

QUARTERLY REPORT NUMBER TWENTY-ONE DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE: DELIBERATIVE BODIES IQC

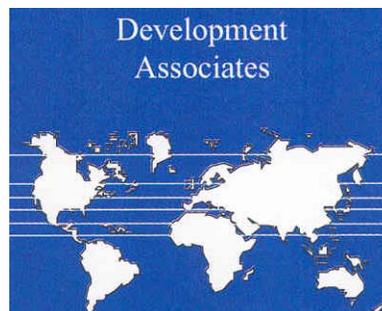
Submitted to:



U.S. Agency for International Development
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Submitted by:

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July 2005

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July 22, 2005

Mr. Keith Schulz
Democracy Center, Global Bureau (G/DG)
Room 6.07-071, Ronald Reagan Building
Agency for International Development
Washington, D.C. 20523-2052

Dear Mr. Schulz:

The Deliberative Bodies IQC (CLIN 007) that Development Associates is currently implementing for USAID stipulates that we provide a Performance Monitoring Report to our COTR on a quarterly basis.

Development Associates herewith submits our report covering the quarter just ended. We believe this meets our responsibility under Section G.9 (a) of the contract. Included in it is the Quarterly Financial Report required under Section G.9 (b). A copy also is being sent to the USAID/W Contracting Officer.

If you have any questions or comments about this submission, please be in touch.

Sincerely,



John H. (Jack) Sullivan
Executive Associate

cc: Joseph Lentini, USAID/M/OP/G/DGHCA

Enclosure: As stated

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**QUARTERLY REPORT (APRIL 1 – JUNE 30, 2005) ON THE
DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE
DELIBERATIVE BODIES IQC (CLIN 007)
AEP I-00-00-00004-00**

I. BASIC DATA ON THE ACTIVE TASK ORDERS

- ▶ **Uganda/Legislative Support Activity.** *Contract No. OUT-AEP-I-00-00-00004-00, Task Order No. 804. Period of Performance: 5/1/02 – 6/30/06. Amount: \$3,143,642.*

The 7th Parliament of Uganda took office on July 3, 2001, for a five-year term. Its most serious problems include size (it has 305 members) and management (made more difficult by size and by lack of political party representation); lack of skills; lack of information; poor legislative drafting; and poor credibility, both with the public and with the Executive Branch. All of these problems are compounded by the fact that over half of the MPs are newly-elected, and cannot rely on the institutional memory and informal networks that helped their predecessors.

Development Associates and its partner, Development Alternatives, were competitively awarded this Task Order under our Deliberative Bodies IQC, in order to advance the Mission's Strategic Objective of More Effective and Participatory Governance. The TO assigns five tasks to the contractor: 1) building human and institutional capacity through training; 2) fostering increased constituent services and dialogue; 3) strengthening legislative drafting; 4) promoting ethics and anti-corruption measures; and 5) fostering systems for free and fair elections. Approximately half of the total effort is to be devoted to the first task. The tasks will be carried out through short and long-term technical assistance; organization of in-country and third-country workshops, conferences, training, and observation tours; collection and dissemination of information on legislative norms, standards and practices from democratic countries; procurement and installation of necessary information systems hardware and software; and organization of conferences and seminars to bring together MPs and civil society and local government representatives.

DA has an office in Kampala staffed by an experienced American professional and a skilled Ugandan staff of six. On March 21, 2005, the project was extended from March 24, 2005, to June 30, 2006, and the contract value was increased from \$1.94 million to \$3.14 million.

Client references: Marie-Claire Sow, Contracting Officer, USAID/Uganda, tel. 256-41-387-387, email mcsow@usaid.gov, and Susan Cowley, Cognizant Technical Officer, USAID/Uganda, tel. 256-41-387-387, fax 256-41-387-293, email scowley@usaid.gov.

- ▶ **Armenia/Legislative Strengthening Program II.** *Contract No. OUT-AEP-I-00-00-00004-00, Task Order No. 805. Period of Performance: 9/1/04-8/31/07. Amount: \$2,483,853.00.*

This project focuses on:

Task One — Facilitating and institutionalizing the involvement of Armenia’s legislative community to advocate, lobby and advise the National Assembly on policy and legislative issues;

Task Two — Improving the functioning of key committees and departments of the National Assembly by having them work closer with the legislative community in jointly analyzing, researching, commenting on and drafting legislation;

Task Three — Improving the ability of select units and individuals within the National Assembly to be more transparent, representative and responsive to citizen priorities, interests and concerns; and

Task Four — Developing the National Assembly’s ability to improve oversight of the executive branch through existing mechanisms and, to the extent possible, through assisting in the creation of new mechanisms via Constitutional and legislative amendments.

This activity supports the USAID/Armenia’s 2004-2008 Strategy, specifically Strategic Objective 2.1, “Improved Democratic Governance.” This activity will directly contribute to IR 2: “Targeted Governance Institutions Strengthened” and sub-IR 2.1.2: “More Responsive and Effective Parliament”. It will also contribute to IR 1: “Civic Participation Expanded”.

It is recognized that certain constraints on legislative strengthening exist in Armenia. In particular, working to improve the ability of the National Assembly to practice better oversight of the executive will probably yield only limited results until constitutional amendments and new or modified legislation allows for more oversight mechanisms. Opportunities for large-scale improvements in the National Assembly’s ability to be more representative and accountable to the Armenian people are also limited. Nonetheless, the project has identified targets for increasing openness and improving representation and especially in increasing public participation in the legislative process.

Employing a mix of technical assistance, training, and limited inputs of commodities, and one-on-one consultations with National Assembly deputies and staff, Armenian policy analysis centers, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), the Armenian diaspora community, and other USAID implementing partners, the Development Associates/Development Alternatives team in Armenia works with the elected deputies and appointed staff to increase public participation, increase transparency of the legislative process, and develop a capacity for legislative analysis to improve legislation and oversight. These efforts will build internal capacity and promote sustainability. ALSP Phase II conducts its activities in close coordination with the other international organizations providing assistance to the Assembly in order to avoid overlap and duplication of efforts.

The client references are: Technical Officer, Bella Markarian, email: bmarkarian@usaid.gov, and Contracting Officer, David Brown, email: dbrown@usaid.gov, USAID/Yerevan, Phone: 37410-52-99-75, 58-61-63, 543-835, fax 374-10-543-874.

II. ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT AND PROGRESS MADE

UGANDA

A. PROGRESS THIS QUARTER

1. *Introduction and Summary*

During this quarter, Development Associates continued to implement the Uganda Legislative Support Activity (DA/LSA) Task Order in close partnership with USAID/Uganda and the Planning and Development Coordination Office (PDCO) of the Parliament of Uganda.

LSA planned, coordinated, organized, developed, and facilitated a number of activities: **a)** Parliamentary Committee on HIV/AIDS Orientation for Parliament regarding the HIV/AIDS Communication Tool Kit, **b)** Training for Clerks to Parliament, **c)** National Media Campaign: Northern Uganda, **d)** Parliamentary Briefers, **e)** Parliamentary Internship Programme, **f)** Civil Society Organisations' Formal Linkages to Parliament, **g)** Parliamentary HIV/AIDS Information Resource Center, **h)** Report on the field visit to mid-western Uganda by the Parliamentary Committee on HIV/AIDS, and **i)** cooperation between the Parliamentary Committee on the National Economy and USAID's Strengthening the Competitiveness of Private Sector project (SCOPE).

2. *Significant Activities during This Quarter*

a. **Parliamentary Committee on HIV/AIDS: Orientation for Parliament on the HIV/AIDS Communication Tool Kit**

LSA, in coordination with the Parliamentary Committee on HIV/AIDS and the Planning, Development and Coordination Office of Parliament (PDCO), organized and sponsored an HIV/AIDS Orientation for Parliament on March 31, 2005. The primary focus of the Orientation was to sensitize Members of Parliament (MPs) about the HIV/AIDS Communication Tool Kit. In addition to introducing and explaining the Kit, the aim of the orientation was to brief Members of Parliament on the progress of activities on HIV/AIDS in Uganda and globally.

