USAID | AFGHANISTAN
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Assessment of Political Party Programming by USAID in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

May 29 - July 16, 2008

This report was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It was prepared under contract with Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc. and its Subcontractor through USAID's Afghanistan "Services under Program and Project Offices for Results Tracking" (SUPPORT) project. The report was prepared by Bradley Austin (under contract to Checchi and Company Consulting), Team Leader, and Ernest Leonardo, (under contract with The Louis Berger Group, Inc).

Assessment of Political Party Programming by USAID in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

DISCLAIMER:

The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

This evaluation was

Contracted under USAID Contract Number: GS-10F-0425M

Order Number: 306-M-00-07-00502-00; Task Order Number 2007-012

Afghanistan Services under Program and Project Offices for Results Tracking (SUPPORT)

Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc.
Afghanistan SUPPORT Project
Wazir Akbar Khan
Kabul, Afghanistan

Corporate Office:
Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc.
1899 L Street, NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20036
USA

Table of Contents

I. Executive Summary 1
II. Introduction. 2
1. Information Collection Methodology, Organization and Analysis 2
2. Description of NDI and IRI Projects 3
3. Purpose and Methodology of the Evaluation. 5
4. Project Implementation Progress, Results And Impacts 5

III. Assessment of Prior/Existing Programs. 6
1. The Context for Political Party Programming in Afghanistan 6
2. What Interventions Were Most Effective in Achieving Program Objectives? 11
a) Organizational Development 13
b) Enhancing Electoral Competitiveness 17
c) Assisting Parties to Participate in Governance. 19
3. What Factors Hindered the Project Implementation? 21
4. Were There Unexpected but Important Benefits or Impacts?. 21
5. Were There Negative Impacts or Unintended Consequences?. 21
6. What Was the Level of Satisfaction of the Stakeholders?. 22
7. How Sustainable Are the Interventions?. 22

IV. Recommendations. 22
1. What Improvements/New Directions Can Be Made in Future Programming? 22
a) New Directions. 22
b) Recommended Improvements - Organizational Development. 25
c) Recommended Improvements - Enhancing Electoral Competitiveness. 26
d) Recommended Improvements - Participating in Governance. 27
2. How Can Political Party Assistance Strengthen Parties in the Afghan Context? . . . 28
3. What is the Justification for Future Assistance to Strengthen Political Parties?. 28
4. Should Future Political Party Programming Be Generic or Targeted? 29
5. To What Extent Should Alternatives to Political Parties Be Supported? 29
6. What Is the Proper Sequence of Programming Assistance?. 30
7. How Can Technical Assistance Be Strategically Balanced?. 30

Annex A: Table of Activities, Outcomes, Indicators 31
Annex B: List of References 32
Annex C: List of Persons Interviewed 34
Annex D: Results of 2004 Presidential Elections 40
Annex E: Assessment of Political Party Programming Statement of Work 41

List of Acronyms

CEPPS	Consortium for Elections and Political Processes
ETIC	NDI Election Training and Information Center
EU	European Union
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
ISM	Independent Solidarity Movement
IRI	International Republican Institute
IRoA	Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MP	Member of Parliament
NDI	National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
NYM	National Youth Movement
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PC	Provincial Councils
PPRC	NDI Political Party Resource Center
RFP	Request for Proposals
SNTV	Single Non-Transferable Vote System
SOW	Scope of Work
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The USAID contracted assessment with Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc. began with meetings in Washington, DC (IRI, NDI, USAID) then in Kabul, where the assessment team (Mr. Ernie Leonardo and Mr. Bradley Austin) honed the Scope of Work with USAID's input. The team then commenced meetings in Kabul with political parties, associations, stakeholders and implementers. The assessment team also traveled to Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif for meetings with political parties and stakeholders. Being away from Kabul added to the scope of the research with comparative information and diversified expectations away from the relative advanced situation in the capital. While a large part of the assessment was to examine how the CEPPS program in Afghanistan was conducted and its success, USAID directed the team to focus on the future of the CEPPS program.

The assessment team was pleased to be able to discuss democratic development in Afghanistan with a diverse group of stakeholders and concerned citizens. Mr. Leonardo governance skills were well balanced with Mr. Austin's political experience. Frequently, the two engaged the stakeholders in constructive, in-depth and forthright conversations that were always cordial and balanced. This facilitated gathering a tremendous volume of salient information. The assessment interviewed as many political parties as possible, large and modest alike; rarely did parties decline the meeting request.

Since 2003 CEPPS implemented programs that included elections assistance, civic education, work with Provincial Councils, Parliamentary development, media assistance, resource centers, elections observations, and of course political party development, candidate training while also assisting coalitions and independents. The NDI and IRI programs for the political parties included an assessment, organizational development, strategic planning, membership recruitment, fundraising/financial management, regional organization and coordination and platform development projects. The assessment team reviewed the many reports as were provided by CEPPS, and discussed the projects with the stakeholders on as many of the programs as possible to get a full understanding of their success and potential for future efforts. These discussions examined how the projects were implemented, how they progressed, their results and impacts. The stop-and-start design being the most frustrating aspect to the programs for the recipients and inability to gain any momentum for continued efforts a great impediment for trust to re-start programs.

All of the partners and recipients provided a consistent account of Afghanistan's political history. How political parties evolved from monarchy, were used against the people, reflect ethnic/religious and personal/foreign concerns and overall lost all of the peoples' trust was explained in several interviews.

The CEPPS programs met with varying results, and did achieve initial success with their efforts to assist the political parties. The parties received training and information concerning their organizational development, ability to compete in elections and then how to best participate in Afghanistan's governing process. The assistance came in the form of trainings, seminars, organizational assistance consultancies and access to resources.

None would suggest that program implementation in Afghanistan is easy, overcoming the history and Afghanistan's protective nature made it difficult to start programs; furthermore, security and poor infrastructure hindered movement and communications. No unexpected benefits were identified, because of the extreme conditions and changing program aims. While the negative impacts of the program are mostly from the changing focus, moving away from the political party development work left the parties feeling abandoned. While parties didn't expect continued intensive assistance, they did say their interaction with the CEPPS partners declined to nothing after the elections. This makes them wary of NDI and IRI and regaining trust more difficult than necessary. When the stakeholders were engaged, they expressed satisfaction with the level of attention, information (but at times felt the trainers were too junior) and assistance.

The sustainability of the programs relies solely on the stakeholders. While the information and direction the CEPPS partners imparted to the stakeholders was valuable and applicable to Afghanistan, the lack of interaction put the onus for sustainability on the parties. Some of which were more diligent to continue their organizational, outreach, financial and media development. For the most part this was directly related to the membership energy and involvement by youth and women.

The assessment recommends improvements for the future CEPPS program; these include resuming and improving previous efforts specifically in organizational development, electoral competitiveness and governance. The recommendations also suggest new program areas, including mentoring.

The political context in Afghanistan is evolving. Specifically legislation will alter the political landscape. The international importance to assist and stabilize Afghanistan is unquestionable. Assistance to the parties needs to be part of this, because even when underground or known by other titles they have been part of Afghanistan's people democratic expression.

Many other international donors are planning their elections related programs, coordinating with them will improve, balance and reinforce the CEPPS programs. The sequence for programs is not so much linear, but should reflect the capacity of the stakeholders and implementation partners through modular project activities.

All of the above and more are addressed fully in the following report.

II. INTRODUCTION

1. Information Collection Methodology, Organization and Analysis

The assessment team collected information through: written documents, i.e. program reports, quarterly reports, one-page program descriptions, etc.; interviews and discussions with program managers, implementers, participants and partners including but not limited to international organizations, local NGOs, political parties, embassies, missions and donors; and observations by the assessment team of the circumstances and conditions in Afghanistan regarding political parties and the pending elections. The assessment team interviewed political parties and

independents in Kabul, Afghanistan and their counterparts / provincial offices in Herat and Mazar for comparison and contrast of their capacity, interaction with implementing partners and other related program offices. The team also re-interviewed the implementing partners as follow-up to the information they learn from the prior meetings and to confirm and/or clarify program facts, outcomes, impacts and challenges. The team appraised the current situation in terms of:

a. Prior programs' effectiveness to achieve objectives, what hindered and/or assisted the effective implementation of the project, important benefits and/or impacts, negative impacts or unintended consequences, the level of satisfaction of partners (political parties, workers and stakeholders) and the projects' sustainability, and

b. Future programs' role for political party assistance in proper local context providing concrete evidence to justify the programs and defining their broad or targeted scope.

2. Description of NDI and IRI Projects

Since March 2003, CEPPS Afghanistan program focused on providing support programs through August 2004 for non-governmental stakeholders prior to the 2004/2005 elections. Initially, NDI and IRI designed and implemented programs to improve the capacity of political parties, independent candidates, civic educators and civil society organizations to be viable, inclusive participants for the 2004/5 elections. Furthermore the program will impart basic understanding of and capacity to articulate policy concerns of the government and citizenry. The Institutes were to accomplish this by developing the organizations' operating structure, understanding functions, opinion research, campaign planning and coalition building.

IRI's specific program areas included, Mobile Civic Education Teams, regional Shuras Project, Polling, independent candidate trainings and building coalitions, supporting the democratic electoral process, public participation and candidacy for elections and international election monitoring. NDI's programs included, conferences, consultations and trainings with political groupings (including Women and Youth), briefing independent candidates, campaign trainings for candidates (party members and independents,) media trainings, focus groups, party registration assistance, elections conferences and trainings, resource/information centers, domestic elections monitoring, supports to elections offices and pre and post elections analysis.

USAID amended the agreement until June 30, 2008. The extension shifted the scope of the programs away from political party support for elections to strengthening institutions, in particular the National Assembly, Provincial Councils and grassroots traditional leadership with the specific objectives of:

a. Establishing a broadly-accepted national government, through elections that are considered legitimate by strategic segments of the population;

b. Reconstructing and/or creating key state institutions at the national and sub-national level, and building the capacity of these institutions to meet the needs of Afghan citizens;

c. Developing rudimentary democratic norms and practices, including participatory and representative governance.

IRI implemented their program, to establish successful independent caucuses in the Wolesi Jirga able to respond to citizens' concerns and advocacy groups, through various projects. IRI's "Political Party Development through Grassroots Advocacy" program aimed to serve the numerous independent MPs serving in the nascent National Assembly. Because the SNTV electoral system diminishes political parties in Afghanistan, there is less organizational support to build communications and understanding for MPs and their constituents, and IRI's program aimed to shrink that gap by, developing coalitions in the National Assembly and political advocacy groups, constituent outreach training, organize coalitions at Provincial Councils, party and independent candidate trainings for District Elections, tracking polls, and guiding emerging political parties.

IRI's further honed it program priorities into three prime areas: grassroots advocacy, issue-based parliamentary caucuses and MPs' capacity to focus on issues, cooperating with colleagues with more responsive legislative activity and as an effective check on the executive. IRI's saw that with proper organization and coordination, these projects would culminate to foster the development of nascent political parties.

Building on the success of these programs IRI also focused their program on the national Youth Network that already was associated with the parliamentary caucus. IRI included project crossover efforts by pairing these groups with IRI sponsored parliamentary caucuses, using the Youth Caucus as a model to encourage other caucuses and groups, by including elected officers, holding regular meetings and developing their legislative agenda as the Youth did.

