

THE CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY
San José, Costa Rica

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT
LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

October, 1994 - September, 1995

Introduction

The Costa Rican legislative development program began in 1991 with the adoption of the Master Plan for the Development and Modernization of the Legislative Assembly and with the formation of the Special Commission on Modernization. In February of 1992, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) affirmed its support of the Master Plan and signed a three-year contract with the Center for Democracy to assist the Costa Rican legislature in the development of a program designed to make the legislative process more efficient and more effective.

Since then, the Center for Democracy has worked closely with the Legislative Directorate and the Modernization Commission in six areas:

- 1 Institutionalizing the legislative development process,
- 2 Strengthening the organizational structure of the Legislative Assembly,
- 3 Developing education and training opportunities,
- 4 Improving institutional linkages,
- 5 Developing legislative information systems, and
- 6 Coordinating multi-donor funding

In February of 1995, the Center for Democracy obtained a thirteen-month extension to the original contract from USAID, permitting the Center and the Assembly to continue developing the **Program for Legislative Development (PRODEL)** and to implement a number of important projects.

During the extension period, the Center for Democracy will focus its efforts on five of the six principal goals of the project. Because the Assembly has recently received a \$1.9 million computerization grant from the Interamerican Development Bank, the Center will not be directly involved in the development of information systems, except in the area of staff training.

Annual Progress Report

1 Program for Legislative Development (PRODEL)

The Center for Democracy's principal project during this period was the creation of the **PROGRAM FOR LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENT (PRODEL)**, approved by the Modernization Commission and ratified by the Legislative Directorate in September, 1994

PRODEL links the Legislative Assembly to the resources of the University of Costa Rica, through the Center for Research and Training in Public Administration (CICAP). The Program provides high-level technical assistance to legislators in developing legislative studies and drafting proposed bills. Topics studied by **PRODEL** must be of national transcendence and must require a high level of specialization. At the specific request of a deputy and with the approval of the Modernization Commission, **PRODEL** also organizes seminars, workshops and conferences, and produces publications of legislative interest.

PRODEL coordinates its activities with the Modernization Commission and the Assembly's Department of Technical Services. Upon receipt by the Modernization Commission, a deputy's request for assistance is assigned to an upper-level university student, who, under the supervision of one of **PRODEL**'s senior advisors, conducts a detailed background study of the issue. With the approval of the Modernization Committee and the respective deputy, **PRODEL** contracts a consultant or group of consultants to draft the proposed bill of law. The consultants are recognized experts in their fields and are selected from a university data base developed by **PRODEL**. These experts are paid from a legislative studies fund which consists of equal contributions from the Legislative Assembly and the Center for Democracy.

To date, **PRODEL** has received a total of 45 requests: 7 for seminars, 7 for legislative studies, 4 for research studies, 26 for proposed bills and 1 for publications. **PRODEL** has held five of the seven seminars requested and has delivered the following projects:

Petitioner	Project Number	Kind of Assistance and Topic	Date of Delivery
Fournier Hernán Fuentes Humberto Garrón Ricardo	N°1	Prop Bill Liquidation of the National Agricultural Contingency Fund	01/24/95
Trejos Gerardo	N°2	Prop Bill Reforms to the Adoption Section of the Family Code	02/24/95
Sánchez María Lidya	N°3	Prop Bill Legal Reforms Guaranteeing the Security of Minors	03/13/95
Piszk Sandra	N°4	Prop Bill Universal Securities Law Institutional model of enterprise	03/21/95
Albán Mary	N°5	Prop Bill Comparison of Educators Salaries	04/03/95
Albán Mary	N°6	Leg Study Support to Microenterprise Woman	04/03/95
Coto Walter	N°7	Res Study Proposed changes in the selection of candidates and election of Deputies	05/15/95
Cole Teddy	N°8	Leg Study Ethnic Discrimination	06/08/95
Fournier, Hernán	N°9	Prop Bill Regulation of Solid Waste Disposal in Costa Rica	08/07/95
Albán Mary	N°10	Prop Bill Incentives for Costa Rican Artists	08/03/95
Piszk, Sandra Benavides, Bernardo	N°11	Prop Bill Reforms relating to legal international grants and loans	08/03/95
Coto Walter Solís Ottón	N°12	Prop Bill Ethics in Public Service	09/08/95
Gutiérrez Rodrigo	N°13	Prop Bill Prevention and Regulation of AIDS	09/25/95

