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**Quarterly Performance Report  
April–June 2004 (3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter FY04)  
Americas' Accountability/Anti-Corruption Project**

**Prepared By  
CASALS & ASSOCIATES, INC.  
1199 North Fairfax Street  
Third Floor  
Alexandria, VA 22314**

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Throughout this regional project, Casals & Associates, Inc. (C&A) has striven to develop cross-border information sharing and synergies by supporting South-to-South cooperation, believing there is substantial value in arranging for pro-reform advocates with successful programs in one country to share their experiences with and train counterparts in other countries. C&A also has worked to leverage USAID funds by participating in regional and national conferences to disseminate results from project activities throughout the region. Several of the activities described below are the result of pursuing these approaches.

**I. Improved Government Policies and Practices to Reduce Corruption**

**Regional Anti-Corruption Desk Assessment**—During April and June, a team of AAA experts conducted a Desk Assessment on Corruption in the LAC Region. The assessment provided a baseline overview of corruption in Latin America; provided USAID’s LAC Bureau inputs for designing an effective, realistic and comprehensive regional approach for the five-year strategy period, 2004-2009. Although not exhaustive, the assessment served as a starting point to document recent trends, programming approaches and potential entry points for anti-corruption activities. The assessment also highlighted areas of opportunities and recommended feasible approaches.

The assessment drew on current literature, C&A’s experiences and an extensive series of interviews in Washington D.C. From April 20 to May 6 2004, the C&A Team reviewed more than 100 policy and strategy documents and conducted more than a dozen interviews with key informants and experts in Washington, D.C. This information was supplemented by email interviews with missions where C&A has in-country staff and with those partners who responded to emails sent out by USAID/LAC Bureau in April and May 2004.

The AAA Team members included Norma Parker, Team Leader; Gerardo Berthin, AAA Democracy and Governance Adviser and Deputy Project Director; Yemile Mizrahi, Democracy and Governance Specialist and Roberto de Michele, consultant.

**ICGFM**—AAA and C&A were intimately involved in planning the program agenda for the 18<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the International Consortium on Governmental Financial Management (ICGFM), the theme of which was “Reducing Poverty and Corruption: An Integrated Approach to Good Governance.” Held April 18-23 in Miami, Florida, participants included comptrollers general, accounts general, municipal financial managers and other senior government financial managers from across the region.

Keynote speakers included Fred Schieck, Deputy Administrator of USAID, David Walker, Controller General of the United States and Sally Shelton-Colby, Director of C&A’s USAID-sponsored Mexico Innovation Project, who spoke on strengthening com-

petitiveness in emerging democracies. AAA also designed and participated in panels on organizational internal control and control self assessment; the former highlighted experiences from USAID's Colombia initiatives and the latter featured a presentation on information in the AAA Technical Assistance Module (TAM), "Control Self-Assessment as a Tool for Organizational Improvement in Latin America." A panel on integrated financial management at the local level featured the AAA TAM on that subject presented by representatives of the Federation of Municipalities of Central America (FEMICA) and a municipal mayor.

**The 10<sup>th</sup> Inter-American Mayors Conference**, hosted by Miami-Dade County and Florida International University, June 21-24, presented an opportunity for AAA to highlight good practices based on its assessments of effective anti-corruption programming as reflected in the TAMs produced during the past 18 months.

AAA organized and participated in a panel on "New Approaches to Enhancing Accountability and Transparency," moderated by Gerardo Berthin, AAA Democracy and Governance Adviser at which two of the seven TAMs produced by AAA were presented—Citizen Participation to Strengthen Transparency in Latin America and the Caribbean and Integrated Financial Management Systems in 17 Central American Municipalities.

Three Latin America mayors participated, as well, presenting experiences from their municipalities: Guillermo Diaz, Sabanagrade-Honduras; Mario Conejo, Otavalo-Ecuador; and Alvaro Enrique Velasquez, Envigado-Colombia. The panel addressed three key questions: How is transparency and accountability being promoted? What instruments are being used to promote transparency and accountability? And, what are the key lessons? More than 40 mayors, other senior local officials and governance experts participated.

