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REVISED DRAFT REPORT

SUPPORTING DEMOCRACY

**IN THE NEWLY INDEPENDENT STATES
OF THE FORMER SOVIET UNION**

**An Evaluation of Nine Grants and Cooperative Agreements
under
Democratic Pluralism Initiatives
Project No. 110-0007**

20 April 1994

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Submitted to:

**Agency for International Development
Bureau of Europe and Newly Independent States**



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1. PURPOSE AND METHOD OF THE EVALUATION

A. Background and Purpose of the Evaluation

This is a summary report of the first evaluation of a major sectoral assistance program from the Agency for International Development (AID) to the New Independent States (NIS) of the former Soviet Union. The evaluation pertains to a portion of AID's Democratic Pluralism Initiatives (DPI) Project, No. 110-0007, which was authorized on 10 April 1992 with a project funding level of \$25 million and a project assistance completion date of April 1996. Funding for the DPI Project was increased in February 1993 to \$85 million, and in September 1993 to \$160 million; the second amendment also extended the project to 31 December 1996.

The DPI Project was designed to help build political, legal and social institutions critical to the success of democratic and economic reform in the NIS in the wake of the collapse of communism and the Soviet economic system. In its early phase, the DPI Project funded grants and cooperative agreements for U.S.-based nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to provide technical assistance, training, and some equipment.

The DPI Project has five sub-sector components:

- **Rule of law.** to foster laws, legal institutions, and civic structures supporting democratic, market-oriented societies. The grantee evaluated is the American Bar Association's Central and Eastern European Law Initiative (CEELI).
- **Independent media.** to support print and broadcast media that are financially viable, editorially independent and credible, and broadly accessible. The grantee evaluated under this component is Internews.
- **Political process.** to enable individuals and organizations to determine political outcomes in a competitive and fair environment. The grantees evaluated under this component are the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI); the International Republican Institute (IRI); the Free Trade Union Institute (FTUI) of the AFL-CIO; and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES).
- **Civil society.** to enable citizens to participate actively and effectively in the political and economic life of their countries, to check governmental powers and encourage responsiveness, and to provide services not provided by the government. The grantees evaluated under this component are the Atlantic Council (AC), the American Foreign Policy Council (AFPC); and the Citizens Democracy Corps (CDC).
- **Governance and public administration.** to help local governments clarify and better administer their roles and responsibilities within democratic, market-oriented societies. No grantees under this component were evaluated.

B. DPI Strategy in the NIS

The November 1992 "Strategy Paper on Assistance to the NIS" articulates the conceptual framework, operating principles and program priorities which will frame this evaluation. According to that strategy, the promotion of democracy and human rights is one of the four key objectives for U.S. Government assistance to the NIS. That objective called for the U.S. Government to:

"Assist institutionalization of democratic political systems based as free and fair elections, pluralist civil societies, the safeguarding of basic human rights, the rule of law, sound public administration, and peaceful resolution of disputes."

The Strategy also articulated principles guiding the program. These were to:

- **Help Reformers:** U.S. assistance should be used to reward those reformers in the NIS attempting to restructure public and private sector roles critical to the transition to market-based, democratic societies. At the same time, democratic differentiation must be tempered with a sense of geographic and program priorities.
- **Provide Symbols of Successful Reform:** Within each country, where possible, look for opportunities to bundle assistance efforts in the most reform-oriented regions to illustrate our comprehensive approach to reform and to create symbols of success that may be replicated in other regions.
- **Maintain Flexibility:** TA should be sufficiently flexible to allow experts to be deployed or withdrawn quickly, based on the evolving situation on the ground and the pace of reform in a particular country. Bureaucratic or administrative constraints which reduce flexibility should be avoided.
- **Establish Program Priorities:** A core program--based on a set of priority projects--should be established for U.S. assistance in each state.

In addition, under the strategy, programs were expected to promote maximum self-reliance, prevent aid dependency, and where appropriate, require some form of self-financing or private sector support within five years of conception.

C. Regional Differences

Major differences in the state of political and market economy development exist among the countries of the former Soviet Union. The Russian Federation has apparently evolved the farthest from the old Communist political system and seems to have the most open environment for political reformers. In contrast, the political environment in Ukraine remains rigid and generally hostile to political reform. The Central Asian republics are significantly different both from those in central Europe and the Transcaucasus and from each other. Many political parties exist, but their sophistication and institutional capability lags. Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan appear to offer

a slightly more favorable environment for political process development than the other three countries in the "second tier."

Russian Federation

Organizing a new and fundamentally different political and electoral system in a country with 225 constituency level commissions, 96 polling district sites, over 105 million voters, 11 time zones, harsh climatic conditions, an incredibly brief preparation period and an extremely tenuous political climate is a tremendous challenge. Add to that the offer of assistance from a relatively new ally, the United States, and one has a sense of the challenge faced by these NGOs in Russia.

From the viewpoint of political development, the Russian Federation is the most open of the New Independent States, and it has evolved the farthest from the old communist system. Because of their intellectual traditions and the history of dissident movements, post-Soviet political reformers in Russia share a sense of individual and group identity that is scarcely found in the other republics. Political reformers meet openly, as do people of other political persuasions including the "red/brown" end of the political spectrum, the communists, fascists, agrarians, and ultra-nationalists.

Western political activists, including the American NGO staff and their consultants, have experienced almost no official restrictions on their activities. Despite anti-western sentiments expressed in some media, most Russians seem to genuinely enjoy talking with Americans and are seldom shy about expressing their political views.

The huge size of Russia makes travel and logistics support a special challenge. Long flights, agonizingly slow train rides, hazardous road travel and third rate accommodations are normal components of in-state travel. Moscow is the hub of air and rail routes, which often means that it is quicker to travel between two nearby provincial cities via Moscow than to go directly.

Ukraine

Compared to Russia, Ukraine has a much more limited tradition of political dissent, much smaller and weaker reform-oriented parties, and much greater monitoring of political activity by security police. Although political parties are more developed here than in Russia, the current election law is written to maintain the status quo and discourage success for candidates supported by political parties. Only 11% of the candidates standing for election in March are party affiliated. Western political activists, including American NGOs and their consultants, and the evaluators, experienced official disfavor in numerous ways. Ethnic tension between Ukrainians and Russians is an important political problem in the northern and eastern parts of the country and especially in the Crimea. The Ukrainian economy has deteriorated more than the Russian economy, and fuel shortages impede transportation.

Central Asia

There are now five independent republics in Central Asia: Kazakhstan, which is by far the largest, Kyrgyzstan, and three in the "second tier": Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan.

Historically all five have been the most isolated from western influences and multi-party democracy is virtually unknown in the region. Ethnic tension between Russians and Kazakhs, and the absence of procedures to register foreign NGOs, impose significant constraints on the American NGO activities in Kazakhstan. Kyrgyzstan is relatively more open to influence by American political NGOs, and Uzbekistan is relatively more closed. The civil war in Tajikistan has virtually precluded any work there by the NGOs.

Transcaucasus

The three independent republics in the Caucasus region, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, are the scene of considerable conflict among the local ethnic groups. Civil war began in Georgia shortly after the 1992 elections, which brought to an end the election-related activities started by IFES, NDI, and Internews. Similarly, conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan have severely limited DPI activities; CEELI has conducted some activities in both countries, and IRI has worked in Armenia.

D. Previous Experience in Evaluation of Democracy Initiatives

U.S. Government support for strengthening democracies abroad proceeded, and has grown with, the wave of democratic revolutions which began in the mid 1970s. As the lead U.S. Government agency, since the early 1960s AID has supported the creation of free trade unions abroad and promoted decentralization and municipal development projects, especially in Latin America. In the 1970s, AID expanded its support to include human rights and legislative development. In 1983, Congress established the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) which during the following seven years provided about \$152 million in grants to private organizations to promote democracy around the world.

Although there have been relatively few evaluations of U.S. Government-funded efforts to promote democracy abroad, each of them contributed in some way to the evaluation team's assessments of these DPI projects.

In June 1991, AID's Center for Development Information and Evaluation reviewed the agency's experience with its support for democracy. The review concluded that "A.I.D. is in the early stages of learning how to develop overall strategies to promote democracy from which to define the kinds of programs and projects to be implemented in a particular country... Measuring the impact of democracy programs may be quite difficult in some project areas. In some cases, progress may be discernible in the lack of further regression or deterioration in the larger political climate. In addition, attributions of progress to donor programs in this arena is difficult to determine" (Hansen 1991:13).