IRI's program for Parliamentary Capacity Building addressed the lack of skills and knowledge that MPs themselves recognize, not just amongst themselves but also in their staff and political groups. The IRI program sought to build individual MP's capacity for constituency understanding and outreach and ability to legislate through training workshops and "town hall" style constituent outreach events.

NDI implemented their program in various, overlapping areas, as they operated from a network of eight regional offices located and staffed throughout Afghanistan to support the Provincial Councils. NDI's developed the National Association of Provincial Councils to act as a forum for exchanging ideas, initiatives, best work-practices and to voice their ideas/concerns on national and regional issues. The forum introduced uniformity to the councils' operations and was used to house specialized commissions on specific issues – agriculture, small business, gender concerns.

NDI in coordination with ARD and UNDP aimed to develop training programs to address the immediate and long-term needs for new councilors. These comprehensive training programs focused on the Councils' responsibilities as part of local government and as their constituents' representatives. As NDI's program developed and evolved, NDI advised the Councils on their specific governmental concerns and local issues.

Additionally to the projects, NDI's regional network of offices served as resources centers that were available to all provincial councils and registered political parties. FEFA also uses the centers for training its personnel.

3. Purpose and Methodology of the Evaluation

The assessment, conducted under a contract to Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc. from USAID, evaluated the Consortium for Electoral and Political Processes (CEPPS) programs in Afghanistan being conducted by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI) from 2003 until 2008. The assessment focuses on the programs dedicated to the assistance provided for Afghanistan's political parties, specifically prior to the elections in 2004 and 2005. Further attention is given to how follow-on and associated programs results or aims also advanced development of the political parties. The evaluation determines how the CEPPS program was effective in meeting the donor's expectations, how it evolved to stay current with the changing environment in Afghanistan and how it maintained programs that addressed the needs and expectations of the partners.

In addition to the assessment for the CEPPS programs, the team also gauged the development, capacity and needs of political parties in Afghanistan. Specifically in light of the CEPPS institutes' previous programs' effects and how they define the availability to engage the partners for their needs to improve their functions and democratic participation for the coming elections. More generally the assessment will address the need and scope for the programs' longer-term facility to sustain and enhance democratic development through political participation for the many and varied populations in Afghanistan.

The outcome of this evaluation is to learn from the experiences of previous efforts by USAID and others to gain insights as to what approaches in political party programming could best achieve USAID/Afghanistan's stated objectives and report on the same to better define future development programming.

4. Project Implementation Progress, Results and Impacts

Progress: The overall project implementation progressed in manner that followed the political events in Afghanistan. This tracked parallel to the expelling of the Taliban and introduction of basic democracy in Afghanistan. Starting with the democratic basics: creating a basis for democratic society, a Constitution and advancing along with the steps that Afghanistan's government, officials, political entities and civil society took.

Following the completion and adoption of Afghanistan's constitution the electoral cycles attracted supporting programs, including the CEPPS Institutes and IFES to assist all the involved offices and organizations. When the elections were over the focus moved to Parliamentary and governmental development.

Results and Impacts: The CEPPS programs' results and impacts varied with the circumstances, political developments, dedication of partners and changing priorities. Many programs were more productive based on the involvement and participation of the local partners. Many of the gains that were made due to direct interaction with the political parties were not sustained.

Further details on all three aspects of the programs are provided in the subsequent sections.

III. ASSESSMENT OF PRIOR/EXISTING PROGRAMS: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. The Context for Political Party Programming in Afghanistan

An assessment of USAID political party programming assistance in Afghanistan must be grounded in the reality of the development and political environment in which political parties have been established and in which they now operate. This environment has been described as a "complex theater of operations". Many factors are in play. Certainly the broad development challenges in Afghanistan – security issues, ethnic and sectarian divisions, the high rates of poverty and illiteracy, geographic isolation, weak government – also challenge the development of broad-based, progressive, democratic political parties. Several specific factors have more directly affected the capacity of political parties to become effective institutions of representative governance:

The Law and President Karzai's Position on Political Parties

President Karzai's decision to employ the "Single Non-Transferable Vote" system (SNTV – each voter casts one vote for one candidate in a multi-candidate race for multiple offices) for the 2005 Parliamentary and subsequent Provincial Council elections together with a ban on the identification of political parties on the ballot has resulted in the election of many independents and fewer representatives of the pre-existing jihadist or leftist parties. As well, the current requirement that parties show evidence of only 700 members to register as a party (and thus be allowed to organize and operate under law) has led to the establishment of over 100 parties, each vying for a place on the map of Afghanistan's political landscape. The overall result is that the voice of political parties in Afghanistan is fractured.

Many of the party officials and political observers with whom we met commented that most of the smaller parties have neither a platform nor a social/economic agenda of any meaning or substance, and few if any play a role in governance at either the central or regional level.

Ostensibly, the President's position at the time of choosing SNTV was that Afghanistan needed time and space to form a viable and strong central administration to deal with the myriad security, development and political problems facing his government, and that the development of strong political parties could/should wait till progress was made on other fronts. Whatever the reason, change is on the horizon for the next round of elections. The proposed new electoral and registration laws signal an understanding that the time has come to consolidate the number of political parties and allow for stronger party representation in elections. Party identification will be permitted on the ballots for the first time. All parties will soon be required to re-register and will have to document 10,000 members. It is expected that these changes will result in coalitions and consolidations leaving no more than 15-20 registered parties. Fewer still will survive the elections and/or gain representation in Parliament. The further requirement that candidates for Parliament gain the signature of 1,500 residents will also reduce the number of unaligned, independent candidates and representatives.

Taken together, the new laws and the next elections could provide a natural screen for targeting future political party assistance. Certainly the time is more appropriate. One official noted that in the last elections, his party was at the stage of development of a child, but it has grown and is preparing itself for the next elections, but needs assistance to become the responsible organization for a reform agenda that it would like to be.

Resources

Political parties need resources to carry out their activities. By law, once registered, political parties are not permitted to accept funding from external sources, the traditional source for most jihadist and leftist political organizations. However, the law is essentially inoperable. There is no capacity in the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) to examine claims of compliance. Most parties with whom we talked suspect their rivals continue to be financed from abroad, or from "the criminal element"(narcotics trafficking); none admitted that their own funding might come from these sources.

All of the newer start-up parties and more western-oriented issue-focused parties with whom we met are having serious financial issues. The membership base is poor and fundraising techniques inadequate. Several have started to close regional offices or reduce the scope of their activities.

These parties are aware that USAID assistance comes only in the form of training, and in-kind services and equipment. They are not seeking direct financial support from USAID. But there is an urgency to their request that USAID help provide the training needed to build membership and fundraise, argue on their behalf for financial support from the government, and assist the MoJ in cracking down on the flow of international funding as stipulated in the law or lobby for a well staffed Independent Commission to do so. They feel that the goal of having political competition in Afghanistan cannot succeed without such assistance.

Origins/Nature of Political Parties in Afghanistan

Political parties in Afghanistan have grown out of a troubled past. Many were established in the "Decade of Democracy", from 1965-75, when King Zahir Shah opened the door to the formal establishment of parties by providing for their legal recognition. During the Russian occupation and Taliban rule, most of these organizations went underground or relocated out of the country and become primarily military organizations, with an obviously different focus, structure and funding base. Many now claim to be reforming back as political parties with the intent to move forward on a non-violent political struggle for the control and development of the country.

The complex histories of political parties in Afghanistan can explain some of the current difficulties in developing political parties as effective institutions of democratic governance. The notion that political parties are loathed in Afghanistan because all early parties, jihadist or leftist, and led by either warlord, communist or fanatic, caused much bloodshed and destruction is true, but not sufficiently nuanced. These same parties continue to hold the longstanding allegiance of the people they have served as defenders, they are powerful and recognized, are well placed in the various Ministries and Parliament, and hold the power to approve or veto the major decisions of government.

At issue is whether the decision to restrict assistance to these parties, or bypass them altogether by organizing other political groupings (coalitions and caucuses) was effective in the pursuit of the goal of developing strong political institutions in Afghanistan. Whether or not the decision was the correct one in the past, there is the issue of whether some or all of these parties are in legitimate transition to a more democratic structure and function and thus deserving of the technical assistance needed to help achieve that goal. Does the past have to be the future of Afghanistan ?

Several points are critical:

- Because these parties already have established networks, resources, a recognized image, and in many cases a program of services, they will have for some time a major advantage in winning elections and securing power. Equally important, the established parties do represent constituencies along different cuts (ethnic, language, regions, secular/religious, liberal/conservative, etc.) that while divisive when they are the sole focus of the party, nonetheless are still compelling for most Afghans. Understanding that the goal of political party development assistance is to promote and strengthen the broader political democratic process in Afghanistan, to what extent should USAID provide long-term support for the kind of specific organizational, behavioral, and governance changes that could help these parties be more democratic ?
- A consequent issue then is how to assess the potential for these parties transitioning to more democratic structures and activities. Many seem to be trying to develop a broader membership base, understanding that the ethnic divisions of the country must somehow be bridged. Assessments that measure the success of this effort as evidenced in the registration process (number and percent of membership from provinces beyond their home base) could be a first step in strategic assessment process. This is discussed in more detail later in this report.
- One official noted that parties are comprised of two kinds of members: 1) the educated, who are attractive by party platforms and positions on key issues, and, 2) the illiterate, the majority of membership for many parties, they become members because of a sense of shared ethnicity or religious values.

  Another party leader spoke of the Eastern-Western cultural divide as it related to the nature of political parties. In his view, USAID wrongly focuses its assistance on western-oriented issue-driven start-up parties, limiting aid to established parties because of a misunderstanding of the value and importance of eastern culture that relies primarily on relationships. He noted that his party is moderate on most issues and is supportive of an Islamic interpretation of democracy, both in his view are valid and complementary collectivist approaches to public decision making. And, guided by Muslim hands, his party is based on peace not violence, and is dedicated to a political not military struggle, and it is focused on the future not the past. He believes that because his party is based on Islamic principles, his supporters are in a comfort zone in which the can make real change happen.

  Others have commented that the interface of these parties and their members is flawed, built as it is on patronage and family history, that only true open democratic structures will provide the responsive system of governance needed to stabilize the country. At

issue is how to best open the system to the voices of both the urban educated elites and the traditional, isolated, tribal and/or poverty stricken populace.

An NGO official offered a thoughtful way forward. In his view, there is a need to carefully familiarize parties, tribal leaders and supporters with the shared values of western-eastern cultures. In his work, he tries to explain the word democracy, which to many Afghans connotes unlimited freedom and thus is seen as a threat to their religion and sense of community. He talks of democracy as the rule of law, rooted in a process little different from the traditional concept of the Shura. Civic education is the key, he says, to bridging the gap of understanding on both sides of the divide.

- Another concern raised by some is that Afghan political institutions have not developed in parallel with other key institutions of government, civil society and the private sector, leaving a vacuum of political will. The lack of sufficient assistance to the long established parties to improve their standing, and the fact that startup parties or the "proto-parties" (ie., National Youth Movement) with which IRI works, are immature, have little capacity to build sustainable political capacities, and/or have no long term policy, platform, or strategy, means that the goal of viable, competing democratic parties at national, regional, and local levels is many years off, by all measures, a significant problem affecting the security, stability and development of Afghanistan.

