

Final Report
GHANA: STRENGTHENING THE LEGISLATURE AND INCREASING
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE
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I. SUMMARY

From June 1997 to October 2000, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) implemented a program to support democratic institutions and practices in Ghana by strengthening the Ghanaian Parliament and building the capacity of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to engage in the policy-making process.

NDI helped build the capacity of the legislature to draft and review legislation independent of the executive branch; strengthened parliamentary committees; enhanced NGO lobbying and advocacy skills; and increased capacity among NGOs to utilize avenues available to them to impact the legislative process. Overall, despite some challenges faced by NDI in the course of the three years, Ghanaian parliamentarians and NGO representatives viewed the Institute's program in Ghana as a success.

II. BACKGROUND

Political Background

Ghana held its first presidential election in 14 years on November 3, 1992. Rawlings, who has ruled the country for 11 years since the military coup of 1981, received a majority of the vote and was declared the winner. Opposition leaders claimed wide-scale fraud, refused to acknowledge the election results and petitioned the Supreme Court, to no avail. Subsequently, major opposition parties boycotted the parliamentary elections that were held that same year – the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) won 188 of the 200 seats in parliament. Although controversial, the 1992 presidential and parliamentary elections marked a milestone in Ghana's political history as the country attempted to move towards a multiparty democratic system.

Four years later in 1996, new presidential and parliamentary elections marked the first time that a civilian government served its full term and put its mandate to test in a multiparty competitive election in Ghana. The 1996 elections witnessed the involvement of several thousand domestic observers under an umbrella coalition co-sponsored by NDI and party pollwatchers. International observers, including a 33-member NDI delegation, also monitored those elections, which were considered by both national and international observers to be generally free and fair. The relative success of these elections (including opposition party participation) was attributed to considerable electoral reforms instituted by the Ghanaian government following the controversial 1992 elections.

The success of the 1996 elections put Ghana on the path of being considered one of Africa's leading nascent democracies. Increasingly, Ghana was being viewed as an isle of stability in a sub-region wracked by civil turmoil and political upheavals. At the same time, some analysts warn that Ghana's journey towards democratic consolidation is far from over. As the end of Rawlings' presidential term approaches, Ghana is at a crossroads in its political development. Given that Rawlings has been a dominant figure in Ghanaian politics for more than 20 years, his non-candidacy in the December 2000 presidential election contest will test the extent to which democracy has become institutionalized in Ghanaian politics and society. The question remains whether Rawlings will stay out of the political spotlight to allow the winner of the coming elections to govern the nation as mandated. While some Ghanaians wonder whether the country's democracy can withstand a heavily contentious and potentially politically explosive election, others acknowledge that getting the country to its third democratic presidential and parliamentary election since the 1992 transition is an achievement in itself.

Ghana Parliament

The First Parliament of the 4th Republic (1992-1996) was a one-party legislature due to the boycott of the parliamentary election by leading opposition parties. Following the 1996 parliamentary elections, the Second Parliament of the 4th Republic became the first truly multipartisan and representative body in Ghana in more than two decades. Four political parties are represented in the 200-member Parliament: the National Democratic Congress (NDC) with 133 MPs; the New Patriotic Party (NPP) with 61 members; the People's Convention Party (PCP) with 5 MPs; and the People's National Convention (PNC) with 1 MP.

Immediately following the 1996 election, NDI conducted a baseline assessment of the Ghanaian parliament in response to requests from Ghanaian MPs and political parties for assistance. NDI responded positively to this request, primarily because of the diverse nature of parliament's membership meant that the legislature would be more independent of the executive branch than previous legislatures and therefore could play a more significant role in consolidating Ghana's democracy.