**DCG**—The Washington, D.C.-based Donor Consultative Group on Accountability/Anti-Corruption in Latin America and the Caribbean convened, on June 18<sup>th</sup>, to discuss "Challenges of the Mechanism for Follow-up on the IACC." Presentations were made by:

- Richard Werksman, U.S. Department of State, U.S. Representative on the Committee of Experts for the IACC—"Current Status of the Mechanism."
- Paulo Eduardo de Azevedo Ribeiro, Alternate Representative of Brazil to the OAS—"Current Challenges and the Future of the Mechanism."
- Roberto de Michele, AAA consulting expert—"Presentation of the TAM on Citizen Participation in the Follow-Up of IACC."
- Juan Sandoval, Alternative Representative of Mexico to the OAS—"Constructive Voices for Strengthening the Mechanism."
- Diane Kohn, Transparency International—"Civil Society Participation in the Mechanism."

The timing of the meeting was especially appropriate, giving the 26 participants an opportunity to discuss central issues related to the Follow-Up Mechanism, as review of the first round of country responses to the follow-up questionnaire is nearing its end. A central issue that will have to be confronted is funding of the Follow-Up process. Currently, funding by participant states, which is voluntary, is insufficient to provide full-time staff

to support the Committee of Experts. This is impeding timely and expanded follow-up processes.

### Newsletters

The 34<sup>th</sup> issue of the electronic English-language newsletter, *Accountability*, was posted on ResponDanet in April and sent to subscribers. Articles featured included:

- United Nations Convention Against Corruption Signed
- Transparency International Releases Global Corruption Report
- Summit of the Americas: Leaders Affirm Commitment to Anti-Corruption Efforts
- Lax Auditing and Little Public Participation in Budgeting Found in Latin American Countries
- XVIII International Conference on Governmental Financial Management
- MEXICO: Federal Law On Access To Information Enters Into Force

### ResponDanet

The number of hits on ResponDanet for the quarter was a bit less than the same quarter last year, but still comfortably over one million. Cumulative hits since April 1998, when ResponDanet was inaugurated, total 14,637,829.

AAA is continuing to explore potential prospects for securing sustainability of ResponDanet beyond the conclusion of the Task Order. These include universities, NGOs and international donor organizations.

Main Website and Sub Sites	Hits Previous Four Project Fiscal Year Quarters					Current Quarter Apr-Jun FY 2004
	FY 2004	FY 2004	FY 2003	FY 2003	Total for Four Previous Quarters	
	1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter Oct-Dec	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter Jan-Mar	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter Apr-Jun	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter Jul-Sep		
PSI Net	1,087,330	1,023,916	1,241,578	1,095,156	4,447,980	1,077,792
AAA Flash-Sp.	54,902	52,542	23,992	45,262	176,698	42,472
AAA Flash-Eng	78,695	60,671	50,629	66,012	256,007	42,802
ACSF	11,293	13,021	13,363	10,981	48,658	13,261
ACWB	969	1,493	1,157	932	4,551	1,180
Visitor Survey	2,905	2,673	2,720	2,200	10,498	2,173
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,236,164</b>	<b>1,154,316</b>	<b>1,333,712</b>	<b>1,220,546</b>	<b>4,944,392</b>	<b>1,179,680</b>
Avg. Hits/Month	412,055	384,772	444,571	406,849	412,033	393,227

## **II. Support to Missions**

**Panama**—The country anti-corruption assessment begun at the end of March was delivered in May. The Mission put it to immediate use in developing a set of strategies for directly confronting corruption in the country. It was also used by the Mission in developing its Country Plan, which was integrated into the Regional Strategy for Central America and Mexico (CAM).

### **III. Strengthen Civil Society's Oversight Role in Reducing Corruption**

**Civil Society Prepares for OAS General Assembly**—Project Director Patricio Maldonado, traveled to Quito, in April, for strategy and organizational session in preparation for CSO meetings to be held in conjunction with the upcoming Organization of American States (OAS) General Assembly. The event was organized by *Corporación Latinoamericana de Desarrollo* to develop a set of regional initiatives to be presented to OAS member states when they convene. Mr. Maldonado used the occasion to disseminate to the assembled NGOs and CSOs the TAM developed by the project, specifically those related to citizen participation and transparency:

- Citizen Participation to Strengthen Transparency in Latin America and the Caribbean
- Citizen Participation in Follow-up of the Latin American Convention Against Corruption