Progress to Date

Yet, for all the aforementioned problems, challenges, delays and uncertainties, there is evidence of some political success **relative to context**. Parliament, which is very much a political institution, has adopted reasonable budgets, approved the appointments of key Cabinet and Ministry officials, has written/introduced/passed critical legislation, is forward thinking on business considerations (i.e., Parliament influence the Chinese copper deal for the better), and has been very supportive of women's issues. The MPs themselves were elected in relatively fair elections. No one would mistake the Afghan Parliament for the Swedish Riksdag (National Assembly) as a transparent, progressive democratic institution, but relative to the severe situation in Afghanistan, there has been notable progress to date.

A number of parties (Hezb-e Jamhori Khwahaan-e Afghanistan is a good example) are recognized/accepted for exerting leadership, advancing an issues agenda, and delivering important services to their members. According to a UN observer, the rate of change is good.

Another area of hope is the attention given young people. Every party with whom we spoke noted their efforts to identify and train young leaders. One party official said simply that the fate of Afghanistan lies in the capacity of the next generation to move past historical ethnic/religious rivalries and enmities. The National Youth Movement of Afghanistan, based in Herat (not associated with the IRI Youth Movement), is constituted through shuras (councils) and was officially established/registered as a social organization in 2003. They sponsor training in democracy and run lectures on the root causes and negative impacts of religious/language/ethnic demagoguery. They run programs to provide social services, i.e., collections for poor children's school supplies. They have a diverse ethnic membership, and are exclusively funded by membership fees and business contributions.

For now, they think they can help provide services better by remaining outside organized politics, and thus will neither accept the resources offered by established parties for their endorsement, nor field their own candidates for office. They do have a political agenda focused on unity, national interests and the "fruits of democracy, i.e., development, corruption-free government, and peace". In such budding movements lie the potential for a more secure and prosperous future for the Afghan people.

These achievements must be recognized and considered in the design of new programs to assist the political parties of Afghanistan.

USAID Objectives and Expectations

Into this complex theater, USAID has provided a program of technical assistance with the goals of:

- Establishing a broadly-accepted national government, through elections that are considered legitimate by strategic segments of the population;
- Reconstructing and/or creating key state institutions at the national and sub-national level, and building the capacity of these institutions to meet the needs of Afghan citizens;
- Developing rudimentary democratic norms and practices, including participatory and representative governance.

In the current rebid of CEPPS, the primary program objective is to "work with stakeholders to increase effective and informed participation in the lead up to the planned 2009/2010 elections as well as to provide support to ensure transparency and broad public participation in the electoral process itself." More specifically, the RFP comments that the program "aims to strengthen the ability of political stakeholders to articulate, organize and compete in the upcoming elections", and then lists a variety of illustrative assistance, allowing that "in the post-election period, activities *may* focus on building the capacity of newly elected officials to govern." The activities noted relate almost exclusively to the development of campaign images, issues and tactics, including: the development and dissemination of a campaign training manual; assistance in candidate nomination and election strategizing; media, constituent outreach, and communications planning; the strengthening of party platforms; and, membership and recruitment drives.

The immediate focus on the next round of elections is understandable. Political party activities in this country revolve around elections. And, certainly, the incentive of winning elections can spur growth and change. However, this assessment team was challenged by many party officials – jihadist, leftist and liberal – over USAID's past focus on election assistance to the exclusion, or at least perceived limitation, on the kind of needed sustained technical assistance to build the capacities of political parties to truly function as the representative voice of the people. The concern is that the new program may represent another lost opportunity to nurture the long term growth and development of political parties, and that further, perhaps not enough is expected or demanded of political parties in Afghanistan.

What has been expressed by most parties in our discussions is that technical assistance should be matched to the needs and the desires of the parties, within a shared context of understanding that the mutual goal in moving forward is responsive democratic governance, not just winning elections. Moreover, they clearly would like to see a broad, sustained and deep program of assistance that will build their understanding of the role of political parties and their members in the peaceful development of their country.

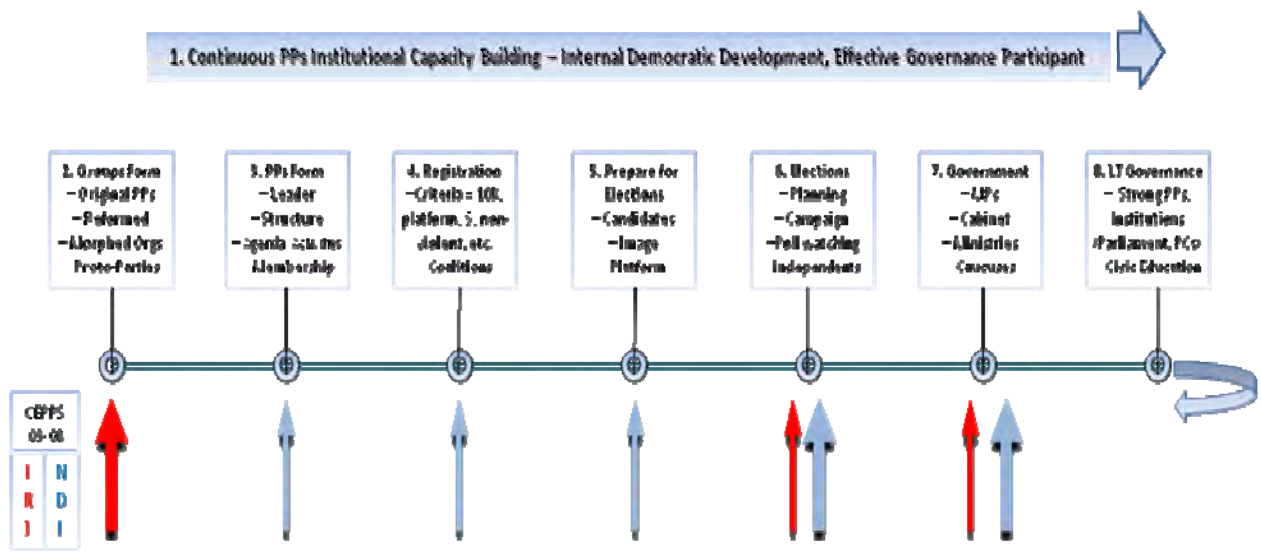
2. What Interventions Were Most Effective in Achieving Program Objectives

An assessment of the "achievements' of CEPPS' political party programming to date must address three levels of concerns. First, were the right interventions chosen. Second, was the level of effort sufficient to effectuate change. Third, what results were achieved against the very specific targeted objectives of the TORs.

"Right" Interventions?

The Chart below matches key points along the continuum of political party development with the programming assistance provided by CEPPS implementing partners, NDI and IRI, in both the prior (2003-2006) and current (2006-2008) phases of activities.

Chart A: Technical Assistance and the Continuum of Political Party Development



Box #1 represents a continuous program of political party development such that over time Afghan political parties, as a whole, will develop the capacity to be democratically governed, and to effectively participate in governance. Boxes # 2-8 represent specific interim points of development at which technical assistance is required. The path of development is not as linear as this chart. In fact, there is a cycle of development as parties loop back to expand their initial set of political and service activities, re-register, prepare and campaign for new elections, etc. The arrows indicate where NDI and IRI have focused their efforts; line thickness reflects the relative level of their involvement.

In assessing whether the CEPPS political party technical assistance program has included the "right" interventions, one has to note upfront comments from every party official with whom we have met that there has been no sustained effort to provide the kind of mentoring and continuous capacity building (Box #1) that they have needed and wanted. All expressed frustrations with the start and stop approach of the assistance. All wondered why initial contacts seldom resulted in the assistance requested. All wondered what happened after 2006 to the basic workshops and training. None feel that either NDI or IRI made realistic efforts to build lasting relationships. None claimed that the assistance that was provided was instrumental in supporting their efforts to develop democratic structures or build their capacities to better participate in the governance of the country.

Many party officials did note that various individual trainings (i.e., workshops for election poll watchers) or conferences were useful, especially the nuts and bolts work on campaign mechanics, but broader efforts to help them understand the role of political parties in a democracy was at best superficial. In either case, the often-repeated lament was that expectations were set high, but the actual on-the-ground achievements were limited. Such comments were not directed solely at CEPPS partners. UNAMA, the EU, UNDP and others also promised more than they could deliver.

Clearly, the decisions to focus the IRI program on coalitions, groupings and independent candidates, and redirect the NDI program mid-term to capacity building for elected Provincial Council members, meant that programming assistance for established political parties would be severely limited. The parties noticed, and they still question, these decisions. Non-party observers have called the shift a lost opportunity.

The characterization of a lost opportunity is meant to describe the view that critical time was lost in helping the pre-existing parties transition into stronger, more democratic, and more viable political institutions. The older established parties now feel ostracized even as some of them try to move towards USAID's goals of becoming broader-based, democratically governed, and issue-focused. That said, the parties with whom we have talked would, on the whole, welcome a new engagement but have cautioned that they would want the assistance to be developed in consultation with them, and that want the assistance to be real and sustainable.

Whether the tactical retreat from supporting the organizational development of formal political parties was decided for pragmatic reasons (there were too many parties to support, there was no reasonable screen in place to choose among them, the parties themselves were not sufficiently advanced to effectively make use of assistance) or more politically motivated reasons (some have suggested that political support for political party development was lacking at the highest levels of government), the assessment of which interventions were effective in achieving program objectives will be made against these more modest program objectives. Going forward, however, the issue will be raised as to whether the time has come to return to a broader program of support for established political parties.

Below, specific interventions along the key points of the development continuum (organizational development, elections, governance) are assessed.

Organizational Development – Parties, Independent Movements, Coalitions

IRI focused on alternatives to established political parties, (i.e., the Independent Solidarity Movement), and its grassroots Advocacy Development Program (i.e., the National Youth Movement. NDI conducted workshops on basic organizational development, and opened a number of regional resource centers. NDI provided a limited number of "expert" trainers to advise on specific development issues. Both IRI and NDI hosted conferences, seminars and roundtable discussions on various topics related to the role of political parties within a democratic society.

1. General Organizational Development Assessment/Comments

- The level of support for basic political party organizational development, apart from interventions focused on elections, is seen as useful but minimal. Officials particularly noted that conferences, resource centers, roundtables and training "experts" have provided exposure to the concept of the role of political parties within a democracy, but left without a sustained mentoring program, the level of understanding of the goals, benefits and practices of democratic political parties has not been much advanced. Party officials have complained that such assistance was not developed in consultation with them, nor was it determined through any process that considered a multi-dimensional, sustained level of involvement with long term development goals and continuous relationships with individual parties. Rather, it all seemed driven by the short-term exigencies of preparing for elections. And, in fact, such efforts were largely discontinued after the 2005 elections.
- Both party officials and outside observers have commented that the established political parties do respond to a need, do group around political interests, do have relationships with citizens, and that the decision to circumvent their development because of the perceived public aversion to their histories has meant that the progress in democratizing these parties has faltered. Given that it is expected that these parties will dominate the next elections and resulting government, the focus on assistance to independent candidates and alternative groupings is questioned.
- The assistance in developing the Independent Solidarity Movement was on paper a success in terms of electoral achievement, 102 so called "independents" were elected, though in reality, only 12 of the 102 are considered truly independent. IRI assistance provided members with an identity as candidates not from the traditional parties, and that simple message resonated. However, at best, the ISM is a loose coalition without a command structure, coherent ideology or policy platform. It mostly concerns itself about process and power for Parliamentarians. It is not particularly issue focused. In terms of achieving the program objective of building viable political entities, it is hard to see that the movement is sustainable past the next election, but it may have challenge established parties to understand, and attempt to address, their image problem as divisive, ethnically based, personality driven old line parties.
- IRI's work to develop grassroots organizations is commendable on many fronts. The mobilization to collect, represent and express constituent interests is fundamental to the creation of viable political entities. In helping the Afghanistan Youth National Social Organization (AYNSO) to develop bylaws, an internal structure, and a democratic

approach, IRI intervention has, in theory, helped to create a national model for an inclusive, democratic, sustainable organization. However, in the reality, the party seems to be personality driven and when interviewed the President could not articulate the purpose or activities of his organization.