In its report presented to USAID and shared with the parliamentary leadership in 1997, NDI concluded that the Parliament had not yet developed the capacity to initiate or draft legislation independently of the executive branch. The legislature had no real tradition of independence for more than two decades. In this report, NDI also noted that MPs were often poorly equipped to engage in substantive policy debate among themselves or with cabinet ministers or to conduct meaningful review of legislation. MP attendance in committee meetings was often low and they appeared unmotivated as a result of the weak committee system. In addition, most MPs had little information about the needs of their constituents at the grassroots level, and when MPs did meet with constituents, they preferred to attend prearranged meetings or ceremonial functions

As a result of these findings, and subsequent discussions with parliamentary leadership and representatives of civil society organizations, NDI designed a technical assistance program to focus on the following primary areas: 1) strengthening parliamentary committees; 2) creating and enhancing the parliament's capacity to analyze, review and draft legislation; 3) improving constituency outreach; and 4) encouraging public input in the legislative process. NDI's program was designed to work toward the long-term institutional development of parliament and civil society, addressing USAID-Ghana's Strategic Objective # 4: Public Policy Decisions Better Reflect Civic Input.

III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

NDI implemented numerous training activities during the course of its three-year program in Ghana. These activities centered on two primary objectives: strengthening the Ghana parliament as a representative branch of government with the capacity to draft legislation independent of the executive branch and increasing civil society participation in the policy-making process.

However, due to unanticipated challenges encountered during the implementation of the first phase of the legislative component of its program (see Evaluation and Conclusion section for more detail), in 1998, NDI and USAID agreed that the program focus be shifted towards NGOs and enhancing their input in the legislative process. Due to budget cuts imposed on USAID in 1998 that in turn resulted in a 40 percent reduction of NDI's grant amount, the program focus again shifted in late 1999 to targeted activities with Parliament in order to achieve the overall objective: to enhance the capacity of Parliament to develop legislation reflective of public input. NDI then curtailed its work with civil society except where relevant to enhancing parliament's outreach to civil society.

The following describes some highlights of NDI's program:

STRENGTHENING THE COMMITTEE SYSTEM

Parliamentary Committee Workshops and Seminars

In December 1997, NDI organized a seminar on "The Role of the Committee in Parliament." The program was designed for and attended by majority and minority members of parliamentary committees. Discussions centered on various mechanisms and procedures for committee efficacy, including techniques for reviewing, amending and drafting legislation. Participants also learned about processes that allow them to incorporate citizen input into the legislative process. The workshop was very "hands-on" and interactive, allowing MPs to simulate a public hearing and draft mock legislation.

In late 1999, as NDI redirected its parliamentary program to further strengthen and develop the lawmaking and deliberative responsibilities of Parliament's committees

and increase the level of public input in these processes, the Institute concentrated its efforts on a few committees, including the Constitutional, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee, which is the lawmaking “workhorse” committee of the Parliament, and the Government Assurances Committee, a dormant committee that had asked for NDI’s assistance in improving its performance. NDI’s goals were to: 1) assist in developing committee structures; 2) enhance their knowledge of substantive issues under a committees jurisdiction; and 3) increase public input into legislation.

In December 1999, NDI organized a roundtable discussion for members of the Constitutional, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee as they prepared to review a controversial bill, the Vice President Succession Bill, which was before Parliament. The roundtable was unique in that it was the first NDI activity designed to increase committee members’ knowledge of substantive issues under consideration by parliament. Prior to the roundtable, many Ghanaians had expressed concern that the bill as drafted would grant the president carte blanche to dismiss the vice president. The NDI-sponsored roundtable provided committee members a rare opportunity to discuss pending legislation with legal experts and civil society representatives. By inviting a diverse group of Ghanaian experts as well as MPs, NDI and the committee chair, an environment for a frank and informative discussion of the proposed legislation was created. The discussion strengthened the ability of MPs to analyze the bill and better understand its implications. However, the bill was subsequently withdrawn by the Attorney General’s Department.

In response to a request from the Government Assurances Committee (GAC), in February 2000, NDI organized a workshop on legislative-executive relations to assist the committee in assuming its constitutionally mandated legislative oversight function. The GAC committee, which had been dormant up to that point, expressed interest in examining different ways in which other legislatures exercise oversight of the executive branch. In the past, ministers rarely appeared before parliament. Ten of the committee’s 25 members attended NDI’s workshop and discussions focused on issues such as: comparative models for legislative-executive relations; committee rules, including the power to compel testimony; procedures for requesting information from the executive branch; and the use of public hearings. Committee members also engaged in frank and open discussions about the different reasons for the GAC’s inactivity in the past and possible measures that could be taken to improve the committee’s effectiveness in the future.