Key leaders in the HIV/AIDS struggle in Uganda attended and participated in the Orientation. Hon Beatrice Wabudeya, representing the Speaker of Parliament, officially opened the Orientation. Other program participants included:

- Professor Francis Omaswa, representing the Minister of Health, who spoke on “Overview and Magnitude of the HIV/AIDS Epidemic in Uganda”;
- Ms. Inge Tack, UNAIDS Partnership Advisor to the Uganda AIDS Commission, “Overview and Magnitude of the HIV/AIDS Epidemic Globally”;
- Dr. Sam Okware, Commissioner of Health Services (Community Health), Ministry of Health, “Core HIV/AIDS Prevention Interventions in Uganda”;
- Dr. Fred Nakwagala, International AIDS Vaccine Initiative, “Update on HIV/AIDS Vaccine Trails”;

- Dr. Alex Opio, Assistant Commissioner for Health Services (National Disease Control), Ministry of Health, “Update on ARV Programme: ARV Distribution, ARV Roll Out Plan and Effect of ARVs on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Challenges”;
- Dr. Peter Mugenyi, Director, Joint Clinical Research Center (JCRC), “Update on ARV: Effect of ARVs on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Challenges; and
- Dr. Kihumuro Apuuli, Director General, Uganda AIDS Commission, “Mapping of HIV/AIDS Activities in Uganda.”

The final presentation was made by Hon. Dora Byamukama, who made these recommendations:

1. Provide interested MPs with funds to enable provision of information and monitoring both at district and constituency level (quarterly facilitation of two million shillings).
2. Support enactment of a special law on HIV/AIDS and revision of the Public Health Act in order to sustain the success registered so far. Since HIV/AIDS is a cross cutting issue, laws need to be urgently revised, including the Labour Laws.
3. Posters that used to be on the highways throughout the country with pictures and messages warning people of the dangers of HIV/AIDS need to be put up again.
4. Specific strategies targeting issues affecting the female population should be undertaken to reduce their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. She recommended that laws on the following aspects be urgently enacted to protect the female population:
 - Sexual Offence Bill
 - Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
 - Widow inheritance
 - Polygamy checks
 - Poverty and Lack of Prosperity Rights
 - Domestic Violence

Hon. Byamukama stated that some of the above issues were already provided for in the Domestic Relations Bill (DRB) and urged the MPs to support the DRB.

The Rt. Hon. Deputy Speaker, Rebecca Kadaga, then gave closing remarks. Hon. Kadaga referred to the recent Assembly of World Parliamentarians which called upon Parliaments and Governments to ensure that their laws, policies and practices respect human rights in the context of HIV/AIDS, with particular emphasis on education, work, privacy protection and access to care, treatment and social services. Governments were urged to allocate sufficient resources to their health systems for that purpose. The Deputy Speaker stated that: “Uganda should take the lead on legislation”. “We need legislation but we are told that policies are coming. Policies have been coming for years and years”. “Legislation in this country takes too long”. Hon. Kadaga appealed to Parliament “to make a difference.”

The Orientation was attended by 153 Members of Parliament, including three Ministers, a Member of the Parliamentary Commission, a Member of the East African Legislative Assembly and two members from the Pan African Legislative Assembly.

3. Training for Clerks to Parliament

LSA sponsored a two-day training exercise for the Clerks to Parliament, May 20 – 21, 2005. DA Consultant Sir Colin Shepherd served as the facilitator for the workshop. Fourteen (14) of the eighteen (18) Clerks to Parliament attended and participated. The focus of the workshop was the roles of Clerks in multi party Parliamentary environments. This training was part of LSA's ongoing training program for the Clerks Department.

A detailed report and recommendations from Sir Colin Shepherd were submitted to USAID. He commented that during the workshop, which related practices in other Parliaments to practices in the Ugandan Parliament, it became apparent that the Rules of Procedure of the Uganda House are not compatible with the requirements of a multi-party environment. For example, as the Rules are presently written there are no opportunities for the official opposition to set the business and the provisions for establishing the composition of committees do not allow for the need for proportionality reflecting the balance of party political representation in the House. He said that the start of the 8th Parliament in 2006 will be significant. There is no real prospect of any change to the way in which the 7th Parliament is operating. The probability is that there will be a change of Speaker at the opening of the 8th Parliament and the advent of plurality will make the new Chair doubly cautious in applying the Rules. However, with an anticipated turnover of 60 - 70% new members, the new Speaker will probably come from the returnees - all of whom are well aware of the current failings of Parliament - and hopefully will want to get things straight again. This presents the only opportunity.

Recommendations from Sir Colin

- 1) There should be further detailed capacity building amongst Clerk Assistants along the lines suggested in para 3.1 of this report and 4.4 of my report of September 30, 2004. This need not to be an expensive exercise but it needs to have been completed effectively prior to the forthcoming General Elections in March 2006.
- 2) The need for the Rules of Procedure to be reconsidered should be drawn urgently to the attention of the chair of the Rules and Privileges Committee, indicating the forthcoming possible (probable?) change to plurality, and the need to reflect both the requirements of proportionality of Committee membership and also the opportunity for the opposition to determine business on certain days, etc. Likewise, the Rules relating to Questions should be revisited (see Report of September 30, 2004). There may be valuable parallel experience in other Commonwealth Countries.
- 3) Representations should be made to the Chair of the Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee that the Constitution as presently written (Article 94 Clause 4 (a)) negates opportunity for the opposition in a plural Parliament and that the Constitutional Amendment Bill No. 3 currently before Parliament presents a rare opportunity to get this right before problems arise in the multi-party setting.
- 4) The Clerks Department should develop, in conjunction with the PDCO, a long-term plan for the career Development of Clerk Assistants with the objective of securing succession of expertise in a developing Parliament.

- 5) Plans for the orientation and induction of new members to the 8th Parliament should be drawn up so that implementation can be executed at the earliest moment possible after their election.

4. National Media Campaign

I found these radio programmes so educative and ever since I have been invited on a number of other radio talk shows to talk about some of the issues I presented on the two [USAID-funded] radio programmes.

- Hon. Mathias Kasamba, Member of Parliament, June 21, 2005

During this quarter, three Members of the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Humanitarian and Security Situation in the Acholi, Teso and Lango Sub-regions, including Hon. Alice Aliso, Chair of the Committee, appeared on four regional radio stations (North, West, Central and East). The four radio programmes reached 32 districts. The objectives of the programs were to:

1. inform the public about the role of Parliament in the Northern Uganda conflict;
2. inform the public about the role of the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Humanitarian and Security Situation in the Acholi, Teso and Lango Sub-regions;
3. inform the public about the Committee's report which was tabled at Parliament (June 2004).
4. inform the public about Government's response to the Committee's report;
5. encourage the public to be active participants in seeking an end to the 20-year conflict; and
6. provide specific recommendations and suggestions for public action.

Comments/Questions on Air

A number of questions were raised on air by callers to the programs: why has the war taken so long? What is the solution? Why is the war of interest to parliament? What is the scale of displacement of persons? What is the humanitarian situation like in the Internally Displaced Persons Camps? What are some of the challenges of delivering relief supplies? What is the government's capacity to handle the situation? A number of questions were raised about the Government and the Conflict: Plans, strategy, considerations for children, school fees (promise of 47,000 shillings but only 6,000 being provided), Local Defence Units [LDUs] salaries, the army being sent to fight wars in other countries while the conflict in Northern Uganda continues, does Kony exist, amnesty for Northern Uganda former rebels, protection of people living in camps, drawing a relationship between the Defence Budget and progress [or lack of progress] in bringing the conflict to an end, how can the public get involved in the situation, did the ceasefire allow Kony [the LRA] to re-organize, and why continue wasting resources? Program discussion focused on these and many other questions and issues.

a. Parliamentary Briefers

LSA printed and distributed three *Parliamentary Briefers* during this quarter. The *Briefers* are designed to inform the readers regarding issues and activities at Parliament. They are distributed

to a select audience, which includes: development partners, diplomatic missions, civil society, academic institutions, and the private sector. The *Briefer* is also distributed to USAID and the U.S. embassy. Numerous requests are received by LSA – after each distribution - from individuals/organizations requesting to be placed on the mailing list. LSA has responded by continuing to add names/organizations/institutions to the mailing list.

b. Parliamentary Internship Programme

LSA, in coordination with the People With Disabilities (PWD) Parliamentary Group, the Parliamentary Committee on Equal Opportunities, and the Planning and Development Coordination Office (PDCO), kicked-off its Second Parliamentary Internship Session at Parliament on June 2, 2005. Participants in an official ceremony included Hon. James Mwendha, Chairperson of the Parliamentary PWD Group, and Hon. Margaret Baba Diri, Deputy Chairperson.