As the need for greater rigor in the design of democracy projects became apparent in mid-1992, AID contracted with consultants to assist six DPI grantees in developing performance targets and relevant indicators. By late 1992, the grantees and the consultants had begun to develop logical frameworks of the hierarchy of project objectives, the external assumptions necessary for the achievement of the objectives, and some fairly specific indicators of performance.

AID has commissioned several evaluations of individual democracy-building projects, two of which are relevant to the background of the present evaluation. In February 1992, an AID contractor evaluated 23 projects in Poland, the Czech and Slovak Federated Republic, and Hungary by AID's Bureau for Europe for democratic pluralism initiatives. The projects were implemented by 11 U.S. NGOs. In April 1993, an AID contractor evaluated the Asia Democracy Program by examining 43 completed and on-going grants in four countries, primarily to indigenous NGOs.

There are several remarkable similarities among the two previous evaluations of AID-supported democracy programs and the evaluation reported here. These are noted at the end of Chapter 3.

E. Methodology for this Evaluation

In December 1993, A.I.D contracted with Management Systems International (MSI) to conduct field evaluations of the activities of seven DPI Project grantees and desk studies of the activities of two grantees.

The evaluations were conducted by a team of six management consultants: David Read Barker (Team Leader), Cynthia Clapp-Wincek, David Hirschmann, James S. Holtaway, Sally J. Patterson, and Alan R. Lessik. Four members of the team (Barker, Holtaway, Patterson, and Lessik) divided responsibility for the seven field studies, with three evaluators each taking lead responsibility for two studies and one evaluator taking responsibility for one field study and the synthesis report. The other two members of the team (Hirschmann and Clapp-Wincek) were each assigned lead responsibility for one of the two desk studies.

The professional backgrounds of the evaluators are development management, cultural anthropology, political science, and political organizing and opinion research. All four of the field evaluators had previous professional experience in Russia; three of them had worked in Russia within the previous 6 months.

A team planning meeting of the AID project managers, the evaluators, and representatives of the grantees was held on 4 January 1994. The participants agreed to support the evaluation as a collaborative, candid, constructive, and creative process. The evaluators then interviewed AID officials and grantees in their offices in the Washington, DC area and California. Extensive documentation was gathered from AID and the grantees throughout the evaluation and reviewed by the team.

The field evaluators visited the Russian Federation from 20-29 January, at which time the team broke into two sub-teams, one of which visited Ukraine from 29 January to 5 February and one of which visited Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan from 29 January to 5 February. The method of the field visits was derived from rapid appraisal techniques, which stress creation of a team, multi-disciplinary treatment of data, selective sampling, gathering information through interviews, and conscious efforts to identify biases.

With the full cooperation of the grantees, the evaluators structured their itinerary to maximize opportunities to observe significant project activities as they were underway. Similarly, the

grantees provided names of key beneficiaries, who became priority targets for interviews by the evaluators. Interviews with Russian-speaking informants were conducted in English using professional interpreters. To the extent that logistics permitted, at least two team members participated in interviews with beneficiaries in the NIS. However, intense time constraints required numerous modifications of the optimal itinerary and interview schedule.

Near the end of the field visit to Russia, the evaluators sponsored a roundtable discussion with 10 political opinion leaders, on the political and social environment in Russia and American assistance to Russian organizations.

Following the field visits, the team reassembled in Washington, D.C. to review findings. In keeping with the collaborative approach to the evaluation, team members met with AID officials and individually with staff of seven of the nine grantees to present key findings and conclusions informally and to review critical issues.

The team interviewed a total of 238 people, who are listed in the individual reports, and reviewed numerous program documents, which are also listed in the individual reports. Background documents common to all of the reports are listed in Appendix B.

The team expresses its sincere appreciation for the excellent cooperation and support received throughout the evaluation, from AID officials in Washington; from USAID and U.S. Embassy staffs in Moscow, Almaty, and Kiev; from the staffs of the grantees in their headquarters and field offices; and from the numerous beneficiaries of these programs.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE GRANTS/COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

A. The Awards

In the months immediately following the approval of the Democratic Pluralism Initiatives (DPI) Project, AID awarded Grants or Cooperative Agreements to a small percentage of the nonprofit organizations that had submitted unsolicited proposals to the Agency. This evaluation examines nine of these awards:

ABA/CEELI	Grant	\$3,164.906
Atlantic Council	Grant	626.500
American Foreign Policy Council	Grant	129.900
Citizens Democracy Corps	Cooperative Agreement	2,700.000
Free Trade Union Institute	Grant	1,043.563
IFES	Cooperative Agreement	1,776.000
Internews	Grant	2,209.280
IRI	Cooperative Agreement	4,453.493
National Democratic Institute	Cooperative Agreement	3,853.620
TOTAL		\$19,957.262

Table One outlines the grantees and their level of activity by country. Each of these grants or cooperative agreements is examined in an individual report.

TABLE 1

Grantees and their Countries of Operation

	ATLANTIC COUNCIL	AFPC	INTERNEWS	CEELI	IFES	FTUI	CDC	IRI	NDI
Russian Fed	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Belarus			•	•	•				
Moldova				•	•				
Ukraine	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Georgia			•		•				•
Armenia				•					
Azerbaijan				•				•	
Kazakhstan			•	•	•	•		•	•
Uzbekistan				•				•	•
Turkmenistan								•	•
Kyrgyzstan				•	•			•	•
Tajikistan									

- Major presence
- Some program activity

B. The Recipient Organizations

The nine organizations which received these awards well reflect the pluralism that is associated with American democracy. Two of the organizations, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI) are private, independent, nonprofit organizations created in the early 1980s by the two main U.S. political parties but managed autonomously to carry out essentially nonpartisan activities in foreign countries.

Two other organizations are equally well known. The American Bar Association (ABA) is the professional society of some 365,000 American lawyers; its Central and East European Law Initiative (CEELI) is a project developed by the ABA's Section of International Law and Practice. The Free Trade Union Institute (FTUI) was created by the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) in 1977 to develop and implement

programs with European trade unions. NDI, IRI, FTUI and ABA have their headquarters in Washington, DC.

The remaining five recipients of these awards are less widely recognized. The American Foreign Policy Council (AFPC) was founded in 1982 as a nonprofit organization to provide information to Congress on the formulation of U.S. foreign policy. The Atlantic Council of the United States (AC) is a national, non-profit, public policy center that addresses the advancement of U.S. global interests through informed public debate about American foreign, security, and international economic policies. The Citizens Democracy Corps (CDC) was established in 1990 as a political initiative of the Bush Administration to coordinate private sector assistance and to mobilize private sector expertise and financial resources to strengthen emerging democratic institutions. The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to monitoring, supporting and strengthening democratic election systems around the world. Internews is a nonprofit organization that provides training and assistance to independent television stations to develop local news production capabilities, strengthen programming and increase financial sustainability. The AFPC, AC, CDC, and IFES all have their Headquarters in Washington, DC. Internews is based in Arcata, California.

Apparently none of the grantees had much long-term experience working with AID before these grants were awarded. The CEELI, CDC, and FTUI had received AID grants for work in Eastern Europe in 1988-89. NDI, FTUI, Internews, and IFES had previous experience in the NIS with non-AID funding.

C. Program Elements

While DPI did not attempt to define the methodologies that grantees would follow in implementing their programs in the NIS, a number of common program elements or sets of activities emerge. These include: needs assessments; technical assessments, in-country training, workshops and conferences; provision of commodities/equipment; in-country resource centers; on-site technical assistance and consultation; and study tours. Each program element is described below.

Needs Assessments

Once in the NIS, most grantees developed the basis for implementing their programs through in-country assessments of the political/social situation and an inventory of community needs and expectations. These assessments are important documents that provide essential information to staff in the U.S. and create a foundation for determining future programming and the terms of assistance. They generally included discussions with AID and U.S. Embassy staff, key contacts and decision makers within the capital, and field visits to cities outside the capital. Needs assessments are an effective tool for ensuring that the program strategies and implementation timelines reflect the political and social climate within the country and allowed programs to be tailored to the needs of the "reformers" targeted by the in-country staff.

Technical Assessments

Technical assistance and consultations with institutions and individuals in the NIS has enabled DPI projects to tailor their support to the unique needs of individual beneficiaries. These assessments are more specific and comprehensive, addressing specific political and social conditions, policy and governance issues, and other areas where comprehensive efforts or strategies are needed.