ANALYZING, REVIEWING AND DRAFTING LEGISLATION

Legislative Drafting Training

In late 1999, pursuant to extensive consultations with NDI in-country staff, the Clerk of Parliament announced the Ghanaian Parliament’s intent to organize a legislative drafting unit. The establishment of such a unit would facilitate the process by which MPs could introduce private member legislation. While the parliamentary rules of procedure allow MPs to introduce legislation, MPs have not exercised this right because of the lack

of resources or expertise needed to draft legislation. In democratic legislatures, the ability to initiate or sponsor private member bills provides legislators with a unique tool to effectively translate the needs of constituents into legislation and to influence government policy.

In 1999 and 2000, working in collaboration with the parliamentary leadership, NDI sponsored six Ghanaian parliamentary staffers to attend a two-week intensive legislative drafting course at the International Legislative Drafting Institute in New Orleans, Louisiana. During the course, the Ghanaian participants conducted drafting exercises, research assignments and prepared working formulae for use in a drafting office. Two of those clerks that NDI sponsored were John Agama, Editor of Debates, and Cyril Nsiah, Senior Assistant Clerk, who attended the course in June 2000. Following their participation in the course, the clerks traveled to the Washington DC area for working meetings with senior staff at the US House of Representatives and the Maryland General Assembly. During the study visit, Agama and Nsiah received and discussed recommendations that later formed the basis for a plan to establish a permanent legislative drafting unit within Parliament. The plan, which NDI assisted the clerks in finalizing, was submitted to the parliamentary leadership for review and approval in October 2000.

Also in 1999, NDI published *Researching and Analysing Legislation: A Manual for Members of the Parliament of Ghana and the Parliamentary Staff*. The manual outlines various types of legislation, explains the role of clerks and other parliamentary staff in the legislative review process, identifies the steps in this process and provides a checklist and other tips for reviewing legislation. The manual was the result of an assessment on parliament's drafting needs conducted by Charles Alan Boright, a legislative draftsman at the Vermont Legislative Council. The manual was distributed to all 200 Ghanaian MPs and senior parliamentary staff. It served as a key resource during NDI's 11-week legislative drafting course, and is widely used.

On June 5 2000, NDI launched a sustainable 11-week legislative drafting course in the Ghanaian Parliament. NDI in-country staff worked with Ghanaian experts to design this program to further enhance Parliament's ability to produce private member legislation reflecting input from civil society and to expand the benefits of the International Legislative Drafting Course to a wider group of beneficiaries. Acting Clerk of Parliament Rex Owusu-Ansah called the course a "dream come true" and the First Deputy Speaker Ken Dzirasah described it as a "highly relevant capacity-building program." The course was taught jointly by Professor Crabbe, a Ghanaian law professor who conducted a legislative drafting program at the University of West Indies Law School, and Stephen Terravecchia, NDI/Ghana resident director in agreement with the parliamentary leadership. NDI targeted training at parliamentary clerks in order to build the capacity of Parliament as an institution. Approximately twenty clerks and several interested MPs attended the course. Seven of the clerks who participated in the course will form the nucleus of a legislative drafting unit that the Ghanaian Parliament plans to establish in the near future.

Private Member Legislation Initiative

In early 2000, the Women's Caucus of the Ghanaian Parliament, in collaboration with Federacion Internacional de Abogadas (FIDA)-Ghana, solicited NDI's assistance in drafting a private member bill. NDI, FIDA and the Caucus worked together on an initiative to introduce the first private member legislation, a domestic violence bill, in the Ghanaian Parliament. The legislation sought to provide a comprehensive set of provisions that would provide victims of domestic violence with a broader set of civil remedies such as restraint orders and financial support for wives and children. The Women's Caucus and FIDA initiative grew out of meetings between FIDA and Caucus members during several NDI-facilitated NGO orientation visits to Parliament. First NDI provided the two parties with domestic legislation from various countries for comparative study and later organized a three-day workshop in Sogakope in April 2000 to bring Caucus and FIDA members together to discuss and finalize the draft domestic violence bill.