Five interns were selected by parliament and are being supported by LSA for this Session. (LSA is providing them with transportation and meal allowances.) All are recent university graduates and all are persons with disabilities. They will serve as Research Assistants during a three month (June – August 2005) internship-training programme at Parliament. They will assist the Parliamentary Group for People with Disabilities and the Parliamentary Committee on Equal Opportunities to analyze various bills with a view towards making the laws sensitive to People With Disabilities. The Interns are required to submit monthly reports to PDCO concerning their work with Parliament. PDCO, in turn, is required to submit the reports to LSA.

c. Civil Society Organisations’ Formal Linkage to Parliament

LSA took steps this quarter to formalize a linkage and working relationship between Parliament and the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) engaged in advocacy at the national level. The Parliamentary Strategic Investment Development Plan (PSIDP) Action Plan calls for the “establishment of a framework for regular meetings between Parliamentarians and Civil Society Organisations”, as well as the “establishment of a Civil Society Network.” On May 10, 2005, LSA shared its CSO database with the Planning and Development Coordination Office (PDCO) and the Public Relations Office (PRO). The listing contains sixty-two (62) Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). Follow up activities will be planned and coordinated with the CSOs by PDCO and PRO. LSA will monitor and facilitate progress toward a formal linkage.

d. Parliamentary HIV/AIDS Information Resource Center

LSA sponsored and provided for the establishment of a Parliamentary HIV/AIDS Information Resource Center. LSA worked in collaboration with the Parliamentary Committee on HIV/AIDS, the Director of Parliament’s Library Services, and the Director of Planning and Development Coordination Office (PDCO). The Center’s Launch took place on June 24, 2005, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Parliament. Featured speakers during the ceremony included: Hon. Dr. Elioda Tumwesigye, Committee on HIV/AIDS, Hon. Alisemera Babiha Jane, Chairperson, HIV/AIDS Information Resource Center, Rt. Hon. Speaker of Parliament, Edward Ssekandi, and H.E. Jimmy Kolker, U.S Ambassador to Uganda. In addition, an Honorable Member of the Parliament of Kenya spoke.

The objective in establishing a Parliamentary HIV/AIDS Information Resource Center was to have an identified reference point, source of information, within Parliament. The Center will serve Members of Parliament and parliamentary staff directly. It will be used for 1) research, 2) collecting and sharing information, 3) testing, 4) counseling, and 5) demonstration and distribution of condoms. The aim of the Center is to help equip Members of Parliament with basic information and knowledge about HIV/AIDS in the hope that will increase participation on the part of MPs in activities to fight HIV/AIDS.

As the HIV/AIDS Committee envisioned during its Strategic Planning Workshop and Retreat in April 2003, the Center, if properly utilized, will enhance the capacity of all Members of Parliament to effectively discharge their representative, legislative and oversight functions in the intensified national response to HIV/AIDS. It is anticipated that the Committee on HIV/AIDS and all Members of Parliament will use the Center as a source of valuable information to help combat HIV/AIDS in Uganda.

LSA's contributions to the Centre included: desks, conference tables and chairs, bookcases, filing cabinets, a computer, printer and other accessories, and books, reports and other resource/reference materials. LSA will make continuous contributions of reports and other reference materials.

5. *Report on the Fact Finding Field Visit to Mid-Western Uganda of the Parliamentary Committee on HIV/AIDS*

LSA edited, bound and distributed a Report on the Parliamentary Committee on HIV/AIDS' Fact-Finding and Monitoring Visit to Mid-Western Uganda (Kasese, Bundibugyo, Kabarole, Kyenjojo and Kamwenge Districts) between January 31 – February 4, 2005. The report was distributed to a total of 43 stakeholders at the national and district levels. Stakeholders included: Members of the Committee on HIV/AIDS, Clerk to the Committee, District Directors of Health Services (DDHS), Medical Superintendents of hospitals in the districts visited, Health Center Directors, LC5 Chairs, and representatives of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). USAID implementing projects AIM and UPHOLD were also provided copies.

The Committee held a pre-field preparatory meeting on January 27, 2005, at which it was stated that the purpose of the field monitoring visit was to seek ways of increasing access, quality and sustainability of the HIV/AIDS intervention in the country. Specifically, the interest was to check on the supply and maintenance of regular HIV/AIDS logistics, the supply of anti – retroviral drugs (ARVs), the operational mechanisms and effectiveness of the CSOs and the public/private sector linkages. The field visit attempted to assess whether the resources channeled to HIV/AIDS mitigation were adequate and being rationally utilized.

From January 31 to February 5, 2005, the Committee set out to monitor HIV/AIDS activities in Mid-western Uganda. Each district had a date to host the Parliamentarians. The MPs would, where possible, make a courtesy call on the district headquarters in the morning before proceeding to other sites. Thereafter, different sites within the district would be visited. Lastly, there would be a general stakeholders meeting where district leaders would present HIV/AIDS report. Each of the major players in the field of HIV/AIDS in the district would also make a

submission. The findings from the field by the MPs would also be presented and interactive discussions would ensue.

Overall, in the five (5) districts, the MPs monitored eleven (11) Health Centers of which five (5) were hospitals, four (4) were Health Centers IVs and two (2) were Health Center IIIs. The MPs also visited and interacted with eight (8) Civil Society Organisations dealing in HIV/AIDS issues. The MPs were also hosted on a two (2) hour radio programme by the Voice of Toro in Kabalore District where they explained the purpose of their visit to the public, sensitized the listeners about HIV/AIDS, and answered questions from the public.

The following were the key findings from the Fact Finding Monitoring field visit:

- ▶ The rate of HIV/AIDS prevalence in the region is high. Kaseses District reported 16%, Bundibugyo 15%, Kabalore 12% Kyenjojo 8% and Kamwenge 8%. In all cases, these figures were above the national average of 6%.
- ▶ There was more demand for VCT services in the region than were being provided.
- ▶ The key causes of HIV/AIDS prevalence in the region included: the long period of insurgency under the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF); cross boarder trade with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC); Polygamy; Sexual Promiscuity among students; defilement and general moral decadence.
- ▶ The major constraints impacting the provision of effective HIV/AIDS services include: lack of trained staff/personnel; lack of necessary materials like test kits; lack of transport facilities plus lack of laboratory facilities/ equipment. At the time of the visit, there was no fully functioning CD-4 Count Machine within the region.
- ▶ There was a general lack of Anti-retroviral (ARV) drugs as well as drugs for treating opportunistic infections.
- ▶ A lot of training was required in the areas of Counseling. Testing and Handling ARVs.
- ▶ There was overwhelming demand for more wage and non-wage resources to be given to the Health Centers to enable them to offer services effectively.
- ▶ The HIV/AIDS pandemic had created a big problem of orphans, widows and school dropouts who required a lot of support services.
- ▶ There was a general complaint of the low level involvement of the male partner in voluntary testing and counseling, which was a hindrance to the mitigation effort.
- ▶ There was general demand to clarify the reliability of the Engabo Condom. The MPs explained that only a particular batch of Engabo was faulty and it had since been withdrawn from the market.

- ▶ The People Living With AIDS (PLWA) and post-test clubs were doing a big job in the fight against HIV/AIDS. However, many needed to get registered so that they could operate formally and be able to attract more resources.
 - ▶ The Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Development Partners were doing tremendous work to reduce HIV/AIDS in the region. They however, need more support.
 - ▶ Many Health Centers were operating without necessary facilities for their respective classes in terms of personnel, laboratory, theater, and wards for patients and they therefore needed to be equipped and strengthened.
 - ▶ Outreach services for HIV/AIDS patients were on a low scale owing to lack of resources, transport facilities and the poor terrain of the region.
- 6. *Cooperation between the Parliamentary Committee on the National Economy and USAID's Strengthening the Competitiveness of Private Enterprise project (SCOPE).***

LSA coordinated a meeting between the Hon. Nathan Mafabi, Chair, Parliamentary Committee on the National Economy, and staff from another USAID implementing partner, Strengthening the Competitiveness of Private Enterprise (SCOPE): John C. Engle, Managing Director, SCOPE and Lydia Ochieng Obbo, Industrial Developmental and Policy Specialist. The meeting was held at Parliament on June 16, 2005. The purpose of the meeting was to afford SCOPE an opportunity to present its program on competitiveness dialogue and debates on issues affecting the National Economy.

B. ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER

- ▶ Sponsor, organize and facilitate People with Disabilities Regional Consultative Workshops.
- ▶ Contract with a publishing firm to publish the People with Disabilities Information Guide, and maximize its distribution.
- ▶ Contract with the Management Training and Advisory Center (MTAC) to provide training for Public Relations Office staff at Parliament
- ▶ Sponsor, organize and facilitate a “Constituency Outreach” forum in Northern Uganda, focusing on Women, Children, and People With Disabilities
- ▶ Encourage Civil Society Organizations and Parliament (PDCO and PRO) to establish a formal network between them
- ▶ Organize, facilitate and sponsor a fact-finding Monitoring and Supervisory Field Visit to the West Nile Region by the Parliamentary Committee on Local Government Accounts
- ▶ Organize, facilitate and sponsor a Parliamentary School Visiting Programme activity engaging the HIV/AIDS Committee, the Social Services Committee, the Ministry of Health, the Uganda AIDS Commission, and selected schools.

- ▶ Organize, facilitate and sponsor one regional forum on HIV/AIDS for MPs to solicit public input.
- ▶ Organize, facilitate and sponsor a fact-finding Monitoring and Supervisory Field Visit by the Parliamentary Committee on Government Assurances
- ▶ Continue to organize, sponsor and facilitate radio talk shows as part of the National Media Campaign (themes: Anti-Corruption, Northern Uganda, and Social Services).

C. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

New Deputy Chief of Party, Ms. Josephine Namusisi, begins work on July 1st.

New Program Officer, Ms. Irene Apio-Julu, begins work on July 18th.

Performance Measurement Plan (PMP)

During the quarter, LSA proposed several changes in the Performance Measurement Plan (PMP) that are designed to improve measurement of the impact of the project. An agreement was reached between LSA, USAID, and the Monitoring and Evaluation Services (MEMS) project to delete one indicator and add five. As a result, there are now 14 indicators for the LSA project (see Tables 1 and 2, below).

D. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AND REMEDIAL ACTION TAKEN

Problem: The major challenge during the quarter was working while seriously understaffed. In addition, the project continued to suffer from a lack of sufficient in-house editing skills.

Action Taken: Hiring a new DCOP and PO will make a very positive and productive difference.

Problem: Failure of Members of Parliament to submit required reports, financial statements and documentation, and information in a timely fashion.

Action Taken: Letters of reminder mailed to the MPs.

E. UNSOLVED ISSUES OR CONSTRAINTS ON THE PROJECT

Planning, communicating and coordinating events and activities with Parliament on time is an ongoing challenge (the obstacles are attitude, perception and culture).

TABLE 1

LSA PMP QUARTERLY REPORT FOR THE PERIOD OF APRIL 1, 2005 – JUNE 30, 2005

LSA PMP QUATERLY REPORTING FORM						
	BASELINE FY 05	TARGET FY 05	ACTUAL Jan-March 05	ACTUAL April- June 05	ACTUAL July- Sept 05	ACTUAL Annual FY 05
<u>SO -9 LEVEL</u>						
1.Number of CSOs submitting written comments to parliamentary committee hearings	42	50	51	5		
2.Number of Parliamentary Committees responding to CSOs with briefings and dialogue	4	6	1	1		
3. No. of laws amended by Parlmnt.	5	5	-	6		
4.No. of target CSOs having legislative agenda items reflected in Parliamentary Bills	13	18	11	11		
<u>IR-9.1 LEVEL</u>						
5.No. of bills substantively reviewed by Parly. Committees before enactment	10	6	6	8		
6.Number of legislative bills introduced in the legislature that are substantive as percentage of total number of bills introduced	* 1%	-	-	1%		
7.Percentage of legislative bills drafted by the executive that are substantially amended by the legislature	* 5%	-	-	0.14%		
8.No. of Parly. Committee reports tabled at Parliament which generate responses from the Executive	* 10	-	-	6		
<u>IR 9.1.2 LEVEL</u>						
9.No. of target CSOs having a legislative agenda with Parliament	* 28	40	20	20		
10.No. of meetings MPs hold with CSOs	* 20	15	-	70		
11.No. of Parly. Committees holding public meetings at the local level	* 5	5	-	0		

1R 9.1.3 LEVEL						
12.No. of Parly. Committees that request technical info from PBO	11	13	11	11		
13.No. of Parly. Committees that request technical info from the Parliamentary Research Service	8	12	6	5		
14.No.of Bills on which budgetary impact analysis is drafted by PBO	9	11	4	2		

The CSOs may not be the same in all quarters or years

Significant indicator dropped in May 2005 (Number of Private Members Bills Introduced by MPs)

* Reflects new indicators as of May 2005 (3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11)

TABLE 2

LSA PMP QUARTERLY REPORT FOR THE PERIOD OF APRIL 1 – JUNE 30, 2005

No.		ACTUAL
1	Number of Civil society Organizations submitting written comments to Parliamentary Committee hearing: 1) Uganda Local Governments Association 2) Association of Surveyors of Uganda 3) Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) 4) Lira and Apac District Aged Foundation (LADAF) 5) The Sexual Minorities of Uganda	5
2	Number of Parliamentary Committees responding to CSOs' wirequests for briefings dialogue 1) Public Service and Local Government Committee	1
3	Number of laws amended by Parliament. 1) The Uganda Tea Authority Decree Repeal Bill, 2002 2) National Agriculture Research Bill, 2004 3) Local Government Rating Bill 4) Local Council Courts Bill 5) Local Governments (Amendments) Bill 6) Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995	6
4	Number of target CSOs having legislative agenda items reflected in Parliamentary Bills 1) Association of Surveyors of Uganda 2) Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE) 3) Hope After Rape 4) Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange (ISIS WICCE) 5) The Uganda Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA-U) 6) Uganda Women's Network (UWONET) 7) Uganda Law Society 8) Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE) 9) Law and Advocacy for Women in Uganda (LAW-U) 10) Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) 11) Human Rights Network (HURINET)	11
5.	Number of Bills substantively reviewed by Parliamentary Committee before enactment: 1) The Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions (Amendment) Bill 2) The Constitution (Amendment) Bill No. 3, 2005 3) The Constitution (Amendment) Bill No. 2, 2005 4) The Uganda Authority Decree Repeal Bill, 2002 5) The National Agriculture Research Bill, 2004 6) The Local Government Rating Bill 7) The Local Council Courts Bill 8) The Local Governments (Amendments) Bill, 2005	8
6	Number of substantive legislative bills introduced in Parliament, as a percentage of the total number of bills introduced: 1) The Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions (Amendment) Bill, 2005 2) The Constitution (Amendment) Bill No. 3, 2005 3) The Constitution (Amendment) Bill No. 2, 2005 4) The Pharmacy Profession and Pharmacy 5) The Uganda National Health Research Organizations Bill, 2005 6) The Warehouse Receipt System Bill, 2005 7) The Local Governments (Amendments) Bill, 2005	7/7
7	Percentage of legislative bills drafted by the executive that are substantially amended by the legislature 1) The Constitution (Amendment) Bill No. 3, 2005	1
8	Number of parliamentary committee reports tabled at Parliament which generate responses from the Executive: 1) Report on the Uganda Tea Authority Decree Repeal Bill, 2002 2) Report on the National Agriculture Research Bill, 2004 3) Report on the Local Government Rating Bill 4) Report on the Constitution (Amendment) Bill No. 3, 2005 5) Report on the Constitution (Amendment) Bill No. 2, 2005 6) Report on Dairy Corporation	6
9	Number of target CSOs having a legislative agenda with Parliament: 1) Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE) 2) Uganda Joint Christian Council (UJCC) 3) Uganda Women's Network (UWONET) 4) Uganda Law Society 5) The Uganda Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA-U) 6) Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE) 7) Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange (ISIS WICCE) 8) Law and Advocacy	20

	for Women in Uganda (LAW-U) 9) Forum for Women in Democracy (FOWODE) 10) Hope After Rape 11) Human Rights Network (HURINET) 12) Council for Economic Empowerment of Women in Africa (CEEWA) 13) MIFUMI 14) Action Aid International 15) Action for Development (ACFODE) 16) Akiika Embuga Women's Self Help Association 17) Akina Mama wa Africa 18) Associates for Change 19) Association of Women Medical Doctors (AUWMD) 20) Association of Women Judges	
*10	NUMBER OF MEETINGS LEGISLATORS HOLD WITH CSOs 1) Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries 2) Committee on Public Service and Local Government 3) Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs	55 12 3
11	Number of Parliamentary Committees holding public meetings at the local level	0
12	Number of Parliamentary Committees that request information from the Parliamentary Budget Office 1) Social Services Committee, 2) Public Service and Local Government Committee, 3) Trade, Tourism and Industry Committee, 4) Natural Resources Committee, 5) Defence and Internal Affairs Committee, 6) Finance, Planning and Economic Development Committee, 7) Agriculture, Animal, Industry and Fisheries committee, 8) Legal and Parliamentary Affairs Committee, 9) Works, Housing and Communications Committee, 10) Presidential and Foreign affairs Committee, 11) Budget Committee	11
13	Number of Parliamentary Committees that request information from the Parliamentary Research Service: 1) Committee on Legal and Parliamentary Affairs 2) Committee on Social Services 3) Committee on Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises 4) Select Committee on the Investigation in the National Social Security Fund 5) Committee on National Economy	5
14	Number of Bills for which budgetary impact analysis is drafted by Parliamentary Budget Office 1) Budget Analysis 2005/2006 – 2006/2007 (Medium term Expenditure Framework) 2) Analysis of the Budget Speech	2

*The Committee on Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries met with CSOs on many instances to discuss the Uganda Tea Authority Decree Repeal Bill, 2002 and the National Agriculture Research Bill, 2004.