Additional meetings will be held leading up to the General Assembly in which AAA will play a central role in terms of defining a unified CSO agenda and strategy for winning OAS member-states' support for greater civil society participation at all levels. -

**Monitoring Government Compliance with the IACC in Guatemala**— In June, Project Director Maldonado, Governance Special Projects Manager, Sylvia Rodriguez and AAA consultant, Roberto de Michele, traveled to Guatemala to launch dissemination of the TAM, Citizen Participation in Follow-up of the Latin American Convention Against Corruption, at a three-day civil society workshop. The first day seminar, "From Discourse to Practice: The Role of Civil Society in the Implementation of the IACC," introduced the TAM to participants, including the implications related to civil society taking an active role in assessing and reporting on government efforts to comply with the convention. Transparency International representatives from Colombia and Panama outlined their own experiences in the process of monitoring and reporting their government's compliance with the IACC to the OAS's Expert Committee of the IACC Follow Up Mechanism.

In the two days following, Mr. de Michele provided training on how CSOs conduct monitoring of government compliance, prepare reports and maximize results from distribution of the reports, especially as related to work with media.

AAA invited several civil society organizations from neighboring Central American countries to attend both the Seminar and Workshop. Transparency International supported AAA in funding the trip of representatives from Nicaragua, El Salvador and Honduras. *Etica y Transparencia*, a CSO from Nicaragua that participated in the workshop, requested AAA assistance in the organization and conduct of a similar workshop there. However, because the project is approaching conclusion and funds have been committed for TAM dissemination activities, AAA could not respond positively to the request.

The USAID-sponsored Anti-Corruption and Transparency Program, managed by C&A with partial support from AAA, continues providing technical assistance to the Office of the Transparency Commissioner and to civil society on implementation of the IACC.

The Inter-Agency Task Force created earlier at C&A's suggestion, became the first-ever collective effort among GOG institutions to focus on IACC implementation. Roberto de Michele has been advising the Transparency Commission on preparing the GOG report to the OAS on IACC compliance. He also has trained CSOs on preparing an independent report. Mr. de Michele was asked to brief the President and Vice President of Guatemala on the state's responsibility in complying with the convention.

**CSO's Respond to Technical Assistance**—At the end of March, AAA provided technical assistance to Panamanian CSOs and NGOs in the area of anti-corruption proposal (small grant requests) design and writing for presentation to USAID. This was a follow-up and complementary activity to a February 2004 workshop. In March, Mr. Maldonado and Ms. Rodriguez providing technical assistance in the review and final drafting of seven specific proposals for USAID consideration. As a result, most of the organizations submitting proposals, with this support from AAA, received funding. Projects are currently being implemented.

**Integrating Activities with USAID Partners**—In early May, AAA participated in a regional civil-society workshop on transparency, held in San Salvador, organized by USAID implementing partner Creative Associates. Project Director Maldonado joined AAA-sponsored participants, Alberto Gutierrez, Bogotá, Colombia and Pengsien Sang, Santiago, Dominican Republic. They comprised a panel at which lessons learned from the AAA TAM, "Citizen Participation to Strengthen Transparency in Latin America and the Caribbean," were presented; Messers Gutierrez and Sang described strategies and approaches on CSO involvement in participatory budgeting and social auditing from their respective countries.

**Anti-Corruption Without Borders/Anti-Corrupción Sin Fronteras (ACSF):**

AAA's electronic listserv continues to reach out and bring together CSOs concerned with better utilization of public funding in their countries. ACSF identified CSOs in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Honduras that AAA invited to attend the dissemination and training of the IACC-TAM in Guatemala in June. Guest speakers from Colombia and Panama were also ACSF members.

Stemming from ACSF experience, C&A has created several listserves with more specific focus. Among these are listserves for

- Dominican Republic in general ([transparenciado@egroups.com](mailto:transparenciado@egroups.com))
- Cibao Region in particular ([cibaotransparencia@egroups.com](mailto:cibaotransparencia@egroups.com))
- Guatemala ([guatetransparente@egroups.com](mailto:guatetransparente@egroups.com))
- The latest listserv brings together civil society organizations in Guatemala interested in social auditing activities ([auditoriasocialguate@gruposyahoo.com](mailto:auditoriasocialguate@gruposyahoo.com)). This social auditing listserv has to potential for including other social auditing initiatives in Central America.