On May 29, NDI and FIDA sponsored a one-day National Forum on Domestic Violence as a follow-up to the three-day Sogakope workshop. The forum offered an opportunity for representatives of women's NGOs, cabinet ministries and government agencies to review and analyze the proposed draft bill and offer recommendations on how to strengthen its provisions. One hundred and five individuals participated in the national forum. Participants included members of parliament, lawyers, representatives of women's groups and organizations, the police service and other security agencies. While members of the Women's Caucus have been sidetracked by preparations for upcoming parliamentary elections, they plan to introduce the bill for debate and adoption as soon as the new parliament convenes.

IMPROVING CONSTITUENCY OUTREACH

"Town Hall" Meetings

In November 1998, NDI organized the first of a series of public forums to give Ghanaian citizens an opportunity to learn about the workings of parliament and to interact with MPs on matters of national interest. However, MPs had dominated the discussions with their individual agendas without allowing citizens sufficient opportunity to voice concerns or to discuss issues that were pertinent in their constituencies. NDI developed a new approach that involved partnering with local NGOs to co-organize "town hall" meetings instead. These local NGOs and NDI helped to steer the meeting agenda in ways that obliged participating MPs to better address the concerns of the constituents and allowed citizens to express their opinions and concerns regarding various policy issues in the region where the meetings took place. NDI, in collaboration with local NGO partners, including Leaders of Tomorrow and Management AID (MAID), conducted four regional town hall meetings. Regional fora were well-attended and allowed MPs and constituents, especially those in rural areas, a rare opportunity to

interact and share information about the legislative process, the role of MPs and local concerns.

ENCOURAGING PUBLIC INPUT IN THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

In March 1998, NDI organized a seminar on “Civic Advocacy: NGOs in Public Policy” as a launching pad to the Institute’s efforts to engage Ghanaian civil society in the legislative process. Seminar participants focused on how NGOs and the legislature could forge constructive partnerships, the respective roles of civil society actors and parliament in the policymaking process, significant steps within the legislative process and possible avenues through which NGOs could generate public interest on issues and advance policy initiatives. Following the seminar, NDI worked with a number of NGOs to form issue-based coalitions in order to foster stronger ties among groups with similar areas of interests and to maximize their impact. Participants at the seminar recommended that NDI and its local NGO partners organize advocacy workshops and orientation visits to parliament.

NGO Orientation Visits to Parliament

NDI co-organized six NGO visits to parliament, an activity that became a linchpin in the Institute’s efforts to strengthen ties between NGOs and the legislature. These visits afforded NGOs an opportunity to become better acquainted with the legislative process and MPs that chaired various relevant committees; they also were an occasion for MPs to learn from NGO representatives about issues of concern to their constituents and to forge ties with groups that had expertise in areas that could be of interest to MPs nationally or in their constituencies. The NGO visits generated substantial dialogue between civil society organizations and the Parliament and brought both parties to recognize the need to work together in advancing legislation and issues of national interest.

During one of these parliamentary orientation visits, MPs and NGO representatives agreed on the need to publish a directory of NGOs to help facilitate communication between MPs and civil society organizations. Pursuant to that agreement, the Coalition on the Rights of the Child, with NDI technical and financial assistance, developed and published the *Child Rights NGO Directory*, listing contact information for civil society organizations that focus on children’s issues by sector and geographic region. Funded by NDI under this grant, five hundred copies of the directory were printed, 50 of which were deposited in the parliamentary library for member use, encouraging MPs to rely on relevant NGOs as important sources of information. The remaining copies were distributed directly to the MPs and other interested parties.

NGO Skills-Building Workshops

NDI-Ghana also organized skills-building workshop for civil society organizations during which participants learned about lobbying and advocacy skills while increasing NGO knowledge of the legislative process. These workshops achieved

measurable results at a relatively low cost as NDI capitalized on the expertise of local resource persons. Through the years, NDI has conducted regular workshops on topics such as lobbying and advocacy, writing and presenting memoranda before Parliament, policy analysis and fundraising.