- Linking this nascent group to Parliament via the Youth Caucus, is also notable as the alliance is a mutually reinforcing relationship that provides the Movement with access to power, and the Caucus access to grassroots networks and the pulse of the membership. Moreover, the Youth Movement assistance to identify and train its leadership has helped to focus attention on a critical issue, the development of the next generation of political leaders in Afghanistan. The Mayor of Herat expressed it best, "youth leadership is key to the long term development of Afghanistan as only they can get past the prejudice and bias and antagonisms of the past and current divisions of the country".
- That said, the wider issue of whether to concentrate technical assistance on social or interest groups that represent a relatively narrow focus must be weighed against other considerations. IRI has the intent in the next phase of CEPPS programming to assist in the development of business and healthcare caucuses, a women's association, a national unity/security coalition, and perhaps rural development advocacy group. The concern is that an infrastructure of lobbying organizations is being developed at the expense of legitimate political parties. Political parties are by their very nature not single issue focused. If properly developed, political parties can better articulate and channel collective citizen preferences in ways that balance concerns and priorities, and enable greater responsiveness through their direct and relatively coherent representation in government.
- Given the cultural sensitivity in Afghanistan to women issues and their visibility in public, most of the 26 women elected to Parliament have quite deliberately chosen not create a party nor form or join a formal women issues' caucus. Nonetheless, the Women in Afghan Politics Conference which NDI sponsored in cooperation with the Frederick Ebert Stiftung, has helped to support women representatives on issues and activities of special concern.
- An issue raised by several non-party officials is the perceived lack of support on policy issues that affect party development, such as changing the SNTV system, pushing for an independent agency to verify party registration information, particularly the source of finances, or lobbying the Government to provide direct financial support for regional offices.

2. Strategic Planning/Development Training Assessment/Comments

- To register as a political party, evidence must be demonstrated of: internal structure including "elected" (or selected) leaders, bylaws, a platform that forswears arms and does not oppose the principles of Islam, a minimum membership of seven hundred, a budget excluding external (to Afghanistan) funding, and a non-sectarian public persona. Established parties, many have been in existence thirty or more years, have managed to meet the minimum requirements, and in some cases, are as well very well organized and funded. The larger of the more recent start-up parties, generally liberal and more secular in nature, struggle with funding even though they were able to register. Thus, most

legitimate parties are organized to some degree (many of the 101 currently registered parties are "ghosts" with few members, no structure and often a foreign address for the leader).

Yet, all parties with whom we interviewed have suggested that there is a need to better understand democracy, and more specifically the role of parties in a democracy. They want to know from real life experience, what activities can achieve results beyond winning elections. In addition, planning to identify a vision and a long-term development strategy is considered a vital necessity if the parties are to become meaningful proponents of democracy.

NDI's focus group work was a useful first step, and various IRI and NDI conferences, workshops and training touched on these subjects, but on the whole, did not provide the custom technical assistance in planning and party development desired or expected. There was a general complaint that much of the assistance was provided by inexperienced local staff who came prepared with "slogans and biases, but without real wisdom or understanding". When experienced international experts did venture to come to Afghanistan, they only came for a few days and did not make efforts to establish long term mentoring relationships.

- There were a number of comments made that as parties try to respond to their many problems, there was no one to turn to for help. One-on workshops or training sessions dominated the technical assistance provided, but a hotline advisory service would have been more effective for party development.
- IRI's work to conceive, plan for and organized the structure and activities of the National Youth Movement has been largely successful, though IRI believes that there should have been an earlier focus on platform and policy development to draw in issue oriented membership.
- A major hindrance to democratic development of parties is the lack of established party interest in either the election of their leaders, or the canvassing of membership on party direction. Generally, party officials are first selected by senior leadership, then approved in the annual party Congress as a façade of electoral democracy.
- Parties have expressed a desire to have much more management training to professionalize their staffs in all aspects of the operations of the party.
- One area of organizational development for which parties old and new have expressed an interest is how to better provide constituency services. One former NDI official gave an example he often used to explain the concept. In western Canada, one state representative spent much of time travelling across his province in his Cadillac "Office-mobile", posting the places and hours of his visits such to grab a cup of coffee and listen to the people he represented. Constituency service is not about polling, or focus group discussions, but about getting out and meeting the people and understanding their needs, and having personal contact. The concept and the mechanics of constituency services needs considerable technical assistance for the parties in Afghanistan.
- Various officials and observers have commented on the need for increased assistance for the Department for the Registration of Political Parties and Social Organizations, perhaps even replacing the existing office in the Ministry of Justice with an outside independent

commission. The current department has no capacity to substantively verify political party registration requirements.

3. Membership Recruitment/Management Assessment/Comments

- Development of the membership base is fundamental to having viable political parties. Though the subject was addressed briefly in some of the workshops and training sessions, the parties we interviewed thought the efforts were too focused on the mechanics of simple membership sign-up, more expertise is sought on a strategic approach to broader membership recruitment/development/management issues.
- IRI membership work for the National Youth Movement, as with their other work with NYM appears successful and sustainable.

4. Resource Development, Financial Management Assessment/Comments

- As noted earlier in this report, party finances are the single most important development challenge facing Afghan political parties, particularly those newer parties that are less entrenched and less beholden to outside interests. While fundraising may have been mentioned in passing in various workshops/trainings, no substantive assistance has been provided to either established or merging parties, the exception being IRI's work with the NYM.
- Financial management of party finances is another critical component of party development, which has received little if any attention. Substantive programs to include certification programs of study could prove essential to party development.

5. Local/Regional Party Organization Assessment/Comments

- IRI's grassroots approach to organizational development is by its very nature supportive of the critical linkages between the central offices in Kabul and the branch offices in the provinces. Initial observations suggest that communication between HQ and the regional offices is strong.
- No technical assistance to build internal party linkages seems to have been provided to any political party new or old.

6. Message Development, Platform/Policy Agenda Formation Assessment/Comments

- This is a critical and underdeveloped aspect of the technical assistance program. Many of the established parties have a view of message development that simple slogans and sound bites are all that matter. Assurance that the party is based on Islamic principles, that the party believes in good relations with neighbors, is against terrorism, corruption and the narcotics trade, seems a sufficient message to many. Established parties do not yet see how to diminish their past (current) reputations for divisiveness, newer parties are still learning to distinguish themselves or communicate clearly their raison d'être. Some assistance was provided for the election campaigns of 2005. Considerably more assistance is required, particularly research for platform development, and an approach to encourage the established parties to understand the need to image their party on

performance, achievement and constituent services, not on the party's history or stature of its leader.

- IRI's work with the Independent Solidarity Movement certainly conceived and executed a proto-type, successful "anti-establishment" message. Whether this advanced the cause of creating viable political entities is questionable as the Movement stands for little other than its own members' elections.

7. Media Relations/Training Assessment/Comments

- IRI's media training program provided ISM members with ten minutes on TV, and included preparation training. The learn-by-doing approach was well received, and seemingly effective as ISM captured 102 seats in Parliament (of 249 seats).
- Training parties in linking grassroots organizations via media outreach strategies and programs are important and effective interventions. Some of this was done prior to the 2005 elections, more such assistance is required and requested by the parties.
- Assistance is needed to improve the capacity of the media itself to better participate in the budding democracy of Afghanistan. Media coverage mostly focuses on stories of government incompetence and lacks capacity to cover the full complexity of the Afghan story.

Enhancing Electoral Competitiveness

IRI/NDI have together implemented a considerable program of technical assistance to political parties in preparation of the 2004/2005 elections. Helping the parties (and independent candidates and movements) mount successful election campaigns has been used to good advantage as elections serve as a point of access to parties who are extremely concerned about election outcomes.

IRI provided election campaign assistance both to the Independent Solidarity Movement and a number of individual independent candidates. As well, IRI organized Mobile Civic Education Teams and Polling and Election Monitoring assistance. NDI developed a variety of campaign trainings for party affiliated candidates, opened Political Party Resource Centers (PPRCs), and provided pre and post election assessments and analyses.

1. General Technical Assistance for Elections Assessment/Comments

- Providing technical assistance to parties to improve their election campaigns is a relatively straightforward exercise. The techniques are well understood and practiced throughout the world, and the measure of success or failure is clear. Which is to say that the significant efforts of IRI and NDI on the 2004/2005 elections made sense and paid dividends. Most parties we met with had at least some contact with one or more election interventions, and most were complementary of the level and nature of the assistance.
- Election interventions included a wide variety of technical assistance, some of which has clearly helped to achieve long-term party development even if the primary objective was winning elections in the short term. PPs were searching for a winning formula and

wanted to understand what they were selling, what image they had, what achievements they could promote, whether their programs matched the concerns of people, whether their outreach strategy was working. Parties were motivated to attend trainings and seek knowledge.

- Some observers have commented that there was insufficient attention paid to policy concerns related to SNTV, and that more effort should have been made to exert influence to change the law. NDI did host a conference on SNTV, but the few people we talked with who attended did not believe the conference provided practical solutions to the problem. Many parties are interested in policies to reduce the number of parties and at the same time ensure greater efforts by parties to become broader base. One suggestion is to require that parties gained a minimum vote, suggestions varied from 2-5%, in each province of the country in parliamentary elections or be dissolved. Others would like to see the introduction of a mixed SNTV-proportional electoral system. On both counts, policy advice and political persuasion is required.
- For the next election, independent candidates will need 1500 signatures to get on the ballot (up from the prior requirement of 300). This requirement is expected to reduce the number of independents and/or provide an incentive for many of them to seek party support and affiliation. Technical assistance to do so may be required.
- The technical assistance for the last election cycle was squeezed into a six-month period, which was considered too tight for level of efforts needed. Those who worked through that period suggest an early start to the next round of election assistance.
- To be sustainable, election technical assistance is needed before/during/after elections. In the last cycle, little attention was given to policy and administrative issues once the elections were completed.

2. Candidate Identification, Recruitment and Training Assessment/Comments

- Parties were very interested and pleased with campaign assistance. While there was no baseline assessment against which to measure success, comments from parties and others suggest the training and assistance provided was useful and timely.
- As noted earlier in this report, IRI work with the Independent Solidarity Movement achieved significant results. Candidates were groomed in anti-establishment messaging, given media time to express their message, and won elections handily, thus achieving one of the primary objectives “to provide independent candidates with the skills needed to mount successful electoral campaigns”.

3. Campaign Strategy, Planning, and Management Assessment/Comments

- One official commented that in the last election expectations ran high, but strategy and capacity to perform were low. His comment reflected those of others in the more established parties that the modest program of campaign planning and management assistance, though useful, was neither fully inclusive nor sustained.

4. Voter Mobilization, Election Monitoring Assessment/Comments

- One of the major concerns of party officials with whom we spoke was election fraud. Many suggestions were made to improve the mechanics of elections. There is a sense that the IEC should be replaced with a UN election monitoring capacity working in tandem with trained party and independent poll watchers. Most parties welcomed the poll watching training provided their members.