IFES conducted Pre-election Technical Assessments (PETA) in Georgia, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Moldova, Belarus and Kazakhstan. The PETA is a comprehensive assessment of the election law; the capability of the election structure (at the CEC, regional and *oblast* level) to administer the election process; the role of other international participants; and, a determination of which IFES assistance would be most productive in the near term to support the election process.

Another example of a comprehensive technical assessment is the NDI Pre-Election Report for Russia, 23 November 1993, which was a comprehensive analysis of the 33 political party blocs which were in formation prior to the December 12th election. This report reflected the background of the bloc and bloc leaders, and outlined the key elements of their political history and platforms.

In-Country Training, Workshops and Conferences

Organized meetings are the primary vehicle through which the grantees deliver their assistance. Depending on the format, the training are described as workshops, seminars, training sessions, issue sessions, and conferences. These vary considerably in size and duration, from a few people meeting for a few hours to large gatherings lasting several days. While comprehensive records were not available, a conservative estimate of the types of training sponsored by the grantees and attendance by NIS participants is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Cumulative Results of Training, Workshops and Conferences

Type of Training	Organizations	Number
Political Party, Elections Preparation	IRI, NDI	2284
Legal, Judicial	CEELI	279
Television, Radio	Internews, FTUI	324
Parliamentary	AC, AFPC	107
Free Trade Union	FTUI	1000
Central Elections Commissions	IFES	250
Women	IRI, NDI	250
Law students	CEELI	1200

Total	5,694
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The training sessions are most often hands-on, emphasizing new skills development through practice and simulations. The grantees conduct training programs with resident American staff, supplemented by U.S.-based consultants. They also utilize local technical experts with local language skills and/or cultural awareness. Among the grantees, NDI, FTUI and IFES also used international experts from Eastern Europe, Latin America or Asia because their experience was more directly related to those of the NIS and they were able to convince Russians that rapid change is possible. A number of grantees have trained local trainers to expand the capabilities of local staff and organizations.

The best workshops and conferences distribute abundant written materials, in local language, to all the participants. These materials allow the participants to revisit the issues raised in the training sessions and to continue to learn the principles once the training is over. Written materials include primary documents from the U.S. and international sources about governance, political parties, campaigns and elections, U.S. laws and legal practices and advocacy.

The most common evaluation practice is to conduct simple evaluations using questionnaires completed by participants at the end of the workshop. Grantee staff members noted, however, that participants are culturally conditioned to be generous in their praise for structured events and additional follow-up is needed to get more objective input for evaluations. Given the extraordinary pressures to continually expand their programs, none of the grantees has conducted follow-up evaluations with workshop participants to determine what types of skills and knowledge have been utilized.

Provision of Commodities/Equipment

Many of the DPI organizations have identified gaps in technology and equipment that prevented local organizations and political groups from operating effectively. Several of the grantees, therefore, included the provision of equipment to local organizations, as a part of their program. A significant amount of the equipment provided to local organizations has been to support the development of communication infrastructures within the NIS. This equipment allowed beneficiaries to operate at a higher level of efficiency because they were then able to communicate in a way that they had not anticipated. Technologies, such as e-mail and fax machines opened up instantaneous communications channels, channels that previously had to rely on word of mouth, rumor and state-monitored phones and mail.

Internews provided computer hardware and software to create an electronic mail network, initially among six TV stations in Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan. In addition, it procured equipment to set up a television production and editing studio in Moscow that serves as a focal point for developing a local news program. FTUI has contributed computer hardware and software to the six radio stations that participate in the Russian Free Trade Radio Project known as 5+1 to facilitate access to information about free trade union activities in remote industrial centers previously unavailable to workers in Russia. IFES donated computers and fax machines to the Central Elections Commissions in Russia and Ukraine to facilitate information flow and ballot tabulation for the Parliamentary elections.

The provision of equipment enabled the grantees, such as IFES, to gain an opportunity to work with targeted reformers. By tying their assistance to the provision of desired commodities, IFES was able to gain a foot in the door of Central Elections Commissions. Once there, they were able to demonstrate to the Commissions that their technical assistance was as important as the equipment provided.

On-Site Technical Assistance and Consultations

Technical assistance and consultations with institutions and individuals in the NIS have enabled the DPI grantees to tailor their support to the unique needs of individual beneficiaries. Technical assistance sessions could extend over a several month period while the grantee and local partner worked to overcome some problem, gain new skills, carry out a project or develop a new policies and programs. Consultations were much shorter, sessions focused on particular issues. Both efforts involved skills development as well as behavior change introduced by U.S. experts.

The CEELI legal and constitutional assessments including 39 in Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan and 35 assessments in six other NIS countries addressed draft laws on the judiciary, bankruptcy, foreign investment, business organization, foreign concessions, elections, status of the legal profession, criminal law and criminal procedure. CDC's Corporate Assistance Program and Business Entrepreneur Program worked directly with businesses to help them become more efficient and effective. The NDI consultations with political parties and leaders focused on dealing with issues related to campaigning and candidate development. Internews worked directly with selected independent television stations advising them on both technical and financial matters.

In-Country Resource Centers

Several DPI grantees have established resource centers within their field offices to respond to information requests and provide general education and training materials regarding democratic systems and political development. The resource centers have compiled extensive reference and training materials in English, translated them into the language of the host country, and responded to major requests from the government for participation in the analysis of election laws, parliamentary procedure, municipal administration and political party development. NDI and FTUI have the strongest in-country resource centers: IFES maintains a resource center in Washington, D.C. but has developed its capacity to quickly dispatch materials to its in-country staff for translation and distribution.

CEELI has developed small law libraries and resource centers in Moscow and Almaty that have U.S.-based materials and references. Internews has developed a media center in Kiev, which has all the equipment necessary to serve as a production center for independent journalists in the country.

Study Tours

Study tours to the U.S. are the final common program element of DPI. Tours allow NIS leaders to see and experience first hand how the U.S. system works. They also provide a cost-effective

means for utilizing U.S. political and technical experts in workshops and programs. Finally, the tours allow the NIS participants to develop relationships with not only U.S. experts but with citizens and community groups also.

The tours were a small part of the budgets of the nine Grants and Cooperative Agreements, but they are the main program elements of the two smallest Grants. The programs of the Atlantic Council and American Foreign Policy Council provided for study tours and exchanges between U.S. officials and their Russian and Ukrainian counterparts. Other grantees, such as CEELI, NDI and Internews used study tours as a program adjunct for particular NIS leaders that, due to their positions or experience, would gain from a U.S. experience that could not be replicated in a workshop in the NIS.

D. Management by the Grantees

Overall, the DPI grantees have been successful in acting quickly with limited AID oversight or intervention. In doing so, they accomplished a primary objective of the strategy. They have established a physical presence in the NIS, implemented quality programs and technical assistance, and have demonstrated their ability to respond to fluid and politically charged events. They have established partnerships with local organizations and people and provide U.S. expertise. In examining the management of the program by grantees, the evaluation team looked at six aspects: locus of management control; field offices; staffing; procurement of commodities/equipment; collaboration amongst grantees; and monitoring and reporting systems.

Locus of Management Control

The grantees implement their programs through a wide range of management models, policies and cultural sophistication. The evaluation team identified three management styles within the DPI: strong management from the U.S.; strong management by the field; and shared decision making between the field and Washington. CEELI and IFES have strong management from the U.S. NDI and FTUI appear to have shared decision making between the field and DC offices, while Internews and IRI appear to rely on decision making in the field. The AC, the AFPC, and IFES have offices only in Washington, D.C., although IFES sets up temporary offices in the Central Elections Commission office in the countries where they work.

The locus of authority has important implications for budget and program management. Grantees that devolved budget authority to the field were generally able to respond more quickly to conditions and events in the NIS. These grantees found it easy to fund local events, hire needed staff and interpreters and provide for basic logistical needs. The CEELI representatives did not have this authority and often found themselves awaiting a Washington decision on simple procurement matters. IFES, despite its Washington-based budget authority, was prepared to act immediately upon requests from the field, thus avoiding duplication of effort and delays.

In addition, except for IFES, grantees that only had a U.S. office or had strong management from the U.S. were not as able to create a strong buy-in for their program. The two U.S.-based grantees had difficulties recruiting participants for their study tours and creating strong ties with local institutions. Some of CEELI's legal specialist assignments that were developed based on

Washington contacts floundered in the field when the local counterpart was not ready or interested in working with the program. IFES did not have these problems because once they were set up to work with a Central Elections Commission, the local team had clear roles and the authority to carry out their work, with strong backing from the U.S. In contrast, programs with strong local components, such as NDI, Internews and FTUI were able to respond to local needs quickly, make adjustments in programs on the spot and thus exceed projections for participant involvement.