The Ghanaian Parliament has an established procedure whereby citizens can submit memos on petitions to parliament. Faced with increasing citizen interest in the legislative process, the parliamentary leadership began encouraging civil society to use this mechanism to draw parliament's attention to their concerns. It became evident during this process that few civil society organizations were familiar with the correct procedure. To address this situation and to build upon prior work with civil society, NDI organized a series of memo writing and presentation workshops. Working with local resource persons that included Angela Dwamena Aboagye, a lawyer and the president of a local NGO, NDI-Ghana staff sponsored several memo writing and presentation workshops during the course of the program. These workshops were among the most effective tools for skill-building as they gave NGOs the capability to translate their ideas and concerns into written opinions before parliament on various issues. That new skill allowed them to influence policy more directly.

Seminars

NDI sponsored a seminar on "Enforcing the law on ritual servitude in Ghana," organized by the Ghana Human Rights NGO Coalition on August 23, 2000. The seminar was a historical initiative since this was the first time that Ghanaian civil society organizations have led such a public effort to actively follow-up on the enforcement of a law passed by the legislature.

Clause 3 of the Ghana Criminal Code Amendment Law prohibits customary practices that involve servitude in any form. The customary religious practice known as Trokosi subjects girls to servitude in shrines to atone for the offences committed by family members. The Human Rights NGO Coalition and NDI organized the seminar with the following objectives in mind: 1) to assemble all agencies involved in the enforcing the law on ritual servitude and find ways to ensure their commitment to abolishing the practice of Trokosi; 2) to explore the issues behind why the law has not been fully enforced since its passage over a year ago; 3) to strategize on how human rights NGOs and activists can work together with law enforcement agencies in fully applying the law on ritual servitude; and 4) to create space for collaboration between human rights NGOs and state agencies charged with enforcing the rule of law.

More than 100 participants attended the seminar, including local NGO and international organizations representatives, four MPs, two deputy ministers, students, victims of ritual servitude and shrine priests. Overall, the seminar was a success, particularly because all of the major stakeholders were represented, allowing for a full discussion on the topic and a concerted effort to find viable solutions to enforcing the law on Trokosi.

IV. RESULTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Below are some highlights of program accomplishments over a three-year period:

Key Results:

Objective: *Enhancing the ability of Parliament, through staff and committees to play an effective role in the legislative process and provide opportunity for citizen input.*

Overall, the Ghanaian Parliament has improved its performance in the years since NDI first began its program. These general improvements are a result of a combination of factors, including parliament's maturation into a representative body as capacity and institutional memory grow from uninterrupted democratic rule and technical assistance the institution has received from NDI and similar organizations in building its capacity to be an effective legislature.

- During 1999, members of parliament, especially those from the minority caucus, increasingly used the introduction of private member motions to debate important issues as a vehicle to raise public awareness, and to make the incumbent government more accountable. NDI had encouraged members to introduce motions as an effective avenue, short of private member legislation, for raising important issues. A total of eight private member motions were introduced during the three parliamentary sessions of 1999, in stark contrast to the one that was introduced in 1998. NDI also noted a marked increase in the performance of some committees, with the overall committee system in the Ghana Parliament becoming increasingly active. After its 1997 committee workshops, NDI noted 362 committee meetings in 1998 and 428 in 1999. NDI monitoring revealed the following additional improvements within Parliament:
 - MPs proposed amendments to 31 percent of the bills submitted by the executive branch of government as compared to 7 percent in 1998; and
 - 62 percent of the bills passed directly reflected input from civil society organizations, some of which were NDI partners, as compared to 50 percent in 1998.
- NDI's 11-week legislative drafting course set the stage for establishing an in-house drafting unit. The parliamentary leadership was working on a legislative drafting unit plan in the weeks prior to the conclusion of NDI's program. NDI's drafting course, according to the Deputy Speaker was a "worthwhile investment and will go a long way towards helping parliament create laws that will promote the development of the country."

- The Government Assurances Committee (GAC), until NDI began working with its members, was dormant. Following NDI's workshop targeted at improving the committee's function, the GAC began fulfilling its mandate and applying the lessons learned from the workshop. In the few months following that workshop, the Government met three times—which was more times than it had met the entire year before—to update its records on unmet assurances by ministers and questions to the government that had remained unanswered. For the first time, the GAC called two Ministers to appear before the committee. The Committee also aggressively pursued outstanding questions by sending reminders to various Ministers to answer the committee's questions or else be called in for questioning. Members now regularly meet and reach a quorum at each meeting in contrast to the state of the committee prior to NDI's assistance and training.

