAL for September 2005	Target for September 2006	Target for August 2007
4	UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES, IF ANY, CAN THE PRESIDENT OR PRIME MINISTER DISSOLVE THE LEGISLATURE?	Constitution Article 55.3 the President can dissolve the NA after the consultations with the Prime Minister and the Chairman of the NA. However the President cannot dissolve the NA during last 6 months of his/her term.	NO CHANGE	The circumstances under which the president can dismiss the parliament will be specifically stated in the constitution	YES: The circumstances under which the president can dismiss the parliament will be specifically stated in the constitution		
5	CAN THE LEGISLATURE OVERRIDE A PRESIDENTIAL VETO? IF SO, BY WHAT PERCENTAGE VOTE?	Constitution Article 72 states that if the disagreements and proposals of the President in a returned law are not accepted by the NA, the NA overrides presidential veto by the total SIMPLE majority of all MPs.	NO CHANGE	The constitutional amendments will preserve the legislature's right to override a presidential veto	No: The constitution still does not allow for National Assembly to override a presidential veto – rather, there is a consultative process of returning legislation for reconsideration and passage – or a new proposal must be submitted.		

	Question	Status as of July 2002	Status as of November 2004	Target for September 2005	ACTUAL for September 2005	Target for September 2006	Target for August 2007
6	CAN THE LEGISLATURE AMEND OR PROPOSE NEW LEGISLATION INDEPENDENTLY WITHOUT EXECUTIVE GOVERNMENT REVIEW?	NO. Constitution Article 75 requires that Government initiated bills be put to a vote only with changes acceptable to the authors. The legislative initiatives proposed by deputies which will have budgetary impact require the conclusion of the Government before consideration. In addition the bills considered "urgent" by the Government shall be discussed and put on vote within one month period.	NO CHANGE	The constitution will provide for mechanisms enabling the legislature to pass and amend legislation without executive interference.	No		
7	CAN THE LEGISLATURE DETERMINE ITS OWN INTERNAL BODIES?	No, the constitution determines specifically that the National Assembly will have six standing committees. The Rules of Procedure determine the jurisdiction of the 6 committees, but since that is a law, that must be approved by the president's signature. The NA By-Laws allow for the establishment of ad hoc committees for one-year terms.	The Speaker of Parliament in 2003 introduced also the concept of "Speaker's Councils" which act as quasi committees of parliament.	The constitution will cede authority to the National Assembly to determine the number of standing committees in parliament. Reference in the Constitution to the "Law" on the NA Rules of Procedure will be eliminated.	PARTIALLY: The Constitution allows for the National Assembly to establish up to twelve standing committees according to the procedures set forth in the NA By-laws NO: NA By-laws still referred to as a Law (i.e., requiring president's signature for any changes)	The NA By-laws will outline the specific procedures for establishing standing and temporary committees and other National Assembly bodies, including consideration of staffing and financial support of these bodies	The NA By-laws will outline the specific procedures for establishing standing and temporary committees and other National Assembly bodies, including consideration of staffing and financial support of these bodies

	Question	Status as of July 2002	Status as of November 2004	Target for September 2005	ACTUAL for September 2005	Target for September 2006	Target for August 2007
8	ARE THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES ADEQUATELY STAFFED AND RESOURCED?	No, the committee staff is limited (by the By-Laws) to no more than 5 full-time staff in the committee (combined clerical and professional staff). Committees do not have their own budgets.	No Change		NA By-laws will be amended to allow periodic review of staffing needs of standing committees will be initiated. Committee Staffing adjustments will be incorporated into the National Assembly's MTEF.	NA By-laws will be amended to allow periodic review of staffing needs of standing committees will be initiated. Committee Staffing adjustments will be incorporated into the National Assembly's MTEF.	2007 State Budget will include a detailed justification of the staffing needs of the National Assembly Standing Committees
9	WHAT IS THE LEGISLATURE'S ROLE IN THE BUDGET PROCESS? CAN IT AMEND THE EXECUTIVE'S BUDGET? REDUCE AND/OR INCREASE EXPENDITURES AND/OR TAXES?	Government presents the budget to the legislature. The legislature has the ultimate power to approve the budget. (Const. art. 76) (By Law Chapter 10).	MTEF introduced in 2003 allows a three-year perspective on the projected budgetary commitments for different sectors and the policies underlying those projected expenditures.		YES: The timeline for budget consideration will be adjusted (budget submitted by October 1) to allow the National Assembly 90 days for consideration and therefore for greater scrutiny by the National Assembly	The timeline for budget consideration will be adjusted (budget submitted by October 1) to allow for greater scrutiny by the National Assembly	