5. Civic Education, Communications and Outreach Assessment/Comments

- Civic education and to a lesser extent corollary public outreach efforts are critical needs in Afghanistan. All parties spoke of their desire to better reach out to rural and/or more isolated and illiterate citizens, and tribal leaders, to explain the benefits and responsibilities of elections and democracy in general.
- Significant assistance was provided for campaign media training to a number of parties and to very many individual candidates. Such media training was noted as a major success of the IRI and NDI programs.

6. Women and Youth Programming Assessment/Comments

- As noted earlier, the IRI work to establish and support the National Youth Movement has been a success and a model of grassroots organization. While no candidates were field from the NYM, future candidates are being developed.
- A significant number of women candidates ran for and won office. Assistance in raising awareness and demonstrating the possibilities of women candidates were advanced through the various conferences and training workshops. However, the constraints of advancing the stature, rights, visibility and capacities of women officials remain a very difficult challenge.

Assisting Parties to Participate in Governance

Efforts to assistance elected and appointed officials to become more effective participants in governance were limited. IRI focused its efforts on developing political advocacy groups (i.e., the Youth Caucus), and provided some assistance to Parliamentarians in constituent outreach. NDI primary assistance since 2006 has been to provide basic training (English, computer training, constituency outreach assistance) to members of Provincial Councils.

1. General Assessment Assessment/Comments

- A sustainable democracy in Afghanistan requires a governance framework within which political parties need to play an important role. Political parties currently have no formal role in government, but that will change as party affiliation will be on the ballot in future elections, and party consolidations result in fewer but stronger parties with clearer mandates from the public to achieve results. A whole range of interventions will be needed, some may come from other USAID initiatives, i.e., its legislative strengthening or sub-national governance programs.

2. Legislative Capacity Building, Transitions to Government Assessment/Comments

- Elected legislators have three roles: 1) .effectuate legislation; 2). provide oversight on the Executive branch of government, and, 3). provide effective representation for the concerns of citizens. Several observers commented that elected officials capacities to play these roles are severely limited. IRI's efforts to develop working coalitions/caucuses in Parliament, and NDI program to provide basic orientation training to Provincial Council members is a necessary but insufficient approach.
- Party performance as measured in cabinet/ministerial appointments is high, as measured in advancing a reform agenda, low. Assistance is needed immediately to help elected members to better research and prepare critical legislation, and to better manage the introduction/adoption of such legislation.
- Parliament has not been free to exert its influence as an institution separate yet equal to the executive, in part because separation of powers is not well understood. This is an area where modest training can be of some immediate benefit, but has yet to be introduced.
- Political parties do not know how to conduct themselves in "loyal opposition". Statesmen are at a premium. Even the Speaker of the House walked out in protest over the state of affairs of the fractured assembly. In part, this is because political parties are marginalized and factionalism remains strong. No relief is in sight until the next elections when party consolidation is expected. IRI's attempt to develop working coalitions is not seen as a significant success. Leaders in Parliament have suggested that formal coalitions/caucuses are merely loose and temporary alignments, and do little to structure the public debate and private decision making in the assembly, and may be counterproductive. Said another official, coalitions are near impossible to sustain due to ethnic/geographic/religious divides.
- NDI's focus on its Provincial Council members training is considered a good idea if not always well carried out. Provincial Councils' role is advisory, they have almost no power, and members have little experience or understanding of their roles. NDI training program in English, computers, community planning and constituency services is well matched to the needs of participants, but concern was expressed that other interventions in governance were a higher priority.
- IRI 's work to develop the Youth Caucus has not yet resulted in either effective legislation or new programs on behalf of youth. Leaders in Parliament have commented that the caucus does not exert any influence and question its efficacy. They recommend in its stead, technical assistance to help parties focused on issues and advance an agenda as noted above. They believe a greater understanding of comparative ideas and programs from other countries is critical.

3. Involvement with Local Governance Assessment/Comments

- NDI training individual members Provincial Council members is seen as effective in a limited way, but missing the point as to how parties at the regional/local level can play a stronger role in local governance.

3. What Factors Hindered Project Implementation ?

Some of the factors that hindered or delayed the project implementation were overcome while others persist as a basic misunderstanding of the nature of development assistance and Afghan society. A global constant for political parties is that they require financial support to function; while many Afghan political parties appreciate and understand the intrinsic value of project trainings and exposure to development concepts, some narrow-mindedly focus the need for money. The history of direct financial support to organizations in Afghanistan is difficult to overcome, especially when it persists from neighboring countries. Some parties or groups that aim to become parties disdain development advice and opportunities to evolve merely because checks aren't being handed out. These expectations and misunderstanding need to be resolved to involve as many local partners as possible and to diminish negative reports from disgruntled partners.

Much of the above financial misunderstanding could have been solved overtime. The brevity in which Afghanistan's political parties were expected to embrace and understand intricate democratic concepts then apply them to their situation was too short and bound to lead to misinterpretation.

Forty years of war and social repression have stunted any democratic practices that Afghanistan tried to implement during the "Decade of Democracy." This led to more difficulties for the CEPPS projects simply because the parties do not have consistent bases on which to build democratic principles. The programs were hindered by a number of entrenched undemocratic practices such as many political parties relying on outside and/or criminal financial sources, the personality-cult of warlords or religious leaders, which are not open to inclusive democratic practices.

Recent events demonstrate that Afghanistan still has security concerns that makes travel difficult, or brings attention to internationals thus hindering the scheduling of meetings. At the start of the CEPPS projects this was more pervasive throughout Afghanistan, preventing efforts to commence when and where the implementing institutions planned. There are still areas of Afghanistan that are too unstable for project activities; requesting local partners to travel to these places is near impossible.

4. Were There Unexpected but Important Benefits or Impacts ?

The CEPPS programs resulted in no unexpected but important benefits or impacts; the level of difficulty to start and implement the programs alone require tremendous effort and the need for prolonged assistance leaves little opportunity for unexpected positive results. Greater interaction will increase such opportunities.

5. Were There Negative Impacts or Unintended Consequences ?

One unintended negative consequence is that the creation of issue-focused Caucuses in Parliament merely organizes members around topics that concern them; potentially developing into nothing more than a narrow-issue concern, or into an extra-Parliamentary group lacking connection to their legislative purpose. If the Caucuses operate without an agenda, legislation or

even a plan to advance legislation through the Parliament and Executive, they run the risk of becoming lobbying groups, not legislators.

Political parties in Afghanistan do suffer from their being used and abused during the Soviet period, by Warlords, foreign and religious interests that ingrained a negative public perception among most Afghans. Overcoming this will take persistent efforts, with positive activities and reinforcement by transparent and inclusive political parties. As the quantity of non-party affiliated members of Parliament indicates, independence has credence in Afghanistan. A negative unintended impact from the programs may be that promoting independent candidature as a better option than from political parties is reinforcing the anti-party sentiment.

6. What Was the Level of Satisfaction of the Stakeholders ?

The stakeholders for the CEPPS partners in Afghanistan met with initial positive satisfaction for their programs. They engaged the political parties in earnest. After the elections, when programs shifted to other program areas, the level of satisfaction decreased precipitously. The stakeholders, political parties, local organizations and international stakeholders have had modestly complementary remarks about the CEPPS partners. But the main stakeholders have expressed dissatisfaction with the continuity for the assistance. They have not expressed an expectation to have all of the CEPPS partners' attention all of the time, but they know that continuing the assistance in a modest, continual manner would have enforced their initial gains and democratic politics before the next elections. In this they do understand the value of the CEPPS partners assistance.

7. How Sustainable Are the Interventions ?

Afghanistan's political parties still have a lot of work to undertake for their outreach, membership, organization and financial base. The parties did not sustain the CEPPS institutes program efforts in these. Areas that have been sustained include the understanding for registration requirements (even as these will change with a new law) and the understanding of Afghanistan's SNTV voting system. Additionally, many of the political parties understand the value of the media, many with their own publications and even TV stations if not fully understanding how to access and present themselves using the independent media.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

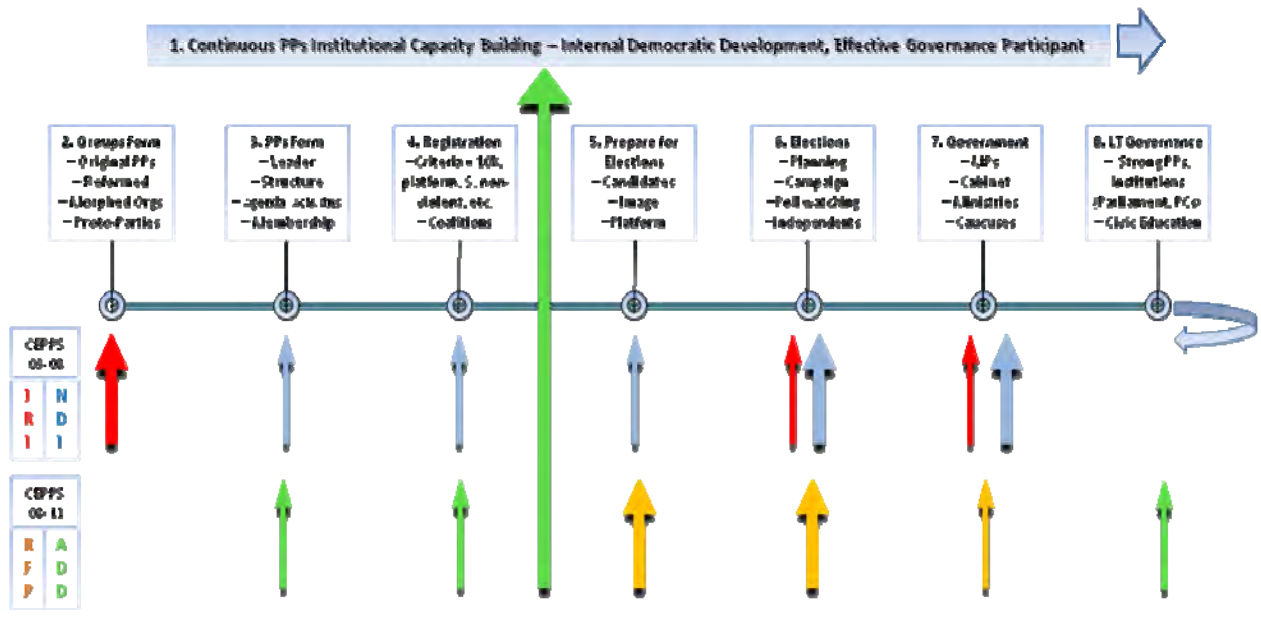
A. What Improvements/New Directions Can Be Made in Future Programming?

In reviewing the programs and activities of CEPPS political party programming assistance against both the broader USAID goals for democratic governance in Afghanistan, and the more targeted objectives in the terms of reference, this assessment team has concluded that both the formulation and the implementation of future programming could prove more effective if it incorporated the new directions and specific improvements recommended as follows:

New Directions

Chart B below highlights the areas of additional assistance recommended for Phase III (2008-2011) of CEPPS.

Chart B: Recommendations for Additional (ADD) Technical Assistance



The green arrows represent point of technical assistance missing but which should be added in future programming.

As noted in Section III, political party officials with whom we have met strongly believe that USAID assistance would be more effective if designed and delivered in a different way. Three concerns need to be addressed in their view: the continuity of assistance; ensuring an appropriate fit to the needs and desires of the parties; and, the level of expertise provided.

