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# **VEGA Armenia Long Term Business Advisors Quarterly Report (July – September 2007)**

**LEADER WITH ASSOCIATE AGREEMENT (LWA)  
EEM-A-00-04-00002-00**

**Associate Cooperative Agreement  
111-A-00-05-00061-00**

**Prepared for the United States Agency for  
International Development (USAID)**

*Implementing Organizations:*

INSTITUTE OF  
INTERNATIONAL  
EDUCATION

**Summary:**

This report will cover the concluding period of the four 2006-2007 EMDAP Advisers whose assignments were completed this quarter.

**Tasks completed this quarter:**

Since the last report, we have accomplished the following:

- Disbursed funds to all Advisers
- Monitored case study development of current Advisers and alumni
- Received and evaluated reports submitted to IIE
- Negotiation of no-cost extension to allow the fielding of an additional LBTA in 2008

**Volunteers and Assignments:****1. Marshall Chase, Senior Adviser for Advocacy, American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham)**

Assignment Period: November 27, 2006 – September 27, 2007 (10 months)

Marshall achieved his overall goals as indicated in his original and revised action plans. He states that “AmCham operations have been significantly strengthened, more formal processes and procedures are in place, and better communications between the organization and its members and outside organizations is taking place. A broad strategy for working with the Armenian and US governments to improve the business environment is now in place.”

Marshall’s tangible deliverables and contributions to his organization during his assignment include:

- Development of a Newsletter
- Annual Report: drafted table of contents and action plan
- PR/Marketing action plan
- Personnel action plan
- Membership revenue calculator
- Membership surveys measuring AmCham performance and business environment concerns.
- Overall organizational assessment
- AmCham overall mission, vision, goals statement
- Various letter templates, and advocacy letters to US and Armenian governments

Reflecting on his experience, Marshall writes in his final report that the most rewarding part was “working with the new AmCham Board and Executive Director to tangibly improve the organization and develop new skills. The Executive Director can now

develop a quarterly newsletter, conduct surveys, etc; the board can develop and implement organization strategy; the webmaster can update the new website.”

Adviser Chase leaves from his EMDAP experience with the acquired knowledge on the inner operations necessary to collaborate with other businesses to address common interests. He confirmed that he would like to work in international business.

Finally, Marshall also submitted his first draft of a case study on mining in Armenia.

## 2. **Jeff Standley, Business Consultant, Shirak Competitiveness Center (SCC)**

Assignment Period: November 27, 2006 – September 27, 2007 (10 months)

Jeff achieved the majority of his overall goals. Committed to the success of the organization in all aspects as it pertains to business, his accomplishments were as follows:

- Developed sustainable business model for organization
- Developed sustainable business model to increase revenue generation
- Wrote grants to increase funding
- Developed a model for real estate program(s)
- Developed sales and pricing training and consistently reviewed marketing issues
- Developed sample marketing newsletter
- Developed web site recommendations
- Developed model for employment services program
- Developed training on enterprise development

In his final report Jeff summarizes the value of his assignment by stating:

“There is value in every EMDAP assignment and all of them can be used as a teaching tool. I was able to learn more about firsthand development of an organizational strategy.” I put the knowledge gained while attaining my MBA into practice. I understand the field of International Development better and can see how I can function effectively in it. I learned about a different culture and how its history has affected the economy and the workplace from a firsthand perspective.

## 3. **Sarah Gray, USAID Armenia Tax Improvement Project (ATIP), Booz Allen Hamilton (BAH)**

Assignment Period: November 27, 2006 – September 27, 2007 (10 months)

Training: “Integrated Marketing Communication for Behavioral Impact in Health and Social Development,” New York University, New York, NY, July 8 – 28, 2007

Sarah shared some of the highlights and lowlights about her training. She states, “the highlights were meeting communications professionals working in many different

countries and areas of international development. I was able to meet very interesting people and establish a good network of professional contacts.”

However, because the training was in New York City, Sarah says “the participants got to visit different ad agencies and organizations designing communications campaigns...but some of these presentations were very US focused and not very relevant to those of us working overseas (the majority attending the course).”

Also, Sarah believes that the training provided recommendations to her clients based on the information she received in the course, which was one of the activities in her original work plan. She also used the communications strategies learned in designing her information campaigns on taxpayer education.