Field Offices

Most of the grantees were able to quickly establish an office or base of operation in the NIS to support their program activity. Despite the difficult logistical problems of finding a secure and functioning apartment and/or office space in Moscow, Kiev and Almaty and setting up communications links, this was done quickly and at fairly low cost. Due to the lack of privately owned commercial facilities in Moscow and some of the other cities, the grantees often set up their operations in apartment buildings rather than commercial locations. Usually, these offices, as well as their private living quarters, required renovation of the electricity, plumbing or security systems, which again was done at low cost and in record time.

The establishment of communications linkages with the U.S. via telephone, fax and e-mail was the next priority of the field offices. Again, in most cases, the grantees were able to overcome local bureaucracies to set up phone links to the U.S. However, in at least one case, the grantee organization delayed in providing adequate phone and fax equipment for the local representative, which in turn reduced the responsiveness of the program in that country.

IFES is unique among the seven grantees that set up offices in the NIS, because it has a specific counterpart organization, the Central Election Commission (CEC), and makes it a priority to negotiate office space for its personnel within the CEC. IFES does not currently maintain an on-going presence in the NIS but utilizes special teams arriving in-country prior to the election and remaining until the final tabulation of election results. The two smallest grantees, AFPC and Atlantic Council, solely conduct exchange programs between the United States and Russia (AFPC) and Russia and Ukraine (Atlantic Council) and have no field offices. They rely on intermittent trips by staff members and local counterparts to carry out their work.

Staffing

The evaluation team was impressed with the quality of the grantees' field staff members. The best of them combine youthful enthusiasm and energy, a solid understanding of their technical field, language and culture skills, and practical management experience. These are clearly not easy people to recruit, and finding so many of them is probably a reflection of the fact that IFES, FTUI, IRI, Internews, and NDI are highly regarded organizations in their respective fields.

The relative youth of the grantees' field staff, typically ranging from the late 20s to mid-30s, may have caused some doubts in the eyes of local counterparts. However, the evaluators found no evidence that age has caused any problems. More important than age, in the eyes of local partners, were the skills, knowledge and access to resources that the grantees represented. If

those were present and the needs of the local beneficiaries were being met, satisfaction was apparent.

Grantee salaries are much lower than comparative AID contractor salaries, ranging from \$18,000 to 30,000. The lower level of salaries virtually requires that staff members be single and without dependents. Without family members present, most American staffers are willing to spend long hours on the job, including nights and weekends. The use of staffing in this way assumes eventual burn-out of staff and replacement with the next generation of high-energy individual.

As some of these programs approach their second anniversary, they are also experiencing a transition in leadership. Several leadership positions have already been handed over from the first generation staff, the high-energy trail blazers, to the second generation, the program managers. This handover is an important event that requires real institutional sensitivity and attention to ensure that there is an overlap rather than a hiatus during the transition.

Two programs, CEELI and CDC, rely on *pro bono* staff or volunteers. In both of these cases, short-term volunteers have been a cost-effective means for providing assistance. However, the use of long-term volunteers as *de facto* staff members, such as in the CEELI program, has not been as effective. CEELI has had some difficulty recruiting for some of its positions since their representative must forego salary for a year. In addition, changing the representative on a yearly basis does not facilitate the development of institutional memory and the building of long-term relationships.

There is a constant, healthy tension between the need to recruit experienced managers and campaign/political experts, and the need to hire staff with language skills and cultural sensitivity. As grantee staffs have expanded, they have had greater ability to achieve a critical balance between these competing needs. The grantees are aware of this need and are attempting to respond to feedback from beneficiaries for more sensitivity to the NIS culture and experience.

Most of the programs use Americans as the professional staff, with support staff and interpreters hired locally. However two grantees, FTUI and Internews, have had local professional staff from the start of their programs. In both of these cases, the organizations have been able to create true partnerships in the NIS, with programs that are seen as being part of the local community. This partnership has enhanced their acceptance and their ability to work with local counterparts.

Provision of Commodities/Equipment

The provision of commodities/equipment was only a small part of most grantees' program. Internews had the largest procurement of equipment for their television production studio, and despite their inexperience in dealing with AID regulations, had no problems. On the other hand, CEELI ran into a number of problems, both within their organization as well as with the Russian government in their procurement of court equipment for the jury trial project. At the time of the evaluation, although this equipment was delivered to a Russian government agency, turf battles within the government have prevented distribution.

Except for this one case, computers, copy machines and other equipment distributed by the grantees appear to be in use and cared for by the intended counterparts.

Collaboration Among Grantees

The evaluation team did not discern overlap and duplication among the DPI grantees and their projects. In Russia, all of the interested parties reported strong collaboration and information sharing among the various grantees, especially prior to the December elections. This collaboration was facilitated by USAID/Moscow and was welcomed by the grantees. In contrast, although no such facilitation occurred in Ukraine, the grantees reported collaboration on training programs and a series of televised voter education debates.

Monitoring and Reporting

Many of these programs have been project rather than management focused in their initial stages. There is a need to instill respect for monitoring inputs, outputs and impact among those who are highly motivated, but not report oriented. The team suggests streamlining the quarter reporting process to capture information needed for management decision making and the creation of a different report format for reporting program activity and outcomes.

Many of the grantees commented on the challenge of quantifying their efforts. There needs to be some discussion about techniques to measure impact within a democracy initiative; measurements that are sensitive to the challenge of creating such initiatives in a foreign country where achieving democracy will require substantial change and where the initiative must come from the people who live there. Regular quantification of output data for reporting could make aggregation of information and comparison of results easier.

E. Management by AID

Interviews with more than a dozen AID officials with responsibility for managing the DPI Grants and Cooperative Agreements revealed a complex relationship that balances AID's perceived need for accountability and rigorous monitoring against an equally strong mandate for flexibility and collaboration with the grantees. These two forces are probably the result of the unprecedented challenge of providing almost immediate, high-visibility assistance in a highly politicized environment and during the transition from a Republican to a Democratic administration. The initial grants were described as having been "written on the back of an envelope" at a time when the Agency was specifically enjoined from conducting assessments or developing a strategy. Under these circumstances, the grantees selected for funding, and their proposed activities, appear quite appropriate.

With the passage of two years, however, there are now increasing demands in Washington for accountability and measurement of performance against strategic and programmatic objectives. AID and the DPI grantees have had the challenges of implementing complex grants requiring great flexibility while simultaneously clarifying the goals and purposes of the activities and developing objectively verifiable indicators for their achievement. The relationship is additionally complicated because these cooperative agreements and grants are designed to offer more

flexibility than contracts. AID officials seem genuinely pleased with most of the grantees' responsiveness and performance overall.

AID officials are sometimes at a disadvantage in their relationship with these grantees because AID has limited first-hand familiarity with the Russian language, with the culture area, and with conditions in the field. Heavy workloads have precluded regular monitoring visits, which forces officials to rely on written reports as substitutes for personal observation. In the field, AID has made limited efforts to visit NGO project sites and headquarters. Grantees have consequently requested more frequent advice on policy changes and program directions, and efforts to coordinate NGO program activities and sharing of information.

3. IMPACT

A. How Well Did Grantees Meet DPI Goals and Objectives?

DPI did not lay out specific goals and objectives for the grants and cooperative agreements made under the program. Indeed most of the signed agreements had few, if any, specific indicators and targets. Instead AID developed a strategy in November 1992 that set four overall programmatic guidelines for DPI. These guidelines were: to help reformers; to provide symbols of successful reform; to maintain flexibility and to deploy quickly in the field; and to establish program priorities. Each one of these guidelines may be examined to determine the success or failure of the DPI organizations as they started their work in the NIS. In addition, under the strategy, programs are expected to promote maximum self-reliance, prevent aid dependency, and where appropriate, require some form of self-financing or private sector support within five years of conception.

Help Reformers

- *U.S. assistance should be used to reward those reformers in the NIS attempting to restructure public and private sector roles critical to the transition to market-based, democratic societies. At the same time, democratic differentiation must be tempered with a sense of geographic and program priorities.*

Four steps--identification, gaining trust, needs assessment and provision of assistance-- were common to all DPI organizations as they sought to help reformers. The first steps in this process were to identify reformers in the various sectors in which DPI organizations worked, and to gain their trust. Once reformers were identified, their needs had to be ascertained and a package of assistance developed.