	Question	Status as of July 2002	Status as of November 2004	Target for September 2005	ACTUAL for September 2005	Target for September 2006	Target for August 2007
10	CAN THE PRESIDENT RULE BY DECREE (IF SO, UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES?)	Const. Art. 56, the President can rule by decree, but they shall not contradict the Constitution and the existing Laws	NO CHANGE	Specific circumstances under which the President can issue decrees will be specified in the Constitution	YES: Specific circumstances under which the President can issue decrees will be specified in the Constitution		
11	WHO DETERMINES THE LEGISLATURE'S BUDGET?	The NA determines its budget, with the approval of the Ministry of finance, as the lead ministry for the government which is the "author" of the Draft Law on the State Budget for FY####.	NA participates in the 3-year MTEF projections of its budgetary needs, but annual budget still requires government approval.	NA Departments and Committees begin to plan their activities with the fiscal implications in mind.	Not Specified	NA Departments and committees develop their budgets and budget projections within the general NA budget	Individual budgets of committees and departments are incorporated into the NA's MTEF projections
13	Are verbatim records (transcripts) of the plenary sessions and committee meetings available to the media and/or officially published?	NO, only plenary session transcripts are in written form and in the NA Library and Archives; Committee transcripts are not kept	Plenary transcripts are on the NA Intranet Site; no committee transcripts are posted – records are maintained in the committees	Plenary transcripts are on the NA Intranet Site; committees will begin recording minutes of meetings	No Progress this period	Plenary Transcripts will be made available on the NA Website; Committee Meeting Minutes will be available on the intranet	Plenary Transcripts available on the NA Website; Committee Meeting Minutes available on the website

Definition of Measurement:

The NDI Legislative Assessment Tool is used in a number of countries to identify the system of governance and the relative strength of the legislative institution. The criteria chosen from this tool for monitoring the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia are those criteria which are most central to the legislative authority and relative independence of the institution.

Relevance of Indicator:

Without meeting these basic tenets of legislative authority and independence, the National Assembly will have much less influence in the process of creating and introducing policy changes and overseeing that these policies enacted into law are being appropriately implemented. As the constitutional reform in Armenia is ongoing, the

Data Collection Methods/Approximate Costs

ALSP Staff will be responsible for monitoring these benchmarks

Target Setting/Trend line Interpretation Issues

Benchmarks are based on analysis of assessments of the legislative authority of the National Assembly by ALSP legislative development specialists based on the practices of modern democratic legislatures. As constitutional reform is being introduced for consideration in 2005, many of the benchmarks of basic authority are targeted to be met in the first year of the program. However, practical application of that authority will be measured in subsequent years as to how that authority is exercised.

Additionally, some less specifically measurable results can be reported in program areas as well. Results achieved during this quarter are indicated below as they relate to specific program task areas.

Task 1: Facilitating and institutionalizing the involvement of Armenia's legislative community to advocate, lobby and advise the National Assembly on policy and legislative issues;

The Citizen Letters Division issued its half-year report for the first time using the disaggregated data provided by Public Inquiry Tracking System (PITS). The report was further enhanced by presenting the data in graphic form as opposed to straight narrative as has been the practice in the past. This report was published in Issue 6 of the National Assembly Bulletin. Therefore the aggregate information that was gleaned from the citizen's appeals to the National Assembly was disseminated to all members and staff.

Task 4: Developing the National Assembly's ability to improve oversight of the executive branch through existing mechanisms and, to the extent possible, through assisting in the creation of new mechanisms via Constitutional and legislative amendments.

Of the 46 recommendations from the Civil Society Initiative on Constitutional Reforms (CSICR) -- a group of civil society and academic specialists on constitutional reform issues which ALSP supported in their efforts to have public input to the constitutional reform process -- 40 recommendations found their way into the third-reading draft law on Constitution Amendments passed by the National Assembly September 28. While some of the most significant recommendations were not accepted, it can still be understood as a "value added" for the process despite the difficulties for civil society to actively participate in the process.