Sarah put forth a genuine effort and had a great impact on the ATIP. Her accomplished goals were as follows:

Goal 1: Triennial Strategic Tax Administration Modernization Plan approved by the RA Government

- Initiated through joint collaboration between ATIP and the State Tax Service (STS)
- Major international organizations have strongly supported this initiative
- STS is now committed to embarking on the most transformational Tax Modernization Plan in the history of Armenia since its independence in 1991;

Goal 2: Taxpayer Handbook is an important step in the development and implementation of the self-assessment system in Armenia

- Geared toward both new and established businesses, it informs taxpayers on the process and location of registration, filing deadlines and methods of payment, as well as information on punitive measures in cases of evasion
- More than 1,000 copies printed and are distributed free of charge to all public agencies and tax bodies of Armenia; also available on the STS Website, Chambers of Commerce
- The Armenian business community has called this the ‘Bible of taxpayers’

Goal 3: Award winning TV ads: TV campaign “Pay Your Taxes” received international awards

- Two MarCom Creative Awards: MarCom’s Platinum Award - the highest in the Television/PSA Campaign category and Gold Award for “Eagle View” ad
- Bronze Telly Award in the not-for-profit category for “Eagle View” ad
- Successful collaboration between STS, ATIP and Bars Media;

Goal 4: E-mail system

- Indispensable tool of communication and management
- Will save thousands of dollars in communication costs for STS
- Helps the STS strengthen its organization, improve outreach to taxpayers, manage communication and become a true service-oriented organization

Sarah’s tangible deliverables and contributions were:

- Worked with Deputy Heads and Outreach Team at the State Tax Service of Armenia (STS) to design taxpayer education campaigns and improve taxpayer services.
- Provided technical expertise in organizational analysis and design, including development of STS' first Outreach Division.
- Worked with the Deputy Heads of STS and external stakeholders to develop the administration's first ever Triennial Strategic Plan.
- Developed 2007 work plan and implementation schedules based on consultations with donor, client and staff—work plan specifies level of effort, indicators and targets.
- Administered reporting requirements, including writing Bi-weekly and Quarterly Reports to insure compliance with USAID policies and procedures as well as manage donor and client expectations through effective communication and preemptive planning.
- Wrote/edited project success stories and press releases for publication on USAID Armenia and ATIP websites.

**4. Anthony (Tony) Woodham, USAID Armenia Tax Improvement Project (ATIP), Booz Allen Hamilton (BAH)**

Assignment Period: November 27, 2006 – September 27, 2007 (10 months)

Anthony worked on the same project as Adviser Sarah Gray. In addition to the goals listed by Sarah, Anthony's accomplished goals also included:

- Implementing Risk-based management
  - Risk Based Audit piloted and implemented in some TIs
  - Risk Based VAT Refund is being developed;
- Improving IT infrastructure
  - Large Taxpayer Inspectorate – daily data exchange is now possible
  - Implementation of a new server, database, backup solutions, upgraded Taxpayer
  - Increased efficiency of the operations and performance of the TIs;
- Improving State Tax Service (STS) automation
  - Developed a road map of Income and Property Declaration processing
  - Identified third party information sources
  - Started cross-matching automation
  - Updated Taxpayer 2 Tax Administration software implemented in 20 TIs;
- Improving data information access and sharing throughout the STS
  - Increased efficiency of data consolidation from TIs
  - Improved data archiving and recovery procedures
  - Increased productivity of STS IT department by automating most of the data collection processes.

Anthony's tangible deliverables and contributions were as follows:

- Collaborated with STS Deputy head, A. Osikyan and ATIP expert to develop and implement ATIP's anti-corruption training as well as conducting post- training evaluation and analysis;
- Consulted with team members for compilation of the bi-weekly and quarterly reporting requirements to ensure compliance with donor policies and procedures;
- Assumed interim leadership of the collection component upon dismissal of staff member, which included managing completion of the legal handbook, initial organization of IRS study tours and harmonizing STS expectations with proposed resource allocation;
- Worked with the deputy heads of STS, the ATIP team and external stakeholders to develop the administration's first-ever Triennial Strategic Plan;
- Assisted in the development of the 2007 work plan by transforming the recommended sequence of reform into draft implementation schedules through consultations with SMEs, STS and ATIP staff;
- Provided technical and leadership assistance to the project in support of the Chief of Party, which included assuring that deliverables and tasks were met in accordance with the USAID contract.