For the DPI organizations with staff in the NIS, these four steps were often compressed. IFES was the only NGO with a clear organizational counterpart with which it could collaborate, the various Central Election Commissions. CEELI was also able to identify counterpart agencies within the government such as the Constitutional Drafting Commissions or parliamentary committees that were attempting to develop new legislation. FTUI was able to determine which of the trade unions were not enterprise unions and which could therefore be identified as free trade unions. Internews' counterparts were the commercial, non-state television stations. In Russia, IRI and NDI had a considerable challenge because there were no preexisting direct counterpart organizations. IRI identified the Democratic Russia Movement as an early partner, and NDI used its network of municipal contracts from its NED funded program to identify political activists.

Through the combined efforts of these grantees, several thousand reformed minded individuals have received training and technical assistance. Many of these reformers have been public officials in executive, parliamentary or the judicial branches of government. In this capacity, they are working on the inside to change procedures, regulations, laws and activities in which the government is involved. Most of the participants in the CEELI, AFPC, AC and IFES programs

fall in this category. These programs specifically targeted branches of the government -- the judiciary, parliament members, elections commissions -- for assistance.

Just as important, however, are the reformers outside the government identified by NDI, IRI, FTUI, CDC and Internews. In the case of NDI and IRI these are grassroots party workers and supporters, the majority of whom are not government officials and members of Parliament. FTUI is working with reformist unions and their members who by definition are workers in the industrial centers throughout the NIS. Although some of these participants are government officials or are seeking election to such positions, the programs offered by these grantees are focused on the skills and activities necessary to influence public policy via advocacy or the electoral process. Finally, CDC and Internews are most often working with market place reformers -- businesses, business support organizations and commercial independent television stations.

All DPI organizations have been successful in helping reformers. The Washington-based organizations have had impact on fewer reformers than those in the NIS, due to the small size of their programs and difficulties that they have had in establishing themselves in the NIS.

Provide Symbols of Successful Reform

- *Within each country, where possible, look for opportunities to bundle assistance efforts in the most reform-oriented regions to illustrate our comprehensive approach to reform and to create symbols of success that may be replicated in other regions.*

Given the independent nature of grants and cooperative agreements, AID's ability to bundle such assistance is limited. However, it appears that the grantees have in several cases done this on a de facto basis, as they worked where they found willing and able reformers.

Most of the field organizations have done an excellent job of working outside Moscow in the Russian Federation, as well as developing locally based programs in other NIS countries. In Russia, the team found several regions where DPI organizations were implementing complementary activities and programs that were able to utilize local energy to a far greater extent than one organization alone could muster. A good example is in the mining region in the Urals, centered around Yekaterinburg and Chelyabinsk. In this region, NDI and IRI have done political party training, FTUI has done training on collective bargaining and established a bi-weekly half hour radio broadcast, and Internews has conducted journalism and television station training.

The Jury Trial Initiative of CEELI is helping the Russian court system to implement jury trials in nine regions. The first trials have highlighted this new form of court proceeding in regions outside of Moscow, all of which are overseen by reform minded judges. In cities, such as Samara, where there are powerful independent television stations, the value of the jury trials has been broadcast to a wider audience.

Nizhny Novgorod is probably the most well-known reformist city in Russia. It has been a base for CEELI's work in bankruptcy reform, CDC's efforts with a business volunteer, political party training by IRI and NDI as well as several other AID projects not covered by this evaluation, such as municipal reform.

Outside of the Russian Federation, most reform efforts are occurring in the new capital cities, such as Kiev and Almaty. The conjunction of efforts in civil development, rule of law and independent media are perhaps less visible, although not less important. Other examples of bundling to provide assistance are discussed later in this report in the Russian election case study.

Other important symbols of successful reform are seen in particular projects of DPI organizations. FTUI recently helped a local union in Yekaterinburg win a court case that provided for compensation for a police officer who had been wrongly dismissed from his job. This landmark case awarded the officer 5 million rubles and reinstatement to his job. It was one of the first times that the courts were used to regain workers' rights and will lead to additional cases now that the system is seen as available for redress of grievances.

Maintain Flexibility and Quick Deployment

- *Technical Assistance should be sufficiently flexible to allow experts to be deployed or withdrawn quickly, based on the evolving situation on the ground and the pace of reform in a particular country. Bureaucratic or administrative constraints which reduce flexibility should be avoided.*

The DPI program as constituted has been able to maintain flexibility in the field, provide assistance, redeploy support and to back off when political or social conditions warrant. In a number of countries, from the Transcaucasus to several of the Central Asian republics, programs have been scaled back or cancelled when local political events become heated or support has been withdrawn.

The advantage of working with organizations that have some previous connections and/or work in the NIS was obvious in their ability to start up their programs quickly. Within months and sometimes weeks of the grant/cooperative agreement signing, FTUI, IRI, NDI, Internews and CEELI had permanent or temporary staff people in Russia. The grantees' use of other funding-- NED for IRI, NDI, and FTUI and Soros Foundation for Internews-- enabled this to occur. Only one grantee, CDC, had significant problems quickly starting in the field. Continued problems prevented them from starting programs in other NIS countries.

Virtually all organizations made decisions to work outside Moscow and St. Petersburg, as well as outside of the capitals in many other countries. This decision allowed them to concentrate on meeting reformers where they live and where they are less subject to the political pressures that usually exist in the capital city.

All of the field based programs provided assistance in discrete amounts at first, testing the waters and if they found a willing audience, expanding and formalizing training and technical assistance. For example, FTUI begins their work with an introductory meeting with a particular union. After

this meeting and other follow-up meetings with union officials. FTUI and the union decide if a match can be made of their talents, skills and need.

IFES is an excellent example of a flexible, fast deployment program. For the most part, they only come into a country within several months of an election. During this time, they ably provide direct assistance to electoral commissions and provide needed assistance to plan and help oversee elections. After an election, they scale down assistance, perhaps working on selected medium-term projects to strengthen some aspect of the elections process.

During the December elections in the Russian Federation, the grantees were able to respond to the needs of the political parties by redesigning training programs and stepping up activities in order to respond to the sudden turn of events. Organizations with in-country resource centers were able to respond quickly and provide assistance where other bi-lateral programs have been slower to respond. Using their base of operation in the capital, these grantees were also able to dispatch trainers and international consultant teams to cities throughout the country as their contacts requested expanded assistance. The Russian elections are discussed in Section C.

Establish Program Priorities

- *A core program--based on a set of priority projects--should be established for U.S. assistance in each state.*

The establishment of program priorities, whether by AID or by the DPI organizations has evolved over the two years of this program. DPI was signed into existence and several of the grantees started work before AID was established in the field. AID staff were not exclusively devoted to democratic initiatives programming and, until recently, the State Department did not permit AID to perform any assessments or develop field strategies in the democratic initiative area. For these reasons, only now is a consensus emerging around coordinated program priorities and should continue to be developed.

On the level of the DPI organizations, the ability of the organizations to establish priorities was based on their previous experience and knowledge of a country. Organizations that had programs in country or had previous experience in-country, such as IFES and Internews in Russia, were able to begin their AID-funded work with clear-cut priorities. Other organizations, that were entering the country for the first time under AID funding, such as CEELI or CDC tried to gain experience in a number of areas to determine what their priorities should be. Frequently, the team heard these programs described as a thousand seeds that were planted to see what would bloom.

B. Unanticipated Indicators of Impact

For more than 20 years AID has used the Logical Framework ("LogFrame") as a tool for planning projects and programs. The LogFrame summarizes the overall design of activities through a hierarchy of objectives: inputs, outputs, purpose, and goal. The LogFrame permits "If-Then" hypotheses by explicating assumptions about the external environment, and it facilitates the measurement of impact by specifying objectively verifiable indicators and the means of

verification. LogFrames were not developed at the time of the initial awards of the grants and cooperative agreements, but the DPI staff at AID enlisted consultants to assist six of the grantees to develop LogFrames for their individual DPI programs.

From reading their quarterly reports on DPI activities, it appears that the grantees have adopted the Logical Framework with varying degrees of success and enthusiasm. IFES' and NDI's reports seem to make the most explicit use of underlying LogFrame concepts, and the NDI quarterly reports evidence a successively increasing rigor throughout 1993.