It is important to note that the average legislative study takes four to six weeks to be developed and a proposed bill, about eight weeks. The average consulting fee paid by **PRODEL** for bill drafting is \$1,000

2 Master's Program in Parliamentary Studies

Through the University of Costa Rica, the Legislative Assembly and the Center for Democracy have established a **Master s Degree in Parliamentary Studies**, the first in its kind in Latin America. Twenty-four graduate students are participating in the first cycle of the two-year program which began April 25. These students include twenty-two employees of the Legislative Assembly and two journalists. The total cost of the program is \$57 452,00, of which fifty percent is paid by the legislature and fifty percent by the Center for Democracy.

Master s Program in Parliamentary Studies 1995 - 1996 Curriculum	
<u>Bi-mester</u>	<u>Courses</u>
First (May-Aug , 95)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Public Administration and Institutional Law ● Parliamentary Law ● Public Policy and Decision-Making
Second (Sep -Oct , 95)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Political Economy ● Techniques of Negotiation Theory and Practice
Third (Nov -Dec , 95)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Political History of Parliament ● Strategic Management of Human Resources
Fourth (Mar -Apr , 96)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social Organization and Parliament ● International Economy
Fifth (May -Jun , 96)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Constitutional Law ● Information Systems and Technology
Sixth (Jul -Aug , 96)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Public Finance and National Budget ● Methodology of Research
Seventh (Sep -Oct , 96)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Public Administration ● Communication and Public Opinion
Eighth (Nov -Dec , 96)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ethics and Legislative Oversight ● Méthods and Techniques of Political Analysis ● Thesis Project

3 Legislative Training Program Short Courses

The **Legislative Training Program** developed and offered by CICAP and the University of Costa Rica completed its first cycle in February of 1995. Approximately 460 legislative staff members participated in seventeen 30-hour courses offered in the last year. The Legislative Assembly and the Center for Democracy split the total cost of this part of the program which amounted to approximately \$48,000.

The first bi-mester of the new program started in September 1995. The University of Costa Rica, the Center for Democracy and the Legislative Assembly signed an agreement for 24 short courses and six seminars of eight to twenty hours each. About seven hundred fifty are expected to participate in the course of the next year.

Traning Program Short Courses 1995 - 1996		
<u>First Bi-mestre</u> <u>Legislative Staff and Advisors</u>	<u>Second Bi-mestre</u> <u>Legislative Staff and Advisors</u>	<u>Third Bi-mestre</u> <u>Administrative/Financial Staff</u>
September October	October November	January February
1 Public Administration Law 2 Introduction to Parliamentary Procedures 3 Research Techniques and Reports Drafting 4 Constitutional Law 5 Technique and Process in Law Making	1 Techniques of Legislative Analysis 2 Tax Law 3 Formulation and Implementation of the National Budget 4 Administrative Contracts 5 Ethics in Public Service	1 Modern Techniques of Organization and Management 2 Operating Plan vs Budgeting 3 Public Administration 4 Re engineering 5 Modern Techniques of Human Resources Management
<u>Fourth Bi-mestre</u> <u>Support Staff</u>	<u>Fifth Bi-mestre</u> <u>Administrative/Financial Staff</u>	<u>Sixth Bi-mestre</u> <u>Legislative Staff and Advisors</u>
March	April May	June July
1 The Legislative Secretary Functions and Responsibilities 2 Ethics in Public Service 3 Motivation and Productivity 4 Team Work 5 Etiquette and Protocol	1 Administrative Procedures 2 Legislative Procedures 3 Team Work 4 Economic legal and political principles of International Commerce 5 Human Relations	1 The Language and Style of Law 2 Techniques of Negotiation and Decision Making 3 Legislative Oversight 4 Environmental Policy 5 Gender and the Law

4 Conferences, Seminars and Workshops

Within the past year, **PRODEL** has organized and directed fourteen seminars, workshops and conferences with a total participation of 929 people