- Based on the participation of Agama and Nsiah in the International Legislative Drafting Institute course and their study visit to Washington, D.C., the two parliamentary clerks have developed concrete recommendations and a plan for establishing a drafting unit within the Ghana Parliament. Their proposal is now under review by the parliamentary leadership.

- In March 2000, the Vice President's Succession Bill was withdrawn as a result of a report by the Constitutional Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee that described the bill as "a recipe for dictatorship and intolerance." Many of the arguments could be traced to participant discussions during NDI's roundtable held in December 1999. Indeed, the principal argument used for withdrawing the bill was first raised during the NDI roundtable. This was the first time in the 4th Republic of Ghana that the executive was forced to withdraw a bill because of opposition from within parliament. Hailing this demonstration of parliament's deliberative powers and independence from the executive as "nothing short of remarkable," a local newspaper, HSJ Accra described this development as "the first time that a Minister had done a volte face [about face] as a result of protests, not from public outcry, nor from perceived political opposition, but from within Parliament's own structures dominated by a pro-government majority, this time acting on its own, remarkably devoid of partisan considerations."

- The FIDA-Women's Caucus efforts to draft and introduce domestic violence legislation that would become the first private member legislation introduced in parliament was a milestone initiative. The initiative is a good example of the successful bridge built between NDI's parliamentary and civil society program components. The domestic violence initiative is also a prime example of how parliament can overcome the resource constraints it faces – while MPs await the creation of a parliamentary drafting unit, a team of lawyers and members of FIDA drafted the bill and incorporated comments from members of the Caucus.

- The domestic violence initiative also reveals the success of NDI's NGO orientation visits to parliament, as it was during these meetings that FIDA and Caucus member first met. The initiative also demonstrates the synergies that can result when civil society organizations and MPs work together to develop public policies. NDI realizes that the journey ahead to introducing the domestic violence bill could be long given the fact that in the 40-years of post-independence, no private member legislation has been introduced in Parliament. Nevertheless, the domestic violence legislation initiative already sets a precedent for the next Parliament of Ghana as it reaffirms to MPs and local NGO leaders that these two sectors can effectively come together to develop legislation that will positively impact democratic governance and the well being of Ghanaians.

Objective: *Enhancing NGO's understanding of the policy-making process and their capacity to use opportunities for public participation in that process on behalf of their constituents.*

Results from NDI's parliamentary and civil society monitoring efforts reveal that there was a marked improvement in the performance of NGOs who have participated in NDI's programs in influencing policies. From 1998 to 1999, the percentage of bills passed that directly reflected civic input increased from 50 to 62. Over the same time period, the number of meetings between NGOs and policy makers increased by 43 percent. Results from the 1999 performance monitoring also show that:

- The aggregate score for 1999 on the performance of NDI-partner NGOs in influencing policies was 19 out of a maximum score of 30 points. This was a six point improvement from the 1998 score; and
 - In 1999, 20 meetings were held between NDI-partner NGOs and policymakers, a 43 percent increase from 1998.
- The orientation visits to parliament allowed NGOs to be acquainted with various MPs and relevant committee chairs, demystified the parliamentary process and gave NGOs access to an institution where they could impact national policies relating to their particular interests. MPs, in turn, became more receptive to sharing information with NGOs, using their expertise to strengthen the legislative process. Furthermore, updates from NGOs who participated in these orientation visits indicate that civil society groups were following up with MPs and government agencies after their visits. For example, following their orientation visit, members of the Youth Coalition met with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture officials to discuss a national policy that seeks to encourage youth to participate in agriculture rather than have them migrate to urban areas in a futile search for jobs.

- NDI's Town Hall program was successful in helping develop local NGO capacity to organize public meetings with MPs and enhancing civic society "in-reach" to parliament. These fora also gave MPs and constituents a rare opportunity to interact and to learn from one another. Furthermore, by involving Ghanaian partner organizations as co-sponsors of the town hall programs, NDI laid the foundation for sustainable relationships that could be further enhanced upon the termination of the Institute's program. Former NDI partner organizations such as Leaders of Tomorrow and the Coalition on the Rights of the Child are now poised to continue similar activities on their own.