An analytical review of the recommendations proposed by the ALSP to the draft constitutional amendments revealed several areas which could be considered as positive progress. The oversight functions of the National Assembly were enlarged in the draft of constitutional amendments. Particularly, provisions for interpellations, enlargement of the number of standing committees expansion of the authorities of the parliamentary committees to the consideration of issues (not specified though) other than preliminary review of draft laws, formation of government and one on relationship between the Control Chamber and the National Assembly and audit powers, as well as procedures of discussing the budget oversight outputs have been defined.

If these amendments to the constitution pass in the November national referendum, it provides some new opportunities for institutional capacity building.

B. SUMMARY OF PLANS FOR NEXT QUARTER

▶ *Cross-Cutting Tasks*

PMP activities will include soliciting bids from local Social Science centers for processing the deputy and staff surveys to be conducted using the same instrument as in 2002 and 2003.

NGO questionnaire should be sent out in the fall with the assistance of CASP and AED to CSOs in the regions.

USAID will sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Assembly and the first meeting of the Legislative Strengthening Advisory Group will be convened.

The equipment procurement plan will be finalized and procurement initiated. This will also be linked with strategic management principles in terms of who is responsible for developing an IT strategy that will include hiring qualified staff to maintain equipment and train staff on its use.

ALSP will present its Information Technology Assessment to the National Assembly's Legislative Strengthening Advisory Group (LSAG) for their review and comment.

ALSP will submit the local STTA's cost-benefit analysis/feasibility study on the options of installing an offset printing facility at the National Assembly to the LSAG for their review and comment.

A report on the first year of ALSP activity will be presented to the LSAG members.

ALSP will begin the procurement of essential equipment for the National Assembly.

ALSP will conduct Performance Management Plan – related activities, including working with the Human Resource Management Department to conduct a staff survey in the National Assembly and solicit bids to conduct a survey of elected deputies.

- ▶ **Task 1:** Facilitating and institutionalizing the involvement of Armenia's legislative community to advocate, lobby and advise the National Assembly on policy and legislative issues;

Improvements and expansion to the NA Information Department External Contacts Database will be introduced especially related to including individual experts into the database in addition to organizations. Additionally, ALSP will work with the department on identifying what information and documentation might proactively be sent to the civil society community using the ECD mailing list. The distribution list will be customized for each committee so that they can streamline their outreach to civil society when they organize events on specific policy topics.

Public Inquiries Tracking System (PITS) will be installed in the in Standing Committee on Social, Health and Environmental Affairs and introduce the system in the Speaker's office. Work will be initiated for future installations in the Foreign Affairs Committee, and the Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs. Staff will be trained on the use of PITS.

ALSP will continue to assist Committees in conducting public hearings using innovative techniques for engaging the public.

Potential policy topics, draft legislative or issues under debate in the National Assembly committees will be examined as far as their applicability as a focus for committee field hearings.

ALSP is soliciting feedback from NGOs regarding their experiences in participating in the public meetings and hearings organized by National Assembly standing and ad hoc committees. This data will be analyzed to identify recommendations for changes in processes and procedures for more effective engagement of civil society in these processes.

National Assembly committee staff who have been recently on study visits to Slovenia and Lithuania will provide a briefing to their colleagues on what they observed there and what practices might be adapted to the work of Armenian standing committees, including those which might be incorporated into the guidelines on conducting public hearings.

A first draft of guidelines to participating in public hearings will be shared with a core group of NGOs and colleagues at USAID's CASP (Civic Advocacy Strengthening Project)

ALSP will pursue with UNDP whether or not they are planning to proceed with a program to introduce report-writing/minute-taking skills to the standing committees in the National Assembly.

ALSP will assist the National Assembly with the preparation of a draft law insert, documenting the procedure and identifying who, within the National Assembly is able to take the lead in the future to continue this practice.

Work with standing committees on improvements to their webpages will continue.

NA Standing Committees' experts will review the Public Hearings' Guidelines folder and will make their suggestions on which materials could be added to it.

ALSP will work with the National Assembly Information Department to organize meetings with standing committee staff on how they can more effectively use the resources and the use of the External Contacts Database.

ALSP will continue its work with the National Assembly Citizen Letters Division on the developing the Public Inquiry Tracking System (PITS) and install PITS in the Speakers' offices and one standing committee and train staff to use the PITS.

NA staff who participated in the Warsaw ISIS training in June will conduct consultations and trainings of other staff units using the ISIS system. On October 13, a British specialist in ISIS will conduct a training for all ISIS users in Armenia, and the NA staff will participate as a core users' group.

Continue assistance to the standing and ad-hoc committees in organizing public hearings.