During the first half of 1993, the DPI staff at AID began systematic efforts to consolidate the expected achievements of individual grants into an overall programmatic framework of objectives, activities, and impact indicators. This work remained in progress while this evaluation was being planned and conducted. Implementation experience during the past two years, new priorities of the Clinton administration, and changing opportunities in the NIS have all influenced the specific objectives of the DPI Project and particularly the indicators selected to measure its impact. Consequently, this evaluation did not begin with specific indicators or quantified targets. The evaluators identified seven elements which may contribute to the development of indicators for the DPI Project. The elements are:

- Establishment of sustainable organizations;
- Increased flow of information;
- Increased skills and knowledge;
- Increased practice of democratic principles and practices;
- New networks of contacts formed;
- Strengthened basis for rule of law; and
- Establishment of partnerships with the United States.

Establishment of Sustainable Organizations

All U.S. assistance efforts have as a central goal the development of sustainable organizations which deliver benefits. Of the DPI organizations, the most impressive work in this areas as been the development of commercially viable television stations through the effort of Internews. Instead of developing a program that depended on outside sources of money for equipment and programming, Internews has helped to develop NIS television stations on a commercial and self-sustaining basis. The stations themselves reported that their abilities to generate more revenues and to grow in financial strength have been due to the training and technical assistance of Internews.

On a much smaller scale, the CDC has also helped to assist commercially viable businesses through their program in the Russian Federation.

This focus towards sustainability has been part of the work of FTUI, IRI and NDI. Independent political parties and trade unions that do not receive government support are new concepts in the NIS. Therefore, fundraising and the development of a revenue base has had to be a part of the training and technical assistance efforts.

Increased Flow of Information

It is perhaps easy to underestimate the barriers to the flow of information that previously existed between the NIS and the west. Formerly, information of any type was transmitted through the government with tight controls at every level. Government control not only existed in the media and airwaves but also determined the availability of commercial, legal and political data.

An important aspect of this control which continues to have ramifications is the filtering of all information through Moscow. Even in distant regions and republics, information was sent back to Moscow for distribution, rather than being disseminated locally. This contributed to weak levels of local infrastructure for information dissemination.

All DPI projects have served to increase the flow of information available to citizens as well as government officials through formal media channels, written materials, provision of communications equipment and through training courses and seminars. The formal media channels such as independent television (Internews) and radio broadcasts (FTUI) reach the largest audiences-- potentially 100 million by television and several million people by the radio. Through these media channels, new ideas and views are generated as people are exposed to new voices, new organizations and new concepts. In addition, the Moscow-centeredness of the previous regime is eliminated as local, regional and world views are aired.

Written materials provide the second source of information that DPI organizations are able to bring to the NIS. Chief among these would be the political party and voter education manuals developed by IRI and NDI, commercial data banks available through CDC, elections manuals and other elections educational materials through IFES, legal assessments and law materials through CEELI and union publications and newspapers through FTUI. These materials are more targeted than the mass media outlets toward particularly groups of people. Consequently the audience is smaller, although the teachers gazette, in which IFES published information on the upcoming Russian elections reached 3 million teachers in 66,000 schools.

The introduction of the fax machine may have done more for the development of networking and communications among groups and individuals within the NIS and outside the NIS than almost any other piece of equipment, especially during the heady days of glasnost and during the change in Soviet government. For this reason, it is not surprising that many counterpart organizations are requesting communications equipment for their work. Several projects have made this part of their effort. Most notably, Internews has included fax machines and computer e-mail equipment as the backbone of their communications systems with their far-flung television stations. These communications means have enabled the stations to share information, news and data amongst each other in a way previously impossible. The media centers run by Internews in Moscow and Kiev provide television production equipment to broadcasters and independent journalists to film locally produced programs of topical interests.

In addition to Internews, CEELI has provided court equipment that will provide for more accurate processing of jury trials and the ability to share the experiences from one court to another. IFES has also provided some communications and data processing equipment to Central Elections

Commissions which allows them to function more efficiently and handle large volumes of data resulting from elections results more efficiently.

Finally, information is relayed person to person through workshops, seminars, study tours and technical assistance. All of the DPI grantees rely on this form of information transfer. Unfortunately, it is the most difficult to quantify in terms of impact and change, especially in a disparate program like this. The impact of these efforts were significant as participants learned new techniques for conveying information, expanded their ability to transmit their experience and created new sources of information.

Increased Skills and Knowledge

Over 5,000 people throughout the NIS have received training through the DPI organizations in this evaluation. Each type of training, targeted to a specific audience, such as political party workers, political candidates, members of Parliament, members of the government, the judiciary, lawyers, and television journalists, imparted new skills and knowledge, which participants were able to put into practice. Television crews began to produce local news programs and covered elections campaigns (Internews); political party workers ran local campaigns and occasionally elected their party member to the parliament (IRI, NDI); judges, prosecutors and attorneys participated in jury trials, developed new procedures for bankruptcy participated in drafting and wrote new laws and Constitutions (CEELI); trade union members expanded their efforts at organizing local unions (FTUI); law students learned principles of Western law (CEELI); and elections workers learned how to run and monitor internationally accepted elections (IFES, NDI, IRI).

Increased Practice of Democratic Principles and Techniques

The transition from totalitarianism to democracy requires a change of attitudes and behavior. All grantees seek to impart the principles of democracy and how these principles are applied in practice through their programs. The gains in this area are difficult to measure but nonetheless have been reported to the team in a number of anecdotes. Several examples are noteworthy:

- Television news coverage that seeks opinions of ordinary citizens and presents a variety of ideas about news events.
- The development of independent unions that are run by their own membership rather than a party-chosen leader or factory manager.
- The understanding of how coalition building takes place in the U.S. in the development of policy consensus.
- Participation in political party training of not only reformist parties but members of other parties that previously did not support the democratic process.

Participants in the grantees programs frequently expressed their surprise at how different the U.S. system is from their previous experience. One senior judge expressed this as "experiencing

another reality which propelled him at least a couple steps away from the communist system."

New Networks of Contacts Formed

The DPI projects challenged beneficiaries to work with non-traditional partners and created opportunities for them to establish new contacts and relationships with groups and individuals formerly held suspect. Many of the DPI grantees enabled their beneficiaries to interact with people outside their own region or occupation. FTUI has fostered opportunities for workers to interact with journalists and the intelligentsia, and forged relationships across union lines not constrained by enterprise relationships.

With information and power tightly controlled by Moscow, under the old system, there were few chances for local or regional networks to form, especially ones that were not under the close scrutiny of the center. The DPI project has helped to facilitate the development of networks of political parties, independent organizations and businesses and like-minded people on local, regional and international levels.

Internews explicitly set out to develop an information/ e-mail network for independent television. The result has been the formation of several regional networks of stations in Russia, as well as the first networks of stations in Kazakhstan and Ukraine. These networks share programming, pass along information and serve to end the isolation under which the stations and their staffs were previously operating.

FTUI fostered the development of networks between nontraditional partners around reform issues. These included journalists, station owners, and free trade unionists associated with the 5+1 Project. More unusual was the advisory boards which FTUI created to foster discussion of reform issues among the intelligentsia press and free trade workers. These new alliances break down stereotypes, creating opportunities for new working relationships.

Strengthened Basis for Rule of Law

It is beyond the scope of the DPI Project and its limited resources to have a major effect on strengthening the basis for the rule of law within the NIS. Nonetheless within specific areas, the project has helped in the areas of constitutional reform, legal reform, judicial reform, electoral reform, and expansion of rights.

The impact on constitutional reform has been modest at best. CEELI has worked with constitutional drafting commissions in five countries: Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Kazakhstan. The Kazakhstan Constitution is the document that has gained the most from CEELI intervention. In Ukraine a constitution has gone through several versions but has not yet passed. A CEELI assisted provision on the role of judges exists in the current version being considered. The Russian Constitution was developed by the President with little outside assistance after considerable efforts were poured into the Constitutional Drafting Commission.

Legal reform and judicial measures have suffered from the same fate. In the three countries studied, reformers have not been in control of Parliaments, which has meant that laws with a

reformist bent are unlikely to get passed. In addition, the Parliaments have gone in and out of session as battles have raged over the division of power between the executive leaders and government bodies. The best efforts to date have been in Kazakhstan, where the criminal code and the oil and gas regulatory system has been developed with considerable input and assistance from CEELI. While neither of these laws have been passed yet, their prognosis is good.

The implementation of other reform efforts, such as the Russian bankruptcy law and the jury trial law have been assisted by U.S. efforts. In these two cases, CEELI has been able to provide some expertise which has assisted in taking the laws from conception to implementation in the field in ground-breaking cases. Again, the levels of assistance were modest but because they were tied to cases very much in the public eye, they played a special role in beginning their institutionalization.

The work of IFES in strengthening the electoral process has been very important in helping the Central Elections Commissions they have helped manage elections. FTUI's success in the courts discussed earlier has provided a model for redress of grievances and use of the courts for achieving workers rights.