Continuous Organizational Development and Mentoring

Box 1 in the chart represents the level of sustained technical assistance desired by the parties. They understand the prior focus on elections and campaign assistance, they too were highly focused on winning elections and appreciated the support provided. However, they feel that now is the time to develop stronger, more direct and lasting relationships with IRI/NDI. The model discussed was one of mentoring and learn-by-doing, where individual advisors are essentially "on-call" to parties who have the interest and capacity to make use of the assistance. Parties want help solving day-to-day problems, but also very much want to better understand in a realistic way how democratic representative governance works. They want to build their capacities to function as the voice of the people. One-on workshops and group training can be very useful, but lessons learned can quickly fade if there is no follow-up and reinforcement.

Appropriate Fit

Equally important in having continuous technical assistance, parties want the respect to be involved in the design of the technical assistance for their parties. Assistance programs need to be strategic. Different parties are at different points along the development continuum, or have different interests. Providing a one-size fits all recipe across the board for all parties may be efficient, but it is neither appropriate nor appreciated. Technical assistance should be matched to the needs and the desires of the parties, with the understanding that the assistance is contingent on pursuing basic USAID objectives – inclusiveness, internal democratic governance, and external participatory practices.

To tailor assistance programs to individual parties, an assessment protocol is required. As well, a more robust screen must be introduced to determine if a party is indeed sincere about advancing a program of reform and improvement. Many start-up parties know the jargon expected of them. The screen must go deeper than words, assessments are needed of the actions of the party.

Expertise

Parties are hungry for knowledge. Knowledge can come in many forms. Highest on the parties' list of priorities is identifying scholarships for young party members to study abroad, even if it is only a short semester. No opportunity beats the experience of seeing up close how political parties work in the reality of developed countries. Observational tours, often thought of as junkets, can have real benefit if properly designed to match the visitor with key players in the political systems of Europe, Asia or the US.

In addition to having access to the stable of mentor-advisors, parties would like to see more expertise in the training and conferences they attend. They want trainers/advisors with real experience who can help connect them to the larger world of political parties outside of Afghanistan. Party representative expressed significant concern that the standard issued local trainers who may have sat through a TOT workshop were in no way capable of providing them with the real life expertise of professionals from outside Afghanistan. As well, more individualized hands-on assistance, and less group training, is required.

One party leader expressed a seldom heard but important notion that "professional capacity building is more important than money, that the knowledge gained can't be taken away, it stays in Afghanistan and is the most effective means of serving the long term benefit of the people". He also noted that outside advisors can remove resistance to, and raise awareness of, the benefits of change. At the same time, an important government official expressed the sentiment that technical assistance without an understanding of Afghanistan culture is useless. His view was that too much programming is ideologically driven and focused on outside interests, not the interests of his people.

Several other recommended **New Directions** for future CEPPS programming have been suggested by observers and party officials:

Policy Assistance

Two levels of policy development require assistance. The first is assistance to help parties and others argue more successfully for new and better processes of government related to political party development, including but not limited to changes in the electoral system, particularly the SNTV. It has been suggested that a stronger Political Party Bill of Rights be written to go further than merely allowing the existence of parties, to include central government financial support, an Indonesian-like law requiring parties to achieve a certain percent of the vote (2% in Indonesia) in EACH PROVINCE or be dissolved, and the provision of training centers for party staff and managers within the broader government public administration programs.

The second level of policy assistance requested is a much stronger program of platform development on the substantive development issues facing Afghanistan. While NDI/IRI's resource centers provide some assistance in this area, the parties desire much more. Future programming should include such assistance in the recommended mentoring program discussed above.

Monitoring and Evaluation Plans

Future programming should include both a quantitative and qualitative baseline assessment of factors related to the targeted objectives of USAID assistance. Baseline measures are required to more accurately identify achievements and measure progress.

One provider commented that political party development activities are evolutionary, that "progress" is not easily measured, may not in fact be measurable, "progress is at such a small scale, it is slow growing capacities to introduce democracy".

While it is difficult to say how and to what degree democracy has been advanced, specific interventions should be tied more directly to concrete objectives wherever possible. Annex A of this report provides some illustrative examples of activities, expected outcomes and specific indicators of achievement.

Recommended Improvements – Organizational Development

The key issue relating to organizational development is the balance of support between established parties, newer startup parties, and independent movements/coalitions/groupings. As stated earlier and often in this report, achieving the fundamental goal of creating inclusive, viable political entities should start with a stronger effort to help political parties transition to become more broad-based, more issue-oriented, more responsive to their constituents.

With the coming changes in the election and registration laws, and with acknowledgement that some, if not all, established and startup parties are making progress, the time has come to step up the program of assistance and help develop these organizations into respected and professional institutions of public discourse. A screening protocol will be required to ensure that assistance is directed to parties with the interest and capacity to progress.

While support for groupings like the National Youth Movement should be continued, there is a question as to the future of the Independent Solidarity Movement – is it sustainable, does it

contribute to electoral competitiveness or does it sap the coherence and capacity to function of the legislature. Future programming should directly address these questions.

A number of specific interventions to develop political party organizations should be improved, including:

- Strategic Planning. One party leader noted that the last strategic plan for party development his party had was the one he personally worked on in Pakistan fifteen years ago. He would like assistance in developing a vision for the next 5-10 years for his party to sustain growth and use the growth to gain/use political power for development. In particular, he requested assistance to perform a sophisticated SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis.
- Fundraising Assistance. More ideas, more training, more professionalism is needed.
- Financial Management. Party managers need basic and advanced training in managing their finances.
- Behind-the-scenes-look. Book training is useful, but party officials want their members to see up close how parties operate in the developed world. Parties want to be involved in events that give them perspective and a comparative understanding of what the models are for political parties. Well-designed visits that allow leaders/managers/staff a behind-the-scenes-look inside political parties abroad would be effective and much appreciated.
- Big Brother**.** A request was made for assistance to established partnerships along the lines of a Big Brother relationship with parties from other countries, which included direct contact and exchanges of information. Such partnerships could work in synergy with the observational tours noted above.
- Bylaws**.** Several officials commented that the new registration process will create an opportunity to develop stronger and better bylaws that incorporate internal democratic governance more forcefully. Assistance is requested to draft such bylaws.
- Grassroots Organizing. More and better training is requested.
- Media. Website support, newsletters development and other media assistance is highly desired.
- Public Outreach. Significant training is needed to raise the standard of how parties connect with their constituents.
- Congress. Assistance is requested to stage and manage the annual party congresses required to be registered under the law.
- Local Offices. Working to support parties at the regional and local levels is critical. Offices outside of Kabul have minimum resources, and less capacity. But, development of these offices is key to the long-term development of the political parties in Afghanistan.

Recommended Improvements – Enhancing Electoral Competitiveness

Given the comprehensive nature of prior/current technical assistance for elections and campaigns, it is not surprising that party officials have called for few improvements. Other than

the recommendations identified above as to the continuity, fit and expertise of election assistance, there were several additional specific recommended improvements:

- Assistance is needed for parties to prepare for future election campaigns that are based on a theme and record of achievement and being responsive and understanding of people's concerns. Help in participatory planning, more professional communications outreach programs, and polling is suggested.
- Parties are concerned about election fraud. Various improvements were suggested relating to the mechanics of elections. As noted earlier in this report, comments also have been made that the IEC is not sufficiently independent or professional to be tasked with managing the elections in Afghanistan. Additional technical assistance is recommended.

Recommended Improvements – Assisting Parties to Participate in Governance

The RFP for the upcoming Phase of CEPPS notes that after assistance is provided for the next round of elections activities "*may* focus on building the capacity of newly elected officials to govern". Illustrative examples of governance capacity building for elected officials include an orientation training, and assistance in hosting town meetings. Such minimal interventions will not effectively bridge the wide gap in politicians winning elections and governing wisely.

In particular, there is a concern about the lack of a structured opposition in Parliament, which impacts efforts to advance a reform agenda. Initiatives have been thwarted by lack of discipline and knowledge of their responsibilities or of policy options among the MPs. Lacking a "mainstream" direction to government, it is difficult to achieve the level of progress needed to sustain development and convince Afghans that democracy is a better alternative to the Taliban or other fundamentalist regimes.

Several suggestions have been made for a stronger long-term program of governance assistance.

- Policy Development. Many party officials spoke of the need to become better informed on policy issues such that their members who win office can better articulate the party positions of key initiatives. A policy research capacity beyond the minimum capacity of recent efforts is needed. For instance, many party representatives desire a better understanding of on-the-ground realities of market economies in successful Islamic countries like Malaysia or Turkey.
- Constituency Inclusion. MPs and PC members need to find ways to involve the citizenry in the decisions of government. A variety of outreach and participatory technical assistance could prove effective.
- Local Governance. Local Government can be more responsive to the needs of its people because it is closer to them. Linkages of parties and members to local government through inclusion in development planning and budgeting processes are vital.
- Observation Tours. One donor sent newly elected MPs to Sweden to observe their Parliament, and came back with eyes wide open as to the possibilities. Such opportunities to envision a better future can significantly help achieve long-term development. If you don't know where you want to go, it is hard to get there.

- Long Term Civic Education. Efforts are needed to raise the awareness of Afghans of the responsibilities and benefits of democracy. The major parties themselves, can/should do more civic education programs. NGOs like WADAN and the Malik Association, can provide useful models. They work at the village level to discuss unity, security, conflict resolution and peace. Relying on volunteers in small-scale discussions, they focus on issues like child abuse or education for girls or forced marriage in the context of Islamic principles to solve local problems, and create civic awareness of the potential for change and progress. These groups try to get Afghans who may be suspicious of democracy ("to many, democracy represents unlimited freedom to drink/do drugs, etc.) to understand that democracy means freedom of speech, freedom of education, freedom of movement, etc. and that democracy comes with responsibility to engage in a civilized life.

2. How Can Political Party Assistance Strengthen Parties in the Afghan Context?

Given the poor standing of political parties in Afghanistan, efforts are needed to strengthen the parties' reputations throughout the country for the peoples' greater democratic choice and opportunities.

Top-heavy leadership structure makes organizations reliant on few people not shared ideas. Building stronger parties based on ideas stabilizes the political system so representation is based on shared beliefs and values that do not change with a single person's situation or reflect only their values. This allows democratic participation in a party to continue and grow across ethnicities, religions, generations and social status as shared values are identified.

Part of strengthening political parties must include their legitimately financial systems. The fact that many Afghanistan political parties rely on illegitimate party financing, damages the political system with inherently dishonest parties that supports the illegitimate money source, giving it political cover as the party obtains government office. Providing parties with legitimate financial sources not only builds worthy public confidence, but also reduces protection for the unworthy political players.

Afghanistan's electoral system disadvantages political parties. Every party expressed their dissatisfaction with the current election system. The government supports the system. Without a unified legislative effort to change the system, it will continue unabated. A strengthened political party system can move Parliament towards proper change to the system that is unpopular and considered undemocratic by many political scholars.

3. What is the Justification for Future Assistance to Strengthening Political Parties?

Political Parties have always existed in Afghanistan in one form or another, they went "gone underground" during the Soviet era and overseas when the Taliban controlled Afghanistan. While they were not officially recognized, Afghan people interacted and received services from organizations, associations or religious institutions that have re-emerged as political parties in current Afghanistan. The fact that political parties are not well received by Afghan people comes from the fact that political parties were opaque State apparatus used against the people while not providing any services or proper representation. To not assist political parties in Afghanistan is

to perpetuate that same misunderstanding. Assisting political parties with civic education to redevelop the Afghan peoples' comfort with parties they knew during the "Era of Democracy" is the most straightforward way to bridge the gap between their need for services and political representation.