A meeting of the Coordinating Council of Constituency Groups will be convened with NGOs who had participated in recent hearings to solicit their feedback on how the new innovations introduced to the practice of parliamentary hearings are working.

The Committee Staff Working Group on Public Participation will meet to review drafted Public Hearings Guidelines so that they might be disseminated to all chairs of the standing and ad hoc committees as well as all committee staff.

- ▶ **Task 2:** Improving the functioning of key committees and departments of the National Assembly by having them work closer with the legislative community in jointly analyzing, researching, commenting on and drafting legislation;

ALSP will engage a local STTA Budget Analyst to support the committee staff and Economic Analysis Department staff's support to the deputies during this budget season. The analyst will focus principally on the opportunities which the presentation of the budget using principles of program budgeting offers to the National Assembly. The analyst may focus in particular with the Standing Committee on Social, Health and Environmental Affairs to analyze more in-depth the 2006 budget proposal which was being proposed by the government as a budget with a "social face."

Reports from NA Fellows who participated in the staff exchange opportunity at the State Duma in Russia will be made available to all NA staff via the intranet.

STTA Donna Usher will work with the NA departments on their strategic plans and reporting including a training session for NA heads of department and divisions on strategic planning and report writing. Following the training Ms. Usher will work individually with several departments to complete their strategic plans for 2006.

The NA Staff Working Group on Gender Analysis will analyze the Draft Law on Social Benefits from a gender perspective applying the tools of gender impact assessment. The report will be disseminated to CSO's through the NA's Information Department External Contacts Directory mailing list to solicit feedback. As a result of this process, the practical steps for further development will be identified.

Building on the foundation of the work already done, ALSP will assist the Human Resources Division to prepare and deliver the mandated (by the civil service law) training of NA staff. Work with the Human Resources Division will also include making necessary adjustments to the training plan so that it can begin to be made available through the department's page on the intranet.

Work with the Human Resources Division on the NA Policy and Procedures and Training Manuals will continue.

ALSP will continue to provide and make the HRM department aware of potential training opportunities for staff outside the National Assembly (through local training providers, for example).

The National Assembly will announce the new competition for NA Staff Innovations Fellowships for the winter and spring, ensuring that the opportunity is available for full-time appointed staff from all departments and committees.

ALSP will engage STTA Donna Usher to work with NA staff departments on drafting their annual plans using strategic management methodologies.

Building on the work already begun with the Regional Policy Analysis Division, ALSP will work with departments on the procedures for procurement of external expertise.

We expect STTA Clay Wellborn to be engaged in this activity as well as consulting with the departments on how to better disseminate their reports to a broader audience within the National Assembly.

ALSP staff will continue to work with the staff of the Foreign Relations Department, specifically, the ECPRD correspondent to identify how this resource can be used more inclusively

Working with the leadership of the Youth Parliament, ALSP will help to identify strategies for their substantive input to the legislative process.

Assuming approval of the proposed plan for the internship program by the Speaker, ALSP staff will work with the NA Human Resources Division to implement according to the developed timeline activities connected with the Fall 2005 and Spring 2006 competitive internship program.

Overall, the assessment of needs of the NA standing committees and departments showed that there is a need for 8-10 interns. The job descriptions of interns' position were prepared and sent to the corresponding committees and departments and to the Human Resources Division. Next steps include: Recruitment; Deployment; Orientation.

USAID EREO staff will be invited to present their portfolio of assistance to National Assembly staff in the fall.

ALSP will continue to prepare and distribute to USAID implementing partners updates on the issues that stand before parliament and the outcome.

- ▶ **Task 3:** Improving the ability of select units and individuals within the National Assembly to be more transparent, representative and responsive to citizen priorities, interests and concerns; and

Work with the Committee on Foreign Relations to publish the report of the March public hearing on Karabakh and posting the report on their committee page on the NA Website.

ALSP will present to the National Assembly the feasibility study on live webcasting on the National Assembly Website of NA Plenary Sessions.

ALSP will assist the PR Department in planning and conducting an orientation program for newly accredited journalists with materials provided through STTA Jack Sullivan.

ALSP will introduce to the National Assembly the concept of a training program for Deputy Assistants which will include an introduction to all the resources available in the NA (research units, databases, media guidelines, intranet resources, etc.).

A training program for committees and factions on improved public relations will be designed.

Work with NGOs and advocacy groups will continue, partly in cooperation with USAID CASP, to encourage engagement of deputies of the NA in their activities.