- The memo drafting workshop series was an important vehicle for imparting practical knowledge to local NGOs on how to present their views to parliament and to inform the policy making process. More importantly, the NGOs that participated in the workshop are applying the skills they learned during these workshops. For example, the Constitutional, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee called for memos on an amendment to the Criminal Procedure Code in the summer of 2000. Since many of the amendments will affect juvenile delinquents, the Coalition on the Rights of the Child, a group that the Institute has worked with on several occasions and which has participated in the memo drafting workshops, submitted a memo on the bill to Parliament.

- The organization of the seminar on enforcing the law on ritual servitude in Ghana was a direct result of NDI's NGO-focused workshops and orientation visits to parliament. One of the recommendations of NDI's maiden advocacy and lobbying workshops, which was attended by more than seventy NGOs in March 1998, was the need for civil society organizations not only to lobby and advocate on policy formulation but also to ensure that laws that are passed by the legislature are enforced. Most of the Human Rights NGOs in the present coalition that organized the August 2000 Trokosi seminar participated in NDI's 1998 advocacy and lobbying workshop and subsequent ones, and have since attempted to put into practice the lessons learned from these workshops. During an NDI-facilitated orientation visit to parliament in July 1999, the Human Rights NGO Coalition alerted MPs of their findings that the law passed by parliament to end Trokosi was being flouted with impunity. It was during the NGOs orientation visit to parliament that members of the Human Rights NGO coalition and MPs agreed to organize a seminar that would ensure that all the stakeholders in the fight against Trokosi are able to air their views on the best ways to enforce the law and abolish the practice.

V. EVALUATION/CONCLUSION

NDI's program in Ghana can best be characterized as one of challenges and triumphs. One of the initial challenges faced by NDI in Ghana was the reticence of the Ghana Parliamentary leadership to commit to NDI's program activities. The leadership had initially predicated its participation in the Institute's technical assistance programs on

“bricks and mortar” projects such as the rehabilitation of the Parliament’s Tower Block building. This issue created a long-standing impasse, prompting NDI to reevaluate its strategy on working with Parliament. NDI actively sought ways to break through these barriers and, failing strong commitment by the leadership NDI decided to concentrate its program on civil society organizations, which embraced the Institute’s assistance.

Another obstacle NDI faced during the course of the three years was the turnover rate in resident directors. Admittedly, this was not conducive to maintaining program continuity as each new director was faced with an orientation period to the political scene and NDI’s partners, as well as the task of building new relationships before being able to forge ahead with programming. These changes, however, were beyond NDI’s control. The staffing situation stabilized towards the third year of programming although at that point the program began to face budget cuts and an uncertain financial future. Another program impediment was the long-term negotiations with USAID on resolving budgeting issues in order to secure the final tranche of our grant. These negotiations lasted for more than a year and did slow down program activity as NDI-Ghana’s funds dwindled.

Despite these challenges, NDI was able to forge ahead with programming at an active pace, gaining measurable results and achieving its goals. Along the way, NDI triumphed in finally securing Parliament’s commitment to participate in its programs and in getting MPs to take the initiative in seeking assistance and being willing to apply recommendations that came out of NDI consultations and workshops. NDI was able to garner the respect and appreciation of MPs and civil society leaders alike through its years of work in Ghana. Program activities were well attended and benefited the target groups and individuals. Participants always found the level of discussion substantive and informative.

When NDI staff first arrived in Ghana they were told that, by encouraging private member bills or in-house drafting of legislation, they would offend the executive branch and risked expulsion from the country. However, NDI succeeded in implementing an 11-week legislative drafting course in parliament that has paved the way for future courses and laid the foundation for a drafting unit within the legislature. NDI was able to encourage and facilitate efforts by the Parliamentary Women’s Caucus and members of FIDA to draft and attempt to introduce private member domestic violence legislation. In the process, the Institute also earned the respect of the executive branch and consulted extensively with the office of the Attorney General’s Department.

Overall, NDI’s work with the Ghana legislature has borne results. Once an institution where MPs simply made speeches, rarely engaging in debate or reviewing legislation, the Ghana Parliament now has committees that review and write analytical reports on legislation and that oversee the executive branch, as well as MPs who regularly put forth motions. The parliament also has staff that is now trained by NDI to review, analyze and draft legislation.