Initial accounts say that 102 independents were elected to Parliament, while the reality is that far less (some say only 12) are truly independent. Most 'independent' MPs align with a political party. True independent MPs are likely to less civic-minded endeavors if not re-elected. Even if re-elected, Afghanistan's nascent political environment does not favor MPs who are responsive to constituent needs as it is to political parties that campaign based on ethnicity, etc. As political parties develop, they grow into organizations that are responsible based on shared need and can sustain development efforts regardless of individual person's interests.

During the prior development cycle, the parties looked to the CEPPS partners for assistance for their growth and capacity development. Initially, much useful support was provided, but as noted earlier, that assistance stopped after the last elections. For the CEPPS partners to re-engage the political parties they must take efforts to rebuild trust and demonstrate their long-term commitment. Afghan political parties are interested in future assistance from NDI and IRI, after rebuilding the support relationships are accomplished, the political parties will rely on them again. The parties report that when CEPPS did implement programs they were able to deliver assistance, where others were not able to do so at all or did so focused on few political parties.

Bluntly, Afghans believe and trust that the United States is here to work for their greater democratic good and that of the country. To make this happen, the United States needs to make Afghanistan secure, militarily and in civil society. To accomplish this, assisting political parties can build contact and relations between parties, the people and elected officials.

4. Should Future Political Party Programming Be Generic or Targeted?

To this point, generic assistance is recommended for the less-advanced parties that require instruction on standard democratic concepts. Targeted programming is appropriate for political parties that will benefit from operational, managerial, financial, strategy and outreach training.

5. To What Extent Should Alternatives to Political Parties Be Supported?

While political parties are more likely to respond to constituents, independents can fulfill an important role. When independents engage and communicate with their constituents, they can speak freely about their needs and concerns. The CEPPS partners should support independent candidates who demonstrate their commitment to democratic representation for their constituents and an understanding for the need to act with the party blocs in Parliament to pass responsive and productive legislation.

While the caucuses that have formed in Parliament through the efforts of IRI are likely to be dormant during the campaign, they should continue to be engaged as partners because their efforts have produced results that can assist the next legislature. Their experience is valuable and should be carried forth for future caucus efforts in Parliament, especially ones that aim to include

multiple parties for legislative advancement. The Youth Caucus has identified Afghanistan's future leaders, who will further grow and flourish when they are included in CEPPS programs.

Some associations and groups in Afghanistan are political parties that were forced to reform themselves because of the harsh political and social environment during the Soviet and Taliban eras. In the current environment many of them are proto-parties than can evolve into productive, representative, functioning political parties with consistent assistance. The more stringent registration requirements will make their evolution more difficult, so building coalitions among the associations / groups may be necessary if they want to become political parties. If the associations / groups choose to remain as such, they can be productively engaged as resources to inform and advise the parties from the Afghan prospective.

6. What Is The Proper Sequence of Programming Assistance?

Program success depends on learning and understanding what the baseline is for Afghanistan's political parties. Parties here are in varying development stages; some require basic assistance for their operational capacity while others more advanced technical advice. To institute a standard sequence for all parties will delay assistance to the more advanced parties while waiting for the less advanced parties to catch-up.

Once CEPPS understands the different needs that the parties require, assistance programs that are appropriate modules can commence rather than consecutive events. Chart B above illustrates the development program sequence that can assist the diverse parties.

7. How Can Technical Assistance Be Strategically Balanced?

The assessment finds a strategic balance for the political party development with three areas:

a. **Organizational** - to assist political parties with their operational and functional needs so that they understand the obligations to register and financial stability, then as representative political parties, responsive to their members and can work effectively, transparently and responsibly;

b. **Elections** - to assist political parties campaigns, including but not necessarily limited to their grassroots outreach, media interaction, platform development, voter education, agent observation and any post-elections disputes as they may arise, and

c. **Governance** - to assist political parties as they are represented in Parliament and act as responsible legislators for their constituents, with associations, civil society, media other political parties in Parliament, the government, judiciary.

Annex A: Table of Activities, Outcomes and Indicators

In the CEPPS program for 2003-2008, there is no quantitative baseline assessment on which to structure a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. Targeted results were simple measures of people trained or who attended workshops and conferences. No qualitative measures were undertaken to assess progress in achieving specific objectives. Following is an illustrative matrix of activities and indicators/measures of progress that could be used in the upcoming CEPPS program.

Activities	Opportunities/Issues	Expected Outcomes	Indicators	Timeframe
Organization Development				
1. Work with parties to develop/implement Strategic Development Plans to identify potential for party development and to identify TA needs.	• Parties have spoken of the need to think long term and plan for future party development but lack professional expertise.	✓ More effective TA. Parties will better understand the changes needed to grow the party base and win elections.	❖ **Higher Satisfaction** with TA and **Increased Knowledge** of how to develop the party as measured in pre/post TA surveys.	Sept '08 – May '09
2. Financial management technical assistance.	• Parties lack sound financial management; they do not budget professionally, nor keep proper accounts or do annual audits.	✓ Parties will better manage limited resources and be more transparent in their financial obligations.	❖ **Prevalence of the Use** of program budgeting, book of accounts, etc., as measured in pre/post TA surveys.	Jan '09 – Jan '10
Elections				
1. Work with Parties to develop/implement campaign strategies.	• Parties are focused on elections and can benefit from TA that helps them brand the party and their candidates based on platform and performance.	✓ Parties will have stronger, more positive public images/reputations which will result in more candidates winning elections.	❖ **Increased Election Performance** and **Higher Public Satisfaction** party ratings as measured in pre/post election surveys.	Oct '08 – Dec '10
2. Conduct candidate training to prepare party nominees for elections.	• Candidates require media training (staying on message, accessing media, etc.), and public outreach to be successful.	✓ Parties candidates will be media savvy and have improved skills to connect with and better represent their constituents.	❖ **Winning Elections** and **Higher Public Satisfaction** candidate ratings as measured in pre/post election surveys.	Oct '08 – Dec '10
Governance				
1. Train elected and appointed officials in participatory processes to better represent/serve their constituencies.	• There is a need to look past the elections to govern wisely by understanding and representing their constituencies.	✓ Parties and their elected/appointed officials will better understand and represent their constituencies.	❖ **Prevalence of the Use** of participatory processes in party and government activities as measured in pre/post TA surveys.	Oct '08 – Sep '11

Annex B: List of References:

Afghanistan 2007: A Survey of the Afghan People
The Asia Foundation, Kabul, 2008

Afghanistan, 2005 and Beyond Prospects for Improved Stability, reference document
Rubin, Barnett, Hauayan Hamidzada & Abby Stoddard
April 2005, Netherlands Institute for Democracy

CEPPS Quarterly Reports, 2003-2008
IRI/NDI

Civil Society Groups and Political Parties: Supporting Constructive Relationships
USAID
March 2004

Decision of the Joint Electoral Management Body
Decision #2004-102, Certification of Results
Joint Electoral Management Body
November 3, 2004
Kabul

Democracy-Building in Afghanistan: An Integrated Dimension for the Way Forward
European Union, Election Observation Mission
Afghanistan 2005

Introduction to NDI Afghanistan
NDI
Afghanistan, Spring 2007

Islamist, Leftist – and a Void in the Center, Afghanistan's Political Parties and where they come from (1902 – 2006)
Thomas Ruttig – The Konrad Ardenauer Stiftung

Political Party Assessment
NDI
Afghanistan, Spring 2006

Political Party Development Through Grassroots Advocacy 2006 - 2008
IRI
Afghanistan, Spring 2008

Political Parties in Afghanistan
Asia Briefing N°39
International Crisis Group
Kabul/Brussels, 2 June 2005

Political Transition in Afghanistan: The State, Islam and Civil Society
Special Report of the Asia Program and the Middle East Program
The Woodrow Wilson Center, June 2004

Transitions to Democracy – Afghanistan
Queens College, ed., March 2006

Additional Materials

Afghanistan IEC Election Calendars

Afghanistan Political Party Law, translation, April 2005

Wolesi Jirga, elections results, IEC / JEMB

National Movement of Afghanistan Youth fact Sheet, March 5, 2008

AYNSO bylaws, translated

Afghanistan Republic Party, Organizational Chart

Afghanistan Republic Party, Office Management Assignment

Annex C: List of Persons Interviewed

Party Representatives and Members of Parliament

Ghulam Jailani Popal
Deputy Party Leader
Afghan Millat Party

Sayed Hashem Folad
Member of Parliament and Member
Afghan Millat Party

Engineer Zafar
Director
Afghan Millat Party in Balkh

Mahroof Fazli
Director
Afghan Millat Party in Herat

Sayed Ishaq Gailani
Member of Parliament, and Leader
National Solidarity Movement of Afghanistan Party

Ajmal Sohail
Leader
Afghan Liberal Party

Mawlawi Ataullah Ludin
Member of Parliament, Chair of Judiciary Commission and Member
Hezb-e-Islami Afghanistan Party

Haji Abdul Karim Rasekh
Representative
Hezb-e-Islami Afghanistan Party in Herat

Mohammed Mohaqiq
Member of Parliament and Leader
Hezb-e-Islami Wahdat Afghanistan Party

Sayed Najibullah Hashimi
Political Affairs Advisor
Jamiat-e-Islami Afghanistan Party

Abdul Sattar Murad
Political Advisor
Jamiat-e-Islami Afghanistan Party

Ismail Khan
Minister of Water and Energy and Member
Jamiat-e-Islami Afghanistan Party

Said Sharif Yelani
Representative
Jamiat-e-Islami Afghanistan Party in Herat

Mohammad Khatibi
Director
National Congress of Afghanistan in Herat

Dr. Fawad Osmani
Director
National Congress of Afghanistan in Mazar

Sayed Abdul Razaq Luqman
Advisor
National Islamic Front of Afghanistan Party (Mahaz-e-Melli-ye Islami-ye Afghanistan)

Abdul Aziz Sakhi
Advisor
National Islamic Front of Afghanistan Party (Mahaz-e-Melli-ye Islami-ye Afghanistan)

Sebghatullah Sanjar
Leader
Republican Party of Afghanistan

Dr. Fazli
Director
Republican Party of Afghanistan in Herat

Sayyad Hassan Sadat
President
Republican Party of Afghanistan in Mazar

Mullah Rockety
Member of Parliament and Member of Mahaz + Taliban

Fauzia Rauofi
Independent Member of Parliament and Member of Youth Caucus

Afghanistan Government Officials

Sayeed Husain Anwari
Governor
Herat Province

Rahul Amin
Governor
Farah Province

Alhaj-M Rafiq Mojaddadi
Mayor
City of Herat

Mawlavi Rahman Berdi Rahmani
Deputy Chairman
Balkh Provincial Council

Dr. Dasoud Ali Najafi
Chief Elections Officer
Independent Electoral Commission

Mohammad Farid Afghanzai
Head of External Relations
Independent Electoral Commission

Mohammad Nasir Hafizi
Director
Office of Assessment and Registration of Social Organizations and Political Parties
Ministry of Justice

Afghanistan Civil Society Organizations

Mohammad Nasib
Managing Director
The Welfare Association for the Development of Afghanistan (WADAN)

Jean Kissell
Consultant
The Welfare Association for the Development of Afghanistan (WADAN)