*The Committee on Public Service and Local Government met with CSOs twelve (12) times to discuss the Local Government Rating Bill, the Local Council Courts Bill, and the Local Governments (Amendments) Bill

ARMENIA

A. PROGRESS THIS QUARTER

1. Introduction and Summary

This report period was marked most prominently by the work of the National Assembly in its spring legislative session and the on-going constitutional reform in Armenia, at the heart of which is the National Assembly's Ad Hoc Committee on Integration into European Structures.

On May 11, the National Assembly passed the Coalition Deputies' Draft Amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia in first reading. ALSP continued to provide assistance to the Ad-hoc Committee on Matters of Integration into European Structures in its discussions of the constitutional amendments. ALSP provided translations of Venice Commission documents for the National Assembly and Armenian civil society organizations to further discussion of the Venice Commission's comments on the draft amendments. ALSP continued to provide comparative information to the authors of the amendments as well as to members of the lead committee on some of the key aspects of the constitution, especially those related to the separation of powers and the authority of the legislature.

ALSP staff took an active role in supporting the work of a civil society initiative to address the constitutional amendments called the Civil Society Initiative for Constitutional Reforms (CSICR). The group, which formed in April, met regularly to discuss both specific issues in the text of the constitutional amendments as well as best strategies for having their feedback heard by the authors of the draft as well as by the National Assembly deputies who would ultimately need to debate and vote on the draft. ALSP staff were also invited to participate in meetings with the Council of Europe's Venice Commission to discuss some of the concerns of Armenian Civil Society and the international community in Yerevan regarding the constitutional amendments and the process of their consideration.

ALSP provided support to two publications this quarter at the National Assembly. The longest tenured elected member of the National Assembly, the Chair of the Standing Committee on Science, Education, Youth, Tourism and Sports Affairs, Hranush Hakopyan, developed a short publication outlining the principles of legislative authority and the experience of Armenia's legislature as well as recommendations and arguments for constitutional reforms addressing the balance of powers and legislative authority. ALSP provided support for the printing of the publication so it could be used by the National Assembly deputies and civil society groups during the discussions on constitutional reform. Additionally, for the first time, the Control Chamber of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia created a summary of its annual report which presented the results of the past year's work in easy-to-read format punctuated with graphs and charts and other enhancements. ALSP supported the printing of the report for dissemination to the National Assembly deputies and provided an English translation for the Control Chamber's Website as well as for use at international meetings in which the Control Chamber has participated.

During this quarter the National Assembly Staff Innovations competition was administered. Twenty-one staff of the National Assembly submitted applications for individualized study programs at other parliaments in the Commonwealth of Independent States. A staff peer

committee reviewed the applications and recommended that seven fellows be funded to work with staff at the Russian State Duma. Individuals mentored with their colleagues in analogous departments from one to two weeks.

As part of the USAID Participant Training Program, ALSP recommended two National Assembly staff to participate in the ISIS training provided by the Warsaw Technical University in Poland in June. The program was designed to help the National Assembly develop an in-house capacity for design and trouble-shooting problems associated with the use of WINISIS (free shareware software from UNESCO) at the National Assembly for databases. The National Assembly uses the ISIS database for its library, archives and information division databases, as well as the Citizen Letters data management. The system is to be replicated in the standing committees of the National Assembly as well. This training provides the National Assembly Staff with in-house capacity to maintain and expand these services.

ALSP continued to work with the staff of NA standing committees to identify opportunities for improving the procedures for public hearings by legislative standing committees. Most notably, the Standing Committee on Social, Health, and Environmental Affairs conducted a hearing on the draft Health Law having used newspaper inserts to broadly disseminate the draft for comment. The experience of that committee was the focus of discussion at the June meeting of the Committee Staff Working Group on Public Participation which reviewed the Guidelines for Publishing Draft Laws as Newspaper Inserts and also identified the most optimal timing and the necessary follow-up for this mechanism to be most effective. ALSP has also continued to work with the Foreign Relations Committee on developing a more detailed website and in the publication of the report on their public hearing on the Karabagh Problem. The NA Standing Committee on Science, Education, Culture, Youth, Tourism and Sports Affairs expanded their web page to include sections devoted to the work of the Youth Parliament.



Speaker of the National Assembly Artur Baghdassaryan, together with coalition and opposition deputies, pitch in for Habitat for Humanity's "Parliament Build"

Two constituency relations events were the focus of ALSP efforts this quarter. The first was working with the Armenian Tourism Development Association and the National Assembly to revive the "Parliament to the People" concert. Efforts to have the concert coincide with Armenia

Republic Day (May 28) proved to be problematic this year, but steps have already been taken to resume the concert on Independence Day in September. The second event was providing assistance to the National Assembly and to “Armenia Habitat for Humanity” in the organization of “Parliament Build” as a way for the National Assembly to prominently express support of the notions of affordable housing, housing finance and volunteerism. In addition to the volunteers both from staff and from among elected deputies who participated in the build, a number of deputies also contributed donations to the effort which was connected with Armenia’s humanitarian support to Tsunami survivors.

2. Significant Activities/Events

Cross-Cutting Tasks

A proposal was submitted to the National Assembly Speaker suggesting the establishment of the Legislative Strengthening Advisory Group to guide institutional development and capacity building for the Armenian parliament. The Speaker’s response was that it would be appropriate to form such a body once the National Assembly signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Assembly.

Based on an IT assessment of committees, and general NA departments, ALSP solicited cost bids from local vendors for the attendant recommended equipment for the National Assembly and submitted preliminary information to USAID for their review and comment. This was submitted in the context of submitting the cost-benefit analysis/feasibility study on the options of installing an offset printing facility at the National Assembly to USAID and the relative choices which should be made whether investment in one large facility that might have limited use outweighed the need for basic modernization of National Assembly standing committees and departments.

The expansion of the Local Area Network at the Control Chamber was initiated.

As part of its Performance Management Plan ALSP analyzed the historical usage of key pages of the National Assembly’s website (the report is incorporated into this report) and solicited responses on the assessment of the last National Assembly session relative to questions of citizen access and legislative process using scorecards. Responses to the latter report were still being collected at the end of the quarter.

Task 1: Facilitating and institutionalizing the involvement of Armenia’s legislative community to advocate, lobby and advise the National Assembly on policy and legislative issues;

ALSP’s local STTA Tigran Zagaryan continued work with the National Assembly Citizen Letters Division (CLD) on the developing the Public Inquiry Tracking System (PITS) in working on bugs and usage questions. The CLD issued its first report based on using the new PITS. In total, the department processed 2849 letters during the first quarter of 2005. 993 applications of RA citizens received and registered were referred to the NA Speaker and Vice-Speaker; 515 letters were referred to NA Standing Committees; 160 applications were referred to NA factions and deputy groups. The department was able to track the status of that correspondence and confirm that all applications had been answered in written form or orally – thus confirming compliance with the Armenian Law on Citizen Appeals. Additionally, they were able to issue a

report on the scope of problems which were addressed in the appeals: legislative, legal, healthcare, social, educational, financial, housing, employment, privatization, domestic issues are raised in the letters. Based on the report, individual deputies and factions are able to also understand the dynamics of this citizen correspondence activity. ALSP COP Valentine received consent from the Chair of the Standing Committee on Science, Education, Youth, Sports and Tourism Affairs to install PITS in the computer of that standing committee and to train staff to use the system to process correspondence addressed to the committee.

ALSP staff continued to provide consultants and assistance to the standing and ad-hoc committees in organizing public hearings. Specifically, ALSP worked with the Standing Committee on Social, Health and Environmental Affairs on a hearing on the draft Law on Healthcare. ALSP staff also provided consultations to the staff of the Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs on a hearing on the amendments to the Local Government Law.