More triumphs came with NDI’s work with civil society organizations. The Institute succeeded in effectively working with local NGOs to increase their capacity to

organize activities around issues that address the needs and concerns of their constituents, while bringing policymakers into these discussions for greater impact. Activities with civil society organizations demonstrated the value added to NDI's two-track approach to political development in Ghana in the post 1996 period – working with both decision-makers and the local NGO community to increase opportunities for public participation in the policymaking process.

While the need still exists to further strengthen Ghana's parliament and build the capacity of local NGOs to impact the policy making process on a more consistent basis, NDI has laid a strong foundation for the attainment of a more representative, viable and stronger legislature and civil society. The Institute, therefore, is confident in asserting that, on the whole, this program was a success and had an impact in the continued democratization process underway in Ghana.

Appendix I
Ghana: Strengthening the Legislature and Increasing Citizen Participation in Democratic Governance
NDI-Ghana Program Activities 1997-2000*

1997

October	<i>Workshop: Women's Parliamentary Caucus Role in Furthering the Legislative Agenda</i>
November	<i>Report: Baseline Assessment of the Ghanaian Parliament</i>
December	<i>Seminar: Role of the Committee Parliament</i>

1998

February	<i>Seminar: The Role of the Party Caucus in Parliament</i>
March	<i>Seminar: NGOs in Public Policy</i>
May	Legislative Research and Analysis Training and Preparation of Draft Manual NGO Parliamentary Orientation Visit <i>Working Lunch: Parliamentary Committee on Youth and Sport and NGO Coalition on Youth Development</i>
June	NGO Parliamentary Orientation Visit
July	<i>Roundtable: NDI and Parliamentary Leadership meet on moving legislative programming forward</i>
September	<i>NGO Roundtable: Parliamentary Orientation Visits</i>
October	Parliamentary Research Facility Assessment
November	Public Forum in Koforidua <i>NGO Seminar: Civil Society Impacting Public Policy</i>
December	<i>NGO Workshop: Policy Analysis</i>

1999

February	<i>Town Hall Meeting</i> in Kumasi co-organized by Leaders of Tomorrow Foundation <i>NGO Workshops: Lobbying and Advocacy; Working Effectively with the Media</i>
May	<i>Town Hall Meeting</i> in Wa District <i>NGO Workshop: Comparative Study on impacting the policy making process</i> <i>NGO Workshop: Creative Fundraising</i>
June	Four NDI sponsored Ghanaian Parliamentary Clerks attend International Legislative Drafting Institute in Louisiana <i>Town Hall Meeting</i> in Sunyani
July	Two NGO Parliamentary Orientation Visits

* This table reflects significant activities conducted by NDI-Ghana. It *does not* show all activities (i.e. one-on-one consultations, technical assistance, Ghanaian participation in NDI regional programs, etc.) performed during the three-year program.

August	<i>Town Hall Meeting</i> in Tamale
October	<i>Manual: Researching and Analysing Legislation</i> (distributed to MPs)
November	Parliamentary Orientation Visit
December	<i>Roundtable: CLPA Committee Review of the Vice President Succession Bill</i>

2000

February	<i>NGO Workshop: Drafting and Presenting Memos to Parliament</i> <i>Workshop: for Government Assurances Committee (GAC) on Legislative Oversight of the Executive</i>
March	<i>Workshop: Domestic Violence and Initiating Legislation.</i>
May	<i>Forum: National Forum on Domestic Violence</i> NGO Coalition on the Rights of the Child Membership Directory Launch
June	Two NDI-sponsored Ghanaian Parliamentary Clerks attend International Legislative Drafting Institute in Louisiana <i>Course: NDI Launched 11-week legislative drafting course within the Ghanaian Parliament</i> <i>Two NGO Workshops: Drafting; Presenting Memos to Parliament</i>
July	<i>Workshop for the GAC on US Congress Oversight Experiences and Techniques</i>
August	<i>Seminar: Enforcing the law on ritual servitude in Ghana</i>
September	<i>Regional NGO Workshop: Drafting and Presenting Memos to Parliament</i>