Month/Year	Activity	Participants	Hours
Oct 1994	Seminar Free Trade Treaty	160 employees of the Assembly UCR and Ministry of Planning	8
Nov 1994	Seminar Legislative Liaisons	53 employees of the Legislative and Executive Branch	8
Nov 1994	Seminar INTERNET	12 SIL/CFD staff	8
Dec 1994	Workshop Strategic Development Plan	60 legislative employees in the administrative area	8
Mar 1995	Workshop Evaluation of the Department of Technical Services	40 advisors fo the Department of Technical Services	8
Mar 1995	Seminar Forum on Penal System	120 Deputies legislative staff and general public Cosponsored with National Commission for the Improvement of Justice Administration	16
Apr 1995	Seminar Intellectual Property Rights	170 Deputies legislative staff Public and Private Sector	16
May 1995	Conference Ethics in Public Service	25 legislative advisors and administrative staff of the Assembly	3
Jun 1995	Conference Central American Interparliamentary of Woman Commissions	18 deputies belonging to Woman Commissions in each Central American Parliament	24
Jun 1995	Conferencia Ethics and Government the role of corruption	55 aids and administrative staff of the Assembly	3
Aug 1995	Workshop Evaluation of the Department of Parliamentary Services	40 employees of the Department of Parliamentary Services	8
Aug 1995	Workshop Evaluation of the Department of Legislative Library	22 staff of the Legislative Library	8
Aug 1995	Workshop Security Measures in the Legislative Assembly	35 security staff 14 department directors 15 legislative advisors and 12 Deputies	24
Aug 1995	Presentation of Alex Solis book <u>Legislative Oversight</u>	128 Deputies staff and guests	
Total		979 persons	9820 hours

5 Internship Program with the Texas Senate

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In August of 1994, the Center for Democracy established a **Legislative Exchange Program** between the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly/University of Costa Rica and the Texas State Senate/University of Texas. The program allows two Assembly staff members to work part-time in the Texas Senate and study part-time at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs of the University of Texas for a period of four months. Reciprocally, two employees of the Texas Senate are given the opportunity to work in the Legislative Assembly and study at the University of Costa Rica for a similar period. The program's first Costa Rican participants were placed in the Senate's Committee on Trade and International Affairs while their counterparts from Texas helped organize the Assembly's Department of Institutional Communication. The second set of Assembly employees were in Austin from January to June, 1995 and the third group will stay in Texas until December, 1995. The Center for Democracy coordinates the program and pays the cost of air transportation and provides each participant a modest cost-of-living stipend. The respective legislatures cover salaries and a small per-diem.

6 Study Tours

In this period, the Center sponsored **two study tours**

The first enabled two members of the Budget Committee, Dr. Constantino Urcuyo and Professor Alvaro Azofeifa, and two advisors from the Department of Technical Services, Gloria Valerin and Carlos Loria, to visit Washington, D.C. to gain first-hand knowledge of the budgetary process in the United States Congress (*October, 1994*).

The second tour organized by the Center allowed Raul Silesky and Karla Granados, respectively Director and Subdirector of the newly-created Department of Institutional Communication, and Deputy Juan Luis Jimenez Succar, to travel to Austin, Texas to visit the Texas Senate's Department of Media Services and to participate in the inaugural activities of the Senate. The United States Information Agency contributed airfare for the two Assembly's staffers (*January, 1995*).

7 Program of Legislative Liaisons with the Presidency

With the help of the Center for Democracy, a **legislative liaison program** has been established between the Legislative Assembly and the executive branch of the government of Costa Rica. A legislative liaison officer has been appointed in each ministry and all will be interconnected by means of a state-of-the-art computer network.

To initiate the project, the Center procured a donation of twelve "486" computers and related peripherals from the Xerox Dell Corporation of Costa Rica. In December, 1995 the Center for Democracy also organized a seminar to train the legislative liaison officers for their new responsibilities.

Over the past year, the Center has completed an distributed eleven new publications, all have the objective of facilitating the work of Costa Rican legislators. Nine other titles are currently being prepared for publication.