The Committee Staff Working Group on Public Participation will meet and reviewed the drafted Guidelines for Publishing Draft Laws as Newspaper Inserts. The group also discussed the Guidelines for Public Hearings in Parliamentary Committees and made recommendations regarding the best way to include experts who had responded to the circulation of draft legislation as reporters in the public hearings process.

ALSP met on several occasions with the Regional Policy Analysis Division to identify effective ways to solicit feedback from regions on the implementation of legislation and potential legislative gaps. Currently under discussion is how to promote such feedback from citizens in smaller communities. ALSP is also discussing with the department how their reports can reach a larger audience within the National Assembly. ALSP is reviewing the department's informational brochure and helping to design a poster that can be used in communities to encourage feedback to the National Assembly from communities.

Task 2: Improving the functioning of key committees and departments of the National Assembly by having them work closer with the legislative community in jointly analyzing, researching, commenting on and drafting legislation;

ALSP worked with the NA Human Resource Management (HRM) Department staff on the methodological and technical skills training for modern analyses techniques in the National Assembly. In cooperation with the Eurasia Foundation Caucuses Regional Research Center ALSP facilitated training of National Assembly staff in use of SPSS (a statistic analysis software) in creating reports and doing analysis for National Assembly deputies, committees and factions.

The Human Resources Management Department has revised the training plan to included two different training plans: training which is required for civil servants (usually provided by the Public Administration Academy) and that which is available for professional development. The revised plan is being readied for posting on the HRM Department's intranet page. Training provided by OSCE in June was coordinated through the HRM Department's training division.

ALSP provided assistance in the further development of the Staff Policy Manual and the Staff Procedures Manual especially regarding the development of procedures for printing and publishing in the National Assembly. ALSP's procedures guidelines developed in the process of

the publication of the National Assembly Guide to the Third Convocation were provided as a guideline. Furthermore, ALSP provided the National Assembly Translation Division with the style sheet developed in the NA Guide publication process as well as the glossary developed when translating the constitutional amendments. These serve as a basis for the department to further develop such style sheets.

Using the occasion of the visit of two experts from the Polish Sejm's Bureau of Studies and Expertise, ALSP organized a series of meetings for National Assembly staff on the Polish Sejm's approach to conducting legislative research in the context of harmonization of domestic legislation with the requirements of the European Union for the staff of the National Assembly's research and analysis departments. Additionally, the Polish colleagues conducted a half-day session on this topic for the staff of three standing committees as part of a larger OSCE training NA staff training event during the month of June.

During this quarter the National Assembly Staff Innovations Fellowship competition was administered. Twenty-one staff of the National Assembly submitted applications for individualized study programs at other parliaments in the Commonwealth of Independent States. A staff peer committee reviewed the applications and recommended that seven fellows be funded to work with staff at the Russian State Duma. Individuals mentored with their colleagues in analogous departments from one to two weeks. Staff chosen to participate in the program included those from the Department of Public Relations, the Information Department, the Human Resources Management Department, the Legislative Analysis Department and the Secretariat. Fellows are required to submit a report within two weeks of their return to Armenia and will be making presentations to their staff colleagues as well.

Work of the Human Resources Management staff with individual units to write with them their policies and procedures has been slower than envisioned. Partly this is a result of the small size of the HRM staff and a number of other activities which has required their attention. Most notably this was a series of competitions for staff vacancies. However, using the occasion of this process, the staff was encouraged to fix that process into the procedures manual as a chapter. Additionally, ALSP provided a background paper to be used for developing the guidelines for the process of printing materials in the National Assembly. The Head of the NA Print House has also contributed to this effort which is still on-going at the conclusion of the quarter.

In June, ALSP engaged as STTA Edward Rakhimkulov of the Parliamentary Development Project of Ukraine to stimulate analysis within the National Assembly for the opportunities to initiate a longer-term competitive student intern program. The ten-year experience of the Verkhovna Rada in this field is especially useful. Mr. Rakhimkulov conducted a series of interviews with National Assembly staff who have been engaged in receiving student interns and identified the strengths and weaknesses of the current practices of the National Assembly in engaging students as interns. By and large, the consensus of those interviewed was that a longer-term program would be of greater benefit both to the students and to the staff and deputies of the National Assembly. Some of the peculiarities of the Armenian practice were identified and addressed in the draft recruitment, deployment, and orientation plans produced by ALSP for the National Assembly's consideration. A working group was formed to review the draft documents and set forth a recommendation for a pilot internship program to be initiated in the fall 2005.

As part of the USAID Participant Training Program, ALSP recommended two National Assembly staff to participate in the ISIS training provided by the Warsaw Technical University

in Poland in June. The program was designed to help the National Assembly develop an in-house capacity for design and trouble-shooting problems associated with the use of WINISIS (free shareware software from UNESCO) at the National Assembly for databases.

ALSP worked with USAID and AED to review the proposal and identify potential training sites for NA Committee Staff training planned under the USAID Participant Training Program. A Central or East European Parliament will be targeted as the site for this training which should take place the last week of August and is intended to compliment other donor training programs for NA staff (most notably OSCE Committee Staff training which will include a study tour to Slovenia in the fall).

The ALSP team compiled a report on the National Assembly's Role in the Budget Process and the Opportunities for the National Assembly in the context of recent innovations introduced to the budget process. The paper New Opportunities for NA Innovations in the State Budgeting Process was distributed at the end of June to all deputies of the National Assembly as a reminder of the opportunity that the July 1 release of the Mid-term Expenditure Framework provides them for advance analysis of government budget requests.

The paper focuses on the legislature's role in the budget process and analyzes new innovations that have been introduced into the budget process in Armenia, how the standing committees, factions and individual deputies of the National Assembly have used these innovations to introduce improvements to the state budget and what challenges lie ahead for future budget monitoring and planning. The paper incorporated the thoughts of several authors affiliated with the ALSP. STTA consultants Areg Barseghyan and David Olson contributions constitute the core elements of this paper. This paper was translated into Armenian and distributed to all MPs on June 27, just before the Mid-term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) was delivered to the National Assembly. This is intended to raise the awareness of individual MPs and the standing committees about the new opportunities for improvement of the budget system and for better budget execution oversight by the NA.

The ALSP team continued to attend the Friday meetings of National Assembly standing committees (State and Legal; Finance, Budget and Economic Affairs; Social Policy, Health, and Environment; Science, Education and Culture; and Foreign Affairs) in order to be able to make recommendations regarding the conduct of the meetings, the opportunities for greater transparency and public participation.

Two standing committees conducted public hearings during this quarter. The Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs conducted on April 27, a hearing on the draft law adopted by the first reading "On Making Additions and Amendments to RA law "On Local Self-Government Bodies." Representatives of local governments were invited to present their feedback to the deputies of the committees on the important changes which were proposed to legislation which guided their activities. Further, seven NGOs participated in the meeting at their own initiative, including representatives of the Community Finance Officer's Association, Union of Armenian Communities, The Center for the Struggle against Corruption, and other regional-based NGOs. The meeting was conducted using some of the innovations introduced last fall (including submitting written questions to the main speakers). Most of the representatives from local governments were raising issues very specific to their current responsibilities under the implementation of the current law on local self-governance rather than focusing specifically on

specific potential changes to that law. This too, however, provided important feedback to deputies on the potential inadequacies of the current legislation.

On June 15, the NA Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Healthcare and Environment conducted a public hearing on the draft law “On Healthcare” together with the Speaker’s Council on Healthcare. Participants included representatives of medical institutions, the Yerevan State Medical University, other academic centers, health care practitioners and administrators and several NGOs (“Family Health” NGO, the “Armenian Medical Association”). The hearing addressed this important new legislation submitted by the government. The draft law had been circulated as a newspaper-insert and several organizations had responded to the standing committee with specific proposals. At the end of the discussions, the main speaker, Mr. Hakobyan, Deputy Minister of Healthcare, mentioned that that all reasonable suggestions would be incorporated into the draft law and corresponding changes would be made in the text. In addition to presenting these proposals at the committee hearing, other specialists reacted to these proposals and presented additional suggestions for improving the law. Representatives of USAID’s two programs on health reform were in attendance at the hearings.

ALSP provided assistance to the National Assembly External Relations Department in their organization of the Macro-Economic Working Group meeting of the European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD) hosted by the National Assembly June 3-5. In addition to some organizational assistance, ALSP helped to identify an appropriate speaker to address the issue of Armenia’s obligations under WTO. Participants from sixteen countries, primarily parliament staff, participated in the meeting. The participation of Armenian colleagues from ministries as well as National Assembly economic analysts at such a high profile international meeting provided an opportunity to reinforce the importance of economic analysis at the parliament.