Establishment of Partnerships with the United States

As a USAID/Moscow official stated, the role of the U.S. assistance program is to create partnerships with participants in the NIS. The level of education, universal literacy, the access to communications media and the generally well-developed infrastructure in many parts of the NIS offer a marked contrast to many other regions of the world in which AID works. And the long history and cultural development in the NIS has created expectations by NIS leaders and participants that a partnership with the U.S. is needed and desired. A partnership assumes that both partners are equal and have information to share. In addition, the NIS partners generally see their development as emerging from a historical context which will require the modifications of our experience to work in their environment.

Thus the development of partnerships with the U.S., both on a personal, organizational and governmental level is a goal of virtually all participants in DPI programs. All of the DPI organizations had this implicitly or explicitly as part of their program. AFPC and AC have tried to link Parliament members and staffers to their U.S. Congressional counterparts. Through linkages with internationally renowned journalists and broadcasting companies, Internews has help NIS television journalists out of their isolation and helped them to understand their role as part of the international cadre of journalists. FTUI has linked free trade unions with their counterparts in the U.S. and Eastern Europe.

IFES provides the best example of creating partnerships with government entities-- the Central Elections Commissions. The remarks of one chairperson indicated that the only reason that IFES was permitted to work with the CEC was because they had the best interests of the electorate in mind.

The establishments of partnerships did not always work, especially with Parliamentary entities.. This was seen in CEELI's attempts to participate in legal reform efforts, especially in Ukraine.

Here they were not able to develop relationships as the cast of characters changed and political movements prevented the institutionalization of executive and parliamentary offices. The same held true to the AFPC efforts to work with Parliamentary members in Russia and the AC with members in Russia and Ukraine. Neither Parliament was secure and institutionalized enough for significant partnerships to be developed. However, in all of these cases, some individual relationships were developed that may influence the future as people move from role to role.

C. The Russian Election: A Case Study of the Impact of the DPI

The Russian parliamentary elections on 12 December 1993 provide the most visible examples of successful efforts within the DPI project to date. NDI, IRI, IFES, Internews and FTUI participated in activities to support the development of democratic practices and procedures surrounding the first multi-party elections to be held in Russia. During an intense three month period, the DPI grantees were able to demonstrate their ability to be set program priorities, maintain flexibility, quickly deploy assistance, target reformers, and provide symbols of success.

Furthermore, the DPI projects were well managed and collaborative. This was achieved in part through the administrative support of the USAID/Moscow office which scheduled weekly meetings and fostered sharing of information and coordination of activities among the various grantees. The degree of overlap was minimal, perhaps because of the magnitude of conducting multi-party elections on such a grand scale and under such a tight timeframe.

NDI, IRI and IFES provided a joint training on election monitoring. The ability of IFES to provide information in a timely manner directly from the CEC enabled the other grantees to know about changes in the election procedures or regulations as they occurred. They were then able to share this information with their key contacts.

This is not to suggest that there were no problems. The lack of a coordinated elections procedure within the Russian Federation and the CEC meant that no one knew precisely what was going on much of the time. Information was critical as the regulations and the guidelines changed at times, almost daily, and occasionally, even hourly. Nevertheless, the DPI projects were able to remain relatively well informed.

At the time President Yeltsin issued a presidential decree calling for parliamentary elections on 12 December (21 September 1993), IFES had already completed its technical assessment and was involved in conversations with the Central Election Commissions regarding specific technical assistance. IFES agreed to provide specific communication equipment and negotiated a supporting role within the CEC offices. They also assisted in leveraging donations of additional equipment from other international donors and provided critical liaison support for the CEC to the foreign press, election observers and the other American NGOs by providing a credential process and essential organization materials, including an international observer guide, on election day.

IFES advisers participated as members of high level panels before audiences assembled by the CEC on election administration and reform to discuss issues such as the regulation of public

opinion polls during the campaign period, election law, campaign finance and election management.

Both NDI and IRI had been working with the two main political movements in Russia, Democratic Russia and the Movement for Democratic Reforms as they attempted to formalize themselves into political parties. They worked with representatives of these movements in Moscow and outside the capital. Training focused on political party organizing and campaign preparedness. When the elections were announced, both organizations reached out to their network of contacts, prepared to intensify their training and responded to an accelerating demand for individual consultations.

In the months before the election, 35 parties, social organizations and electoral blocs emerged. Of these 35, only 21 succeeded in collecting the number of signatures necessary to appear on the ballot. Several blocs that were expected to be politically significant did not garner enough signatures to appear on the ballot, but half a dozen new blocs and organizations emerged and successfully collected the necessary number of signatures.

NDI was conducting a workshop in Vladivostok the day the elections were announced. The topic was "The Technology of Elections and Political Parties" and it was attended by 70 party activists from the Russian Far East. The workshop focused on party organization, theme development, media strategy and field organization. Later, NDI sponsored a 3 day seminar in St. Petersburg in October that paralleled the Vladivostok training. The conference provided the basis for a three part training video entitled "Strengthening Democracy" which was distributed to political parties to help them prepare for the elections. In addition they developed a comprehensive program in support of the electoral process. Beginning in October, they dispatched 12 international experts who traveled to 14 cities throughout the Russian Federation. The three week long program was designed to assist democratic political parties and blocs in developing the organizational skills necessary to compete in Russia's first multiparty elections. Beginning in mid-November, NDI assembled a second international team to conduct election monitoring training programs in the 14 cities visited by the political party trainers. International experts with grassroots organizing expertise trained nonpartisan civic organizers and political party activists to monitor the elections.

In addition to the support provided to specific political blocs and the CEC, DPI grantees also played a critical role in increasing voter awareness and understanding of the election. IFES provided specific advice on the development of official voter information posters as well as a text on marking ballots, which was aired in the form of public information announcements on radio and television. NDI produced three voter education spots in cooperation with the Russian governmental television to explain voters' rights and responsibilities, describing the complex voting procedures and encouraging participation in the elections. NDI also assisted Russian civic organizations in developing similar public service announcements for the radio and print media.

FTUI published eight separate pamphlets on critical issues of importance to workers and analyzed the platforms of the various parties. Internews provided technical support and training to six independent television stations that produced the first debates among the candidates. Several stations developed call in formats for their programs. Elections broadcasts gave the stations the

chance to learn how to cover elections and politics in an informative and interesting way for their viewers.

This microcosm example of the DPI initiatives reveals that the grantees had a clear understanding of their ability to support the democratic process, were able to identify the counterpart organizations and candidates who could most benefit from their support, and were able to deliver tangible advice and programming which enabled their counterpart entities to more effectively participate in these elections.

D. Comparison with Previous Evaluations

There are some striking, although fairly general, similarities between the findings of this DPI evaluation and the two previous democracy-building programmatic evaluations conducted by AID, cited on page 5. In the evaluation of 23 projects in Poland, the Czech and Slovak Federated Republic, and Hungary, the evaluators concluded that "many of the projects...were critical to the immediate process of transition from communist, authoritarian states, to democratic systems. The vast majority of projects and their results to date were assessed positively. On the whole, they were well-targeted and well-functioning. Some were excellent. No major problems were detected" (AED 1992: i).

In the evaluation of 43 completed and on-going grants made by the Asia Democracy Program, the evaluators found "many specific examples of accomplishment" and concluded that the projects "appear to be meeting democratization specifications: they are well designed; and the agents for their implementation appear to be carefully selected and well placed" (Development Associates, Inc. 1993).

All three evaluations were carried out quite early in the life of the project, well before its full impact could be assessed. All three projects are quite innovative, one consequence of which is that there is virtually no baseline data, few specific impact indicators, and little in the way of specific targets. In short, the projects lack the precision that is required for a well-quantified evaluation. All three evaluations were conducted with comparable methodological difficulties of small, selective samples and severe logistic constraints. In tone, all three evaluations are generally positive and identified specific achievements and signs of impact, and all three conclude that the implementing NGOs performed well overall.

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL QUICK-START ORGANIZATIONS IN DPI

The AID strategy for DPI was based on the utilization of organizations that would be able to start programs quickly in the field with little AID support. The team identified four sets of characteristics that typify those organizations that were able to start quickly and have some immediate impact. These characteristics include: client-centered product/expertise, staffing able to provide client-centered product/expertise, an organization poised to meet client expectations and the ability to adapt to AID operations/requirements. Each of these is described below with example of organizations that illustrated the characteristic to the positive or negative.