DISTRIBUTED PUBLICATONS			
Month/Year	Publication	Author	Copies
Set 1994	Legislative Committees with Plenary Power	Hugo Alfonso Muñoz Q	500
Set 1994	The Language of the Law	Carmen Maria Valverde Acosta	1000
Set 1994	Directory and Guide to the Legislative Assembly	Ronny Rodríguez Chang	800
Dec 1994	The Protocol of Legislative Procedures	Sergio Vinocour Fornieri	500
May 1995	How Law is Made in Costa Rica	Ricardo Aguero	3000
Jun 1995	Legislative Oversight	Alex Solís Fallas	1000
Jul 1995	INTERNET Manual for Legislative Users	Joanne y Gilbert Fuentes	1000
Set 1995	The Style of Law	Alberto Barahona N , Maria Quesada V , Marta Rivera Ch y Ma Rosa Solano S	500
Set 1995	In Search of a New Local Government	Edited transcript of Seminar	500
Set 1995	The Legislative Assembly and its Deputies 1994-1998	Kathleen McGowan, Alexander Chacón Alexander Chavarría	1500
PUBLICATIONS IN DEVELOPMENT			
Oct 1995	Manual for Legislative Secretaries (second edition)	Grenz Silene Calvo C	100
Oct 1995	The Protocol of Legislative Procedures (second edition)	Sergio Vinocour Fornieri	300
Dec 1995	Directory of Specialists with Master s or Doctorate Degrees from State Universities	Joanne y Gilberth Fuentes	300
Dec 1995	Legislative Oversight Manual	Alex Solís Fallas	500
Dec 1995	Ethics in Public Sector	Marina Ramírez Altamirano	500
Dec 1995	Telephone Guide of the Legislative Assembly	Ronny Rodríguez Chang	1000
Dec 1995	Techniques of the Law	Hugo Alfonso Muñoz Quesada	500

9 International Delegations

Thus far in 1995, **PRODEL** has hosted five international delegations of legislators. In March and August, Deputies and staff from the Legislative Assembly of El Salvador visited **PRODEL**, in July and September, two separate delegations of deputies arrived from Surinam, and in June, a group of legislators from Namibia came to learn about **PRODEL** and the assistance it offers to Costa Rican deputies.

As part of the exchange program with Southwest Texas State University, 27 professors representing different subject areas came in January 1995 to meet with their counterparts in the University of Costa Rica and key members of the Costa Rican government. This experience produced a number of benefits for both countries. One result was that a group of Professors from STWSU's Institute of Criminal Justice returned in July to conduct a security assessment of the Legislative Assembly and to provide security training to Deputies and staff.

In July, Dr. Jaime Chahin, Vicepresident of Southwest Texas State University and in August, Dr. Leonardo Cardenas, Chairman of the Department of Political Science, also visited Costa Rica to follow-up on the exchange program and to work with their counterparts at the University of Costa Rica and National University. In June, 1995, Dr. Chandler Stolp, from the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, Texas University, came to check on the progress of the Master's Program he helped to launch last year.

Finally in August, **PRODEL** hosted the visit of Dr. Mark Jones and Dr. Bill Snow, from Michigan State University and the Michigan Senate, respectively. These two gentlemen came to assess the possibility of developing a legislative exchange/technical assistance program between Michigan and Costa Rica. They will very likely channel their activities through **PRODEL** in the coming year.

10 College Students Assistance

The Center for Democracy and **PRODEL** have had an active policy of utilizing college students from the University of Costa Rica as well as from U.S. universities to assist in the development of legislative research projects. To date, thirty-one advanced students from political science or law, have worked *ad honorum* for at least four hours per day for a minimum of four months.

Of the thirty-one students, sixteen continue to assist **PRODEL**, and fifteen have returned to their studies or accepted offers of employment in public service. Hannia Vega has become the legislative assistant to Deputy Otton Solis, Max Loria is the principal advisor to Vice Minister of Public Security, Rowland Espinoza was hired to assist the Minister of Information, David Fallas is chief assistant of the Deputy Public Ombudsman, and Mariela Jiménez is a key assistant to Costa Rica's Minister of Planning.

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