Mirosław Gwiazdowicz and Mirosław Sobolewski, both environmental experts with the Polish Sejm’s Bureau of Studies and Expertise, visited the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia (NA) June 2 – June 13, 2005. Under a special program promoting exchange of parliamentary experience, the Polish Sejm Chancellery covered the expenses for transportation to and from Armenia. Local transportation, lodging and per diem were covered by ALSP. The objectives of the visit were:

- Participate in the June 3-4 meetings of the ECPRD Macro-Economics Working Group
- Sharing the experience in the development of research capabilities at the Polish Sejm with their counterparts of the NA staff
- Sharing the experience in developing research/analysis plans and projects both to respond to and to anticipate from elected deputies their information needs to consider policy options proposed by the government or legislators in the Sejm
- Sharing their experience in delivering non-partisan legislative research services, and the process for soliciting expertise which may exist outside the walls of a parliament.
- Conducting discussions on the analyses in European legislation analysis and examining the proposed EU legislation or regulations in certain fields

During the visit, the Polish experts had separate meetings with the NA Chief of Staff, Deputy Chief of Staff, Head of the Secretariat, the staff of Legislative Analysis Department, Regional Policy Analysis Department, Information Department and Social Policy Research Department

and joint meetings with staff of various NA departments and standing committees. The visitors were also able to meet Armenian NGO representatives and visited the Armenian Tree Project NGO. They also contributed a training session on “Legislative Research for Harmonization of Legislation” as part of a larger OSCE parliamentary committee and department staff training program conducted by OSCE from June 1-27.

ALSP continued to work with USAID implementing partners PA Consulting regarding their work with the Standing Committee on Social, Environmental and Health Affairs in preparation for the submission of the draft Law on Potable Water. Additionally, ALSP staff recommended National Assembly participants for the USAID Energy Reform Program (PA Consulting) micro-hydro conference and attended the meetings as well in order to provide eventual follow-up with the National Assembly should legislative action be required in this field.

ALSP recommended to USAID Social Reforms Office that National Assembly specialists be included in an AED participant training sponsored program on legislative drafting for social sector specialists. NA staff from the Legislative Analysis Department participated in the training which also provided them with more insight into the challenges faced by their colleagues within the social and health ministries when they are charged with drafting government-sponsored legislation.

ALSP Public Policy Specialist Edward Safaryan attended all plenary and extraordinary sessions of the National Assembly and prepared reports on key agenda items under consideration at the NA sittings/ sessions to share with USAID and implementing partners. At the conclusion of the session/ sitting, corresponding changes indicating the status for each draft legislative initiative are introduced to the reports and again disseminated to USAID.

The ALSP team also prepared a Guide to Reading the NA Sitting Agenda, both for the paper agenda distributed at the session hall and the electronic copy that appears on the National Assembly website. The purpose of the paper is to explain to the lay-person the sitting agenda, thereby allowing the politically active civil society representatives to interpret and track the process of the consideration and adoption of the draft legislation. The guide also includes an explanation of how to find the voting results of individual laws. The guide was translated into Armenian for distribution to the NGO community. The guide can also be used to train new employees of the National Assembly. After approval of the NA leadership, it is planned that the Armenian version of the guide will be placed on the NA website.

Task 3: Improving the ability of select units and individuals within the National Assembly to be more transparent, representative and responsive to citizen priorities, interests and concerns

Citizen Information and Communication Centers (CICC)

The ALSP held ongoing discussions with the Vanadzor Integrated Social Services Center (ISSC) on the possibility of providing an internet connection for this pilot CICC. A computer was provided by USAID’s Social Services Reform Program to the NGO Coalition of Lori Marz affiliated with the Vanadzor ISSC and a telephone connection was provided by the Vanadzor City government. ALSP investigated the possibility of internet connectivity and committed to supporting the internet connection for six months while the Vandadzor NGO Coalition sought future funding for on-going support. Fifty-four local NGOs expressed their readiness to

cooperate with the Vanadzor CICC. The CICC volunteers initiated a baseline survey of the level of knowledge of the NGOs in Lori marz. The volunteers have also been maintaining a log of those who have approached the NGO representatives in the ISSC. Review of these statistics show that within the period of two months, 47 persons applied to the NGO representatives regarding social problems, and 18 citizens turned to the NGO representatives for information or consultations on matters related to healthcare issues. Given the location of the Vanadzor CICC in the Lori Marz - ISSC, the emphasis on social service and health issues is natural. As opportunities arise to expand the activities and services of the CICC's, it is expected that the range of issues on which the Vanadzor CICC is approached will also broaden.

ALSP's COP Valentine, and Public Policy Specialist Edward Safaryan joined USAID's Social Services Reform Program's implementing partners Brian Kearney and Artak Ghazaryan (PADCO) on a visit to the Masis Integrated Social Services Center (ISSC) on June 1, 2005 to evaluate the Masis ISSC as a potential site for the second Citizen Information and Communication Center (CICC). The team met with the representatives of local NGOs, who formed the "SIS NGO Union," to discuss mechanisms for increasing contact between Masis-based (southern region) NGOs and the National Assembly, as well as opportunities for NGO involvement and participation in reviewing, analyzing, and improving draft legislation. As the follow-up of this meeting, the the "SIS NGO Union" sent a letter of requesting cooperation, and ensuring that it will provide all its resources for the operation of the CICC in Masis.

Eleanor Valentine also met with the Goris Youth Union Director and examined the NGOs premises as a potential CICC site. Informational materials were provided to the Executive Director and in cooperation with the Counterpart International Civic Advocacy project team, a plan for joint training was discussed.

The ALSP team also began identifying potential future sites based on the list of Business Development and Citizen Information Centers which have been supported by the USAID Local Government Program implemented by Urban Institute. Potential next sites include the Aparan Citizen Service Center and the Ijevan Business and Information Center.

Other activities under Task 3

Two constituency relations events were the focus of ALSP efforts this quarter. The first was working with the Armenian Tourism Development Association and the National Assembly to revive the "Parliament to the People" concert. Efforts to have he concert coincide with the Armenia Republic Day (May 28) proved to be problematic this year, but steps have already been taken to resume the concert for Independence Day in September.

The second constituency relations event was providing assistance to the National Assembly and to "Armenia Habitat for Humanity" in the organization of "Parliament Build" as a way for the National Assembly to prominently express support of the notions of affordable housing, housing finance and volunteerism by participating jointly and from a number of parties in a National Assembly event. The "Parliament Build" was organized under the auspices of a June 2005 sister-community initiative with the State of Michigan where former US President Jimmy Carter participated in a HfH build where the Armenian Catholicos also participated. National Assembly deputies from three factions volunteered: Orinats Yerkir and the Republican Party factions of the ruling coalition participated and one member of the opposition faction "National Unity" also

participated. The deputy volunteers were led by the Speaker of the National Assembly Artur Baghdassaryan and chairs of three standing committees also participated (Hranush Hakopyan, Mher Shaghelyan, and Gagik Mhkeryan). It was also important that minority groups were represented among those deputies participating in the event – a woman deputy and a disabled deputy – emphasizing that there is potential for everyone to participate in such community events. In addition to the volunteers both from among the elected deputies and the National Assembly staff who participated in the build, a number of deputies also contributed donations to the efforts which was connected with Armenia’s humanitarian support to Tsunami survivors.

On May 27 at the initiative of the NA Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Health Care and Environment the NGO “For Sustainable Development” presented its publication Theory and Practice of Sustainable Development: World Experience and the Problems of the Republic of Armenia. During the discussions at the presentation, it was decided to form an inter-faction working group on sustainable development at the National Assembly.

ALSP worked with the Public Relations Department staff to organize a meeting in May of standing committee staff with NA accredited journalists to discuss the importance of clear, concise and timely press releases in ensuring that standing committee events are adequately and accurately reported to the Armenian public. DA’s Executive Director Jack Sullivan, a former congressional press secretary, who was in Yerevan at the time (not at project expense) joined in the discussion. Both journalists and committee staff were able to identify several issues that will help for better media communication. These included better dissemination of drafts to journalists, prospective announcements of events, and better use of the committee website potential.

ALSP also met with the staff of the National Assembly’s Speaker’s office regarding the media coverage of the Habitat for Humanity “Parliament Build.” In the process of that planning for that event, strategies for effective public communications were discussed. The need to clearly identify those events which are parliament events and those that are speakers’ events was discussed. The ALSP staff reviewed the press releases for the event and worked with the Public Relations Department on ensuring appropriate media coverage of the event.