Client-Centered Product/Expertise

- **Beneficiaries/clients clearly identified at outset:** The DPI organization knows exactly what types of people and organizations they are dealing with and what their needs are. Formal or informal needs assessments have been undertaken to determine what programs and services will be most responsive to beneficiaries needs. Internews and IFES do this well.
- **Beneficiaries/clients are compatible to the DPI organization:** The DPI organization establishes clear criteria regarding its counterpart organization and has a precise understanding of the types of assistance it can and cannot provide. Some of these entities will be government entities that may require special sensitivities; others clearly will be non-governmental and in fact, may be working in opposition to the current government.
- **Identifiable American product/expertise desired by clients:** In the formative stages of these projects, the beneficiaries and the clients first had to establish a common understanding of need and expertise of the DPI organization. Out of this relationship came the request for technical assistance and training. IRI and NDI have shown that they are demand driven organizations providing training and expertise not available in the NIS. The problems with the CEELI Jury Trial Initiative resulted from the lack of consensus over the need for certain types of expertise.
- **American product/expertise adaptable to local conditions:** The DPI organization is able to successfully adapt their product/expertise to local conditions in a timely fashion for specific clients. Use of international consultants from other emerging democratic nations and NIS counterparts enhances the likelihood of this outcome.
- **Clear input/output objectives:** The best organizations are able to identify what resources they need to carry out their programs and what means they will use to do so. However, plans alone are no guarantee of client buy-in. Internews had projected the numbers and types of training it would offer in its grant proposal and were able to measure whether they were meeting their objectives.

Staffing Able to Provide Client-Centered Product/Expertise

- **Language/cultural sensitivity of staff:** In virtually all cases, the staff of DPI grantees have strong language ability and knowledge of culture. The NIS countries are very sophisticated and expect that those working with them will have the ability to communicate well and understand their current environment.
- **Campaign mentality of staff:** In the best cases the evaluation team found staff that was committed to their work, were willing to put in long hours and believed in their cause. The time differential between Washington DC and Moscow and the outlying cities required long work days, frequent weekend activity and a campaign mind set by staff members. The zeal of the staff was tempered by their ability to communicate and listen to their counterparts. FTUI, NDI and IRI present some of the prime examples of committed staff.
- **Terms of service allow for institutionalization:** Personal trust and interaction were the foundation of the early partnerships between NIS organizations and the DPI organizations. These relationships cannot be developed if local staff is not permanent and serving at least a several year term. Short-term staff and consultants can provide short-term expertise but cannot guide a program. CEELI liaisons with one year terms leave just at the point that their effectiveness is at its highest after building local contacts.
- **Extensive use of local staffing:** While the DPI organizations bring American expertise, their use of local staffing for their programs helps to institutionalize their work and utilizes the networks to which the local reformers associate. Internews now have program directors and technicians in the Russian Federation and Ukraine that are primarily Russian and Ukrainian. FTUI's local foundation also provides a firm rooting in Russian soil for its work.

Organization Poised to Meet Client Expectations

- **Previous organizational in-country experience:** The organizations that were able to get started most quickly had previous in-country experience. IRI, NDI, FTUI all had NED funding which they used for this purpose in the NIS. Internews had Soros Foundation funding.
- **In-country presence established:** This presence allows the DPI organization to experience conditions in-country, to identify potential collaborators and to demonstrate seriousness of intent. FTUI, NDI, IRI and Internews all established offices and local presences in the countries in which they worked. AFPC and AC, without local offices, had a harder time in getting their program developed and experienced more difficulties in identifying and gaining participants.
- **Program management in-country:** Decision-making must reside in country for programs to act flexibly and to meet local conditions. The reliance on the field personnel meant that organizations were able to best assess and respond to local needs. Internews

experienced the most field autonomy and was able to utilize their U.S.-based staff to provide needed support and resources for their work.

Ability to adapt to AID operations/requirements

- **Knowledge of AID Procedures:** Many of the DPI organizations were new to working with AID. Yet the ones that were able to learn and respond to AID's expectations and procedures were able to work more easily with their (usually) largest funder. Internews proved its ability to manage a fairly large procurement of equipment for television production, whereas CEELI struggled with a relatively minor procurement of equipment, that in turn required AID to intervene.

- **Low management intensity at AID:** Most DPI organizations require little management oversight by AID. This was particularly true when DPI started and USAID missions did not exist. Even today, understaffing at the missions require that DPI grantees not require intense supervision. From the beginning, Internews and FTUI proved themselves to be able to carry out their program with minimal AID intervention.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Recommendations for Improvement of Current Programming

The nine individual evaluation Reports contain a total of 53 specific recommendations. About half of these are actions recommended for the individual grantees. To preserve the context and clarity of these recommendations, they are not abridged here; interested readers are referred to the individual reports. The following recommendations focus on actions that are relevant to all current grantees under the DPI Project:

1. Monitoring and evaluation systems should be designed and implemented by all grantees. While some grantees have preliminary logframes and fewer still have some sort of monitoring system developed, greater guidance by AID in the development of these systems is needed in order to begin to document impact. This may be done by holding joint workshops in Washington and in the field for AID and the grantees. This type of workshop would send an important signal to the grantees that AID is concerned with this type of information and would acquaint AID with what is possible to collect. This participative approach can greatly improve future performances.
2. AID should consider developing multi-year grant and cooperative agreements which would allow current grantees to engage in long-term planning for their projects. While the current system was developed under less than certain conditions, multi-year commitments are now possible. The ability of the grantees to work in the field would be strengthened.

B. Recommendations for Future Democratic Initiatives Programming

In addition to the recommendations for current grantees, all of which are applicable to future DPI Project collaborators, the evaluation team makes these additional recommendations:

1. Specific objectives and targets should be set for areas of DPI focus and activities, within the current five components. The development of targeted objectives for each of the five areas of DPI will guide RFP and program development. This will help shape realistic expectations for what can be accomplished.

In addition, the evaluations noted two areas for specific changes:

- There is need to develop strategies for working with parliaments, given their changing face and lack of reformers. All members of parliament are likely to benefit from study tours or other experiences, if they are planned to meet the members needs and are arranged in a politically sensitive manner.
- AID may wish to consider elimination of civilian-military relations as an area for its focus. This area requires high-level, long-term commitment by U.S. and NIS governments, and currently these commitments do not exist in the NIS. AID, with its one civil-military grantee, has not shown that it has the level of entry to NIS

civilian and military officials to make this program work. The democracy office of the Department of Defence may be a better home for this important initiative.

2. No single strategy for implementing DPI is suitable for all countries, or even a group of neighboring states. Country by country strategic plans must be developed in collaboration with existing grantees, USAID missions, local NGOs and NIS governments. The development of such strategic plans would help to target the missing areas of DPI involvement in a manner that would help to guarantee buy-in from NIS NGO and government representatives.
3. NGOs and PVOs have unique insights to contribute to project design. AID/W and USAID officials should examine the extent to which they can become *facilitators* of the Grants and Cooperative Agreements in the DPI Project. This means to:
 - Treat the grantees as collaborators and utilize their expertise and NIS experience in developing strategies and program directions, as well as for gaining in-country background and information.
 - Set out clear, agreed upon management and program objectives on which the grantees must report and be evaluated. This will allow AID to receive the necessary information to determine the progress of a project and perform its own management oversight without micro-managing the grantee activities.
 - Share strategic thinking more fully as it evolves, and to illuminate policy and program priorities as they change.
4. NGOs and PVOs have, and will continue to have, a vital role to play in instigating political change in the NIS. An area of future program activity for all components is the development of advocacy NGOs within the NIS. Local NGOs must start gaining skills and experience in advocating for their needs within governance systems. This role cannot be played by outsiders.
5. Integrate efforts between State, USAID and the pertinent DPI organizations for the development of integrated program activity. AID/NIS could facilitate information sharing during periods of high activity, especially in the weeks prior to an election. In addition, it can hold brainstorming or strategic planning sessions for the grantees to discuss long-term needs and opportunities.
6. Circulate the Quarterly Reports more widely, especially to the USAID missions. The reports should be revised for better management use, as described in recommendation 3.
7. AID might wish to revisit the programs currently within the DPI and to consider additional programs for NGO development, voter education, and other activities beyond the scope of the current grantees, such as the League of Women Voters and the National League of Cities.

8. AID should review the individual reports for examples of successful programs or projects which might have relevance for other grantees or cooperative agreements. For example, the FTUI joint Russian-American foundation is an interesting model of a partnership designed to pass control to the Russians over time.

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