Obaidullah Hejrat
Deputy Director
Malik Association

Khallil Parsa
Director
National Movement of Afghanistan's Youth (Herat)

Dr. Najib Paikan
Director
Afghanistan Community Foundation and Youth and Child Development Program

Mawlagul Ahmadzai
President
Afghanistan Youth National Social Organization (AYNSO)

Professor Yama Sharaf
Dean of Law Faculty
Balkh University

Afghanistan Private Sector Stakeholders

Gabriel Dvoskin
Executive Director
Sayara Media and Communication

Hamidullah Farouqi
Member of Board of Directors
Afghan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (AICC)

Khalil Roman
Editor-in-Chief
Bakhtar Weekly

United Nations Organizations

Margie Cook
Elections Program Manager
UNEAD

Shahmahmood Miakhel
Governance Officer
Office of DSRSG-II
United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)

Vadim Nazarov
Senior Political Affairs Officer
United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA)

Gulrahman Totakhail
Project Officer
UN SEAL Project

Izatullah Safi
Project Officer
UN SEAL Project

Mansoor Khushzad
Project Officer
UN SEAL Project

USAID Program Implementers in Afghanistan

Susan Carnduff
Country Director
NDI

Grant Kippen
Former Country Director
NDI

J. Brian O'Day
Head of Elections and Political Party Programs
NDI

Shuvaloy Majumdar
Country Director
IRI

International Organizations

George Varughese
Country Representative
The Asia Foundation

Mary Cummins
Chief of Party
IFES

J. Patrick O'Mahony
Deputy Chief of Party
USAID Local Governance Community Development Program

Meetings in Washington DC

Peter Manikas
Director for Asia Programs
NDI

Thomas Barry
Deputy Regional Director for Asia
NDI

Christina Costello
Program Director, Asia
NDI

Colleen House
CEPPS Manager
IRI

Hallam Ferguson
Program Officer, Middle East and North Africa
IRI

Barbara Smith
Democracy Officer
USAID Washington DC

Blair King
Senior Democracy and Governance Advisor, Asia
USAID Washington DC

Keith Schultz
Governance Advisor
USAID Washington DC

Annex D: Results of 2004 Presidential Election

Hamid Karzai (Pashtun)	4,443,029	55.40%
Yunus Qanuni (Tajik) - Afghan Nationalist Party	1,306,503	16.30%
Mohammed Mohaqiq (Hazara) - Independent (Wahdat Islamic Unity Party)	935,325	11.70%
Abdul Rashid Dostum (Uzbek) - Independent (National Islamic Movement)	804,861	10.00%
Abdul Latif Pedram (Tajik) - National Congress Party	110,160	1.40%
Massouda Jalal (Tajik)	91,415	1.10%
Sayed Ashaq Gailani* (Pashtun) - National Solidarity Movement	80,081	1.00%
Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai (Pashtun) - Independent (Islamic Revolutionary Movement)	60,199	0.80%
Abdul Satar Sirat (Tajik)	30,201	0.40%
Hamyon Shah Aasifi (Pashtun) - Independent (National Unity Party)	26,224	0.30%
Ghulam Farooq Nejrabi (Tajik) - Afghan Independence Party	24,232	0.30%
Sayed Abdul Hadi Dabir (Tajik)	24,057	0.30%
Abdul Hafiz Mansoor (Tajik) - Independent (Islamic Society)	19,728	0.20%
Abdul Hadi Khalilzai (Pashtun)	18,082	0.20%
Mir Mahfuz Nedahi (Pashtun)	16,054	0.20%
Mohammed Ibrahim Rashid (Pashtun)	14,242	0.20%
Wakil Mangal (Pashtun)	11,770	0.10%
Abdul Hasib Aarian* (Tajik)	8,373	0.10%
Total Valid Votes (turnout 70%)	**8,024,536**	**100.00%**
Invalid Votes	104,404	
Total Votes	**8,128,940**	

Reference:

Decision of the Joint Electoral Management Body
Decision #2004-102, Certification of Results
Joint Electoral Management Body
Kabul
November 3, 2004

Annex E: Assessment of Political Party Programming – Statement of Work

Statement of Work
Political Party Programming Assessment
Project implemented by National Democratic Institute and
International Republican Institute
CA #DFD-A-00-03-00033-00 under leader award #DGC-A-00-01-00004-00

I. Introduction and Background

Prior to the 2004/2005 Presidential and Parliamentary elections in Afghanistan, the international community began supporting political parties in the hopes that a strong, pluralistic political spectrum would stabilize the country. However, political parties did not seem to be as energized as the international community assumed they would be in the lead up to the elections. Governmental policies and the Single Non-Transferable Vote electoral system were listed as reasons for this.

Additionally, political parties in Afghanistan are largely viewed with distrust. The Asia Foundation's Survey of the Afghan People noted that in 2006 56% of those polled thought that political parties should be able to hold meetings in their area. However, in 2007, this number was down to 47%.

Since 2003, USAID/Afghanistan has supported the implementation of political party programming through two of the Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening (CEPPS) partners -- the National Democratic Institute and the International Republican Institute. These programs were implemented individually and designed to include the following program objectives:

- IRI program: Improve the capacity of political parties, civic educators and civil society organizations to be inclusive and operate as viable political entities with a basic understanding of and ability to articulate policy concerns of the government and citizenry, by helping them in the areas of organization, understanding functions, opinion research, campaign planning and coalition-building.
- NDI Program: To improve the capacity of political parties to be inclusive and operate as viable political entities; and to prepare political parties to stand and effectively compete in the 2004 election.

The initial cooperative agreement focused on providing support to non-governmental stakeholders prior to the 2004/2005 elections. The time period of the agreement was from March 1, 2003 – August 31, 2004.

In April 2004, the agreement was extended until March 1, 2006. At that time, the scope of the programs shifted away from political party support towards strengthening institutions, in particular the National Assembly, Provincial Councils and grassroots traditional leadership. IRI and NDI programs included the following revised program objectives:

- IRI program: To establish successful independent caucuses in the Wolesi Jirga able to respond to citizens' concerns and advocacy groups.
- NDI program: To build the capacity of parliamentarians in party coalitions and groupings to participate in parliament.

These programs are still in place and are expected to run until June 30, 2008.

II. Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to learn from the experiences of previous efforts by USAID and others to gain insights as to what approaches in political party programming could best achieve USAID/Afghanistan's stated objectives noted above.

III. Information Collection Methodology, Organization and Analysis

The assessment team will collect information through: written documents, i.e. program reports, quarterly reports, one-page program descriptions, etc.; interviews and discussions with program managers, implementers, participants and partners including but not limited to international organizations, local NGOs, political parties, embassies, missions and donors; and observations by the assessment team of the circumstances and conditions in Afghanistan regarding political parties and the pending elections.

The literature includes:

- Program description and subsequent modifications for Cooperative Agreement #DFD-A-00-03-00033-00
- NDI and IRI workplans from 2003 – present
- NDI and IRI quarterly reports from 2003 – present
- Any other reports and/or documents developed by NDI and IRI under the Cooperative Agreement
- Written briefings materials on the programs, activity reports, success stories and any other USAID/Afghanistan produced documents regarding NDI and/or IRI political party programming
- Other reference or historical documents which might be identified by USAID and others

USAID/Afghanistan will provide the team with input and guidance on setting up a schedule of interviews and site visits but it will be the responsibility of the team to set up their own appointments and to make their own logistics and travel arrangements.

IV. Assessment of Political Party Programming Opportunities/Approaches

The team will appraise the current situation in terms of:

Prior/Existing programs

a) What interventions were most critical and/or were effective in achieving the objectives of the program?
b) What factors, if any, hindered/assisted the effective implementation of the project?

c) Were there unexpected but important benefits or impacts that should be documented?
d) Are there any negative impacts or unintended consequences of the program that need to be addressed and how?
e) What is the level of satisfaction of the political parties, workers and stakeholders with the projects?
f) How sustainable are interventions proposed under the projects?

Future Programs

a) What is the political environment for the development of political parties?
b) What improvements/new directions can be made in future programming?
c) How can political party assistance of this sort play a role in strengthening political parties in the Afghan context?
d) What concrete evidence can be provided to justify assistance to strengthening political parties?
e) Should future political party programming be generic or targeted toward more definable objectives?
f) To what extent should alternatives to political parties (associations, NGOs, networks, coalitions, caucus) be provided technical assistance in order to achieve program goals of fostering more responsive governance?
g) What is the proper sequence of programming assistance that should be provided?
h) How can technical assistance be strategically designed to achieve the right balance of TA to: help organize/develop the structure of political parties or alternative organizations; provide for the civic education of the citizenry; train successful party members (elected officials) to govern and be fully responsive to their constituencies?

IV. Personnel

The contractor will provide two experts for this task, in addition to hiring and identifying local support staff (interpreter and driver) as required. An ODG staff member may be identified to participate in a portion of the evaluation, but the Team Leader is responsible for the overall completion of the evaluation and final, written products.

The Team Leader will have international experience with political parties and political party development. In addition, the Team Leader will have experience evaluating projects/programs and a good track record of producing high quality products. The second member of the team will also have international experience with political parties and political development, including program implementation experience. For both team members, regional experience is preferred and experience in the evaluation of organizations and political/democracy activities is required.

V. Deliverables

- Upon arrival in Afghanistan, the team will submit a detailed work plan along with the schedule of fieldwork specifying (1) tentative appointments and (2) how the information will be collected, organized and analyzed to meet the information need specified in the SOW.

- The team will provide interim verbal or written reports to the USAID/Afghanistan Office of Democracy and Governance (ODG) indicating progress to date and any emerging conclusions.
- Prior to departure from Afghanistan, the team will present a near to completed draft version of their findings to ODG and any others within the USAID/Afghanistan mission ODG may deem appropriate.
- A second draft version of the report will be submitted within one week after the team's departure from Kabul.
- The Mission shall review and provide comments on the draft report within one week of receipt.
- The evaluation Team Leader will then submit the final report within one week after receiving Mission comments.

To ensure that the evaluation findings and recommendations are presented in a way that is useful for the Mission personnel and program implementers, the following basic outline is recommended for the evaluation report:

- Executive summary not to exceed two pages in length composed of findings, a brief methodology statement, conclusions and key recommendations;
- Introduction and background section for the overall evaluation;
- Brief description of NDI and IRI projects;
- Discussion of SOW questions by applying the following format (findings, conclusions, and recommendations)

The report is not expected to exceed 30 pages (exclusive of annexes); however it should include a response regarding the cause(s), if any, of deficiencies or weaknesses. It will also include findings and recommendations on priorities for further assistance/activities, improvements and possible synergies that can be achieved in USAID's other programming, a discussion of lessons learned and best practices that should be captures for consideration in the implementation of future activities.

VI. Time Frame

The duration of the evaluation is estimated to be approximately total 42 days, including planning, travel and finalizing deliverables. A six-day workweek is authorized for the team while in Afghanistan. 42 days total, 38 days in Afghanistan.

VII. Special provisions

a. Duty Post: Travel within Afghanistan
b. Language: Dari or provisions for translation as needed.
c. Access to classified information: N/A
d. Logistical support: USAID/Afghanistan will provide access to internal USAID Air flights. The contractor is responsible for making all logistics and travel arrangements including the identification of ground transportation and lodging arrangements, as necessary. USAID has limited personnel and cannot provide logistics, administrative or travel support.