At least three additional sites for CICC's will be assessed jointly with National Assembly participation. Orientation of the CICC volunteers at the National Assembly.

CICC's will be engaged to identify topics and issues as potential focus for committee field hearings.

ALSP will assist the CICC's to organize meetings with deputies on budget related issues. Visits of NA committee and department staff to CICC sites will be organized to raise awareness to these potential resources.

ALSP will work with deputies and NA LAD staff to review the draft laws and amendments to laws on the status and accountability of deputies in the post-constitutional amendments environment. STTA (both CCN and international) specialists on legislative Rules and Ethics may be engaged in this activity.

ALSP will solicit from NA factions and deputies contributions to a volume on “Legislative Accountability: Rules of Procedure, Deputy Ethics and Conflict of Interest”

ALSP will continue to assist the National Assembly to identify institutional and individual citizen outreach activities.

ALSP will assist the National Assembly in the preparations of Public Relations events such as the 15th Year of the National Assembly in Armenia in November.

ALSP will work with the Protocol Department and External Relations Department to streamline some of the background information that is provided to foreign delegations.

Work with the NA Web Division will continue identifying new opportunities for citizen access to information.

Work with the Web Division and the standing committees will continue in order to enhance the NA Committees’ pages on the NA Website.

Work with the Web Division will continue in an effort to enhance the NA departmental intranet pages and through that improve interdepartmental communication.

Enhancements to the National Assembly’s public relations tools (Parliamentary Hour, the Electronic Journal, etc.) will be discussed with counterparts.

ALPS will engage CICC volunteers to solicit feedback on a quarterly basis from citizens on the effectiveness of these outreach tools

Staff of the Speaker’s office and the first standing committee will be invited to the CLD to see how the PITS works and the computer resources of the speaker’s office and the standing committee will be assessed to ensure that it can support the ISIS program on which the PITS is based.

ALSP will work with the Public Relations staff to prepare for the new accreditation process of journalists at the National Assembly for the fall session.

ALSP will work with the PR Department on developing an orientation program for new staff in the department -- based on the Communications Strategy drafted in 2004.

ALSP will provide support to the National Assembly in publishing an updated and “renewable” staff directory.

- ▶ **Task 4:** Developing the National Assembly’s ability to improve oversight of the executive branch through existing mechanisms and, to the extent possible, through assisting in the creation of new mechanisms via Constitutional and legislative amendments.

ALSP will engage a STTA specialist to do an analysis of what opportunities exist for the National Assembly with the constitutional amendments allowing more standing committees in parliament. This will include what rules changes will be required.

ALSP STTA will review the staff charters and mission statements regarding the work of the Assembly departments.

ALSP will provide consultations on improved presentation of reports to NA Deputies – perhaps engaging STTA library science specialists to train Control Chamber staff on developing keyword indexes for Control Chamber reports.

ALSP will complete consultations with the Control Chamber on developing a brochure that will explain the Control Chamber’s methodology for NA Deputies (based loosely on the GAO brochure for Congress which participants of the October 2003 study tour brought back with them).

The analytical paper prepared by ALSP staff on Question Period practices in the National Assembly and in comparative context will be disseminated to NA deputies for discussion. The paper will also focus on the international experience in interpellations since this practice is introduced in the constitutional amendments.

In cooperation with the Working Group on Lobbying, recommendations for the Code of Conduct of Deputies will be drafted.

ALSP will deliver comments on the Rules of Procedure and recommendations on how the work of committees can be improved for increased legislative effectiveness during the non plenary weeks.

C. COOPERATION WITH OTHER DONORS

Other Donor Activity with the National Assembly

ALSP continued its cooperation with both USAID implementing partners and donors and partners from other donor organizations.

ALSP cooperated with the British Embassy on a number of activities during the quarter. As a follow-up to the March 2005 Gender Impact Assessment Training, ALSP reviewed additional materials illustrating how the GIA tool is used in Northern Ireland and co-convened those from government, the National Assembly and the NGO sector who are ready to work to develop an Armenia-specific GIA tool.

Thanks to the British Embassy’s support, ALSP was able to facilitate the participation of two staff from the National Assembly to attend the IFLA¹ conference in August and participate in the meetings of the Parliamentary Libraries and Research Centers Section.

ALSP nominated several National Assembly deputies and staff to participate in special exchange programs sponsored by the British Foreign Office (Chevening Fellowships, for example). MP Grigor Ghonjeyan was selected in an international competition to participate in a high-level course on Economic Policy in Birmingham. NA Legislative Analysis Department staff Artur Grigoryan was chosen as a finalist in the Chevening Fellowship competition.

The OSCE sponsored the participation of NA Committee Staff in a study tour to the Slovenian parliament in August to learn more about the work of legislative committees there. Discussions with UNDP are ongoing on how their support to the National Assembly might

¹ IFLA – International Federation of Library Associations

support the ALSP program goals of instituting regular reporting from standing committees on the deliberations at the committee level.

ALSP continues to participate in an international donor working group on constitutional amendments which is convened by OSCE.

D. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

ALSP DCOP Gregg Halstead continued on medical leave in the US for the duration of the quarter. DA hired John Armstrong as Acting DCOP who began his assignment in Yerevan with ALSP August 1.

Lusine Abovyan, the Constitutional Law Specialist departed the project in August 2005 to become a Yale World Fellow. ALSP hired Lilit Hakobyan as the ALSP State Institutions Specialist to fill that professional staff position.

COP Eleanor Valentine announced at the beginning of September that she would be leaving the project to take on a new assignment departing Armenia October 7. *DA Senior Associate, Jack Sullivan arrived in Yerevan at the end of September to work on a number of issues related to COP transition as well as undertaking STTA responsibilities in preparing an agenda for and facilitating the first LSAG meeting.*

ALSP II Work Plan for Year 2 was completed and submitted to USAID for approval.

E. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AND REMEDIAL ACTIONS

Problem: While intentions were to solicit bids for the staff and MP surveys foreseen in the PMP submitted to USAID for approval, the PMP was only approved in mid-September. NA Director of Human Resource Division was asked to review the questions on the staff survey and suggest new questions. DAI technical staff was reviewing the deputy survey to determine if adjustments to questions should be made or whether additional questions should be added.

Remedial Action: Bids for the surveys foreseen in the PMP will be solicited and submitted to USAID for approval for surveys to be conducted during the fall session of the National Assembly.

Problem: Though the PITS software was installed in Education Committee and a staff person trained, it was not being used.

Remedial Action: ALSP needs to do a lot of advocacy at the NA to promote new technologies. Additional time and effort needs to be applied to convince staff that new technologies will really be useful. ALSP advised a strategy to start with current correspondence, since the backlog of correspondence to the committee is overwhelming (approximately 1000 letters starting from 2000). Once they start working with the system for current correspondence, then later -- when there will be a lull in activity -- they can decide whether it would be useful to have the historic data available as well.

Problem: NA training plan was not posted on the Intranet as some other priorities were identified for the Website (problems with the tracking and search systems). Additionally, since there are now two training plans foreseen for NA staff-- one for Public Administration classes and second for individual professional development -- the Chief of staff considers the placement

without having a consolidated version as a misleading. Earlier in the year, there was also some concern about making this information widely available in the intranet.

Remedial Action: A new tact on posting training opportunities will be presented to the Chief of Staff which will include period postings of new training opportunities for staff, rather than a full calendar of planned curriculum. In other words, rather than trying to tackle the task as a whole, different types of training opportunities will be introduced gradually.

F. UNRESOLVED ISSUES OR CONSTRAINTS ON THE PROJECT

Now that USAID has finalized the Memorandum of Understanding with the National Assembly which envisions the establishment of the Legislative Strengthening Advisory Group, heretofore unresolved constraints should be freed.

III. FINANCIAL REPORT

Contractor Name: Development Associates, Inc.
 Contract No. AEP-I-00-00-00004-00
 Quarterly Financial Report
 Cumulative through 9/30/05

To No.	Country	Authorized Expenditures (\$)	Actual Expenditures (\$)	Balances (\$)	Estimated Completion Date	Actual Completion Date
800	EGYPT	274,062	264,998.50	9,063.50	1/11/01	1/11/01
801	BULGARIA	67,284	56,784.99	10,499.01	9/30/00	9/30/00
802	EGYPT	4,464,754	2,937,313.58	1,527,440.42	1/11/04	1/11/04
803	ARMENIA I	2,301,804	2,273,975.99	27,828.01	8/31/04	8/31/04
804	UGANDA	3,143,642	2,258,595.61	885,046.39	6/30/06	
805	ARMENIA II	2,483,853	705,143.80	1,778,709.20	8/31/07	
	TOTALS	12,735,399	8,172,579.34	4,562,819.66		

IV. RESULTS FROM COMPLETED TASK ORDERS

None this quarter.