In a follow-up to the March training of NA deputies and staff (as well as government deputy ministers and NGOs) on Gender Impact Assessment, a meeting to discuss next steps with the principle participants from the National Assembly, the Government and NGO sector was held. Additional materials on Gender Impact Assessment and Gender Proofing translated by the British Embassy were distributed by ALSP to the NA Staff Working Group on Gender Analysis. The group has decided to analyze one or more drafts from a gender perspective applying the tools of gender impact assessment. As a result of this process, the practical steps for further development will be identified. Gender Impact Assessment of the Draft Law on Health Care was conducted by the Center for Gender Studies and incorporated into their comments to the Standing Committee on Social, Health and Environmental Affairs at a hearing on the draft Health Law conducted June 15.

The National Assembly during the spring session included on the agenda several laws related to deputy ethics and accountability. However further consideration of all three drafts has been postponed until after constitutional reforms have been decided. “The Law on Deputy Behavior” has been in circulation since October of 2004. The draft law was included in the agenda on February 7, 2005, but the consideration was postponed. This draft resembles more a code of

ethics than a legal act containing norms, the breach of which would cause some legal consequences. About the same time when this draft law was circulated another draft proposing changes and amendments to the NA Rules of Procedure was put forward by Raffik Petrosyan, Chair of the Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs. The NA Legislative Analysis Department provided its conclusion on both draft laws in one document. With respect to the “Draft Law on Deputy Behavior” the LAD suggested to review the law once again to decide which norms have to be regulated by law because the most of the provisions are ethical and those, according to LAD, should not be regulated by law. LAD commented that many provisions incorporated into the “Draft Law on Deputy Behavior” are subject to be regulated by internal rules of conduct (i.e., NA Rules of Procedure). LAD makes a reference to Article 45 of the NA Rules of Procedure which contain similar provisions, including measures to be taken in case of breach of certain internal rules or order.

The Draft Law on Status of Deputy Status (2nd reading) has been in circulation for very long time. It was included in the big agenda in the fall of 2003, and throughout 2004-2005 the inclusion of the draft in the three or four day session agenda was postponed for 6 times. The NA Legislative Analysis Department did not provide any recent conclusions on this draft. The draft law lays down the rights and responsibilities of deputies and their assistant(s). The draft contains many references to the RA Constitution and NA Rules of Procedures. Since the constitutional reforms process is not complete yet, the adoption of such a legal act would be appropriate only after constitutional amendments and relevant changes in the NA Rules of Procedure.

The Draft Law on Salary Rates of Key Officials of Legislative, Executive and Judicial Bodies” was first circulated in the summer of 2003, and was included in the plenary-sitting agenda in February 2005. The Government provided a negative conclusion to this draft reasoning that a similar law was adopted in 2002 and that there is no need to revise it. The scope of regulation of these two laws is the same. The difference is that the draft proposes to calculate the salaries based on a formula, and the laws currently in force have fixed amounts, and have calculated everything based on a minimum 15000 minimum salary (as opposed to 13 000 which the Government argued in its conclusion is the sum already fixed in Midterm Expenditures Framework).

However, the consideration of these provisions in the absence of constitutional reforms is seriously compromised. ALSP reviewed the drafts which were under consideration and discussed with principles their intent and also concerns regarding the objectives of these legislative initiatives. The consensus was that further discussion of these issues would resume after the constitutional reforms were enacted.

Task 4: Developing the National Assembly’s ability to improve oversight of the executive branch through existing mechanisms and, to the extent possible, through assisting in the creation of new mechanisms via Constitutional and legislative amendments.

Constitutional Amendments Activities

ALSP staff, particularly ALSP Constitutional Law Specialist Lusine Abovyan attended the plenary discussions of the draft constitutional amendments which commenced on May 4th in the regime of an extraordinary session. The extraordinary session lasted for 4 days throughout which ALSP staff observed and took notes of the proceedings and discussions and prepared a report

summarizing procedures and analyzing the constitutional text adopted in the first reading in terms of compliance with the Venice Commission's recommendations incorporated in its Interim Opinion #313/2004 December 6, 2004. The report was shared with USAID Armenia Mission, the US Embassy, USAID sponsored projects, Venice Commission experts and other interested western donor organizations.

ALSP continued to assist the National Assembly in translation of the draft constitutional amendments. Upon the adoption of the draft constitutional amendments in first reading ALSP translated the changes made in the draft and prepared an annotated version of the English version of the constitutional text with highlights of the current text and the changed portions, which was posted on the Venice Commission's website.

COP Valentine and Ms. Lusine Abovyan met with Deputy Chairman of the National Assembly and Chairman of the Ad-hoc Committee Tigran Torosyan to discuss the constitutional amendment process and facilitating the process of public discussions and appropriateness of publishing a newspaper insert of the draft constitutional amendments adopted in the first reading as a tool aimed at raising public awareness of the content of the constitutional changes (Mr. Torossian dismissed the suggestion that such a format would be conducive to soliciting public input to the discussions on constitutional amendments). COP Valentine and Ms. Abovyan together with USAID CTO Bella Markarian also met with the Venice Commission expert Alvares Edzins (Constitutional Court Justice of Latvia), who was in Armenia as a member of the working group to discuss the constitutional amendments with Armenian authorities.

After the adoption of the draft constitutional amendments in the first reading on May 11, Ms. Abovyan drafted an analysis of a number of provisions relevant to the legislative authority of the National Assembly and balance powers and distributed it to the authors of the draft constitutional amendments and members of the NA Ad-Hoc Committee on Matters of Integration in European Structure. On June 8 Ms. Abovyan had a meeting with one of the co-authors of the draft constitutional amendments Rafik Petrosyan and discussed some of the issues raised in the above-mentioned analysis, in particular the question of specification of the number of the standing committees in the constitutional text. Although the number of the committees currently set at six has increased to 10, it is still insufficient, and Mr. Petrosyan agreed that specifying the number of the standing committees in the constitution is not desirable.

ALSP continued to take part in work of the Task Force made up of judges, attorneys, academicians, and other specialists, the work of which resulted in the creation of a "Civil Society Initiative for Constitutional Reforms" (CSICR) a coalition of Armenian NGOs whose activities are aimed at strengthening democratic principles through the constitutional reforms and raising public awareness prior to and after the constitutional referendum. ALSP played a key role in providing expertise for drafting the CSICR comments and suggestions on the constitutional amendments relative to the powers of the National Assembly and legislative-executive relations and assisted in submitting the CSICR comments to authors of the draft constitutional amendments and factions in the National Assembly.

ALSP provided the National Assembly and NGOs active in the process with an Armenian translation of the Council of Europe Venice Commission's Interim Report on the First Reading Draft."

Other Activities under Task 4

ALSP assisted in the publication of a small volume On Different Functions of Parliament written by Standing Committee Chair Hranush Hakopyan, the longest tenured sitting member of the National Assembly. The volume addresses issues of legislative-executive relations which are central to the current constitutional debates. The volume was distributed to all deputies of the National Assembly as well as to libraries, academic institutions, and NGOs throughout Armenia. It is intended to contribute to an informed debate during the second reading of the draft constitutional amendments.

At the close of the spring legislative session, ALSP had begun to analyze data on the National Assembly's Question and Answer sessions attended and observed by ALSP staff throughout the fall and spring sessions. ALSP prepared a questionnaire assessing the effectiveness of the Question and Answer sessions and how they can be improved. Among the deputies who participated in the Question and Answer sessions twenty-five deputies were selected as most active participants and staff began to conduct interviews with these deputies.

ALSP assisted the Control Chamber in the preparation an informational brochure which became a part of their summary Annual Report prepared on the standard of reports of Supreme Audit Chamber members of EUROSAI. USAID ALSP supported the printing of this new approach to the presentation of the Control Chamber's Annual Report with the intention to catches the attention of more National Assembly deputies to the content of the Control Chamber's Audit Reports. The report, which for the first time incorporates charts and graphs to illustrate some of the examples of waste and inefficiencies which were discovered in the course of the Control Chambers' audits was printed in color and distributed to all deputies and journalists of the National Assembly. Additionally, the summary report as well as the full audit report was posted on the Control Chamber's Website. ALSP provided an English translation of the Control Chamber's summary Annual Report which the Head of the Control Chamber was able to disseminate at the EUROSAI meeting at the end of May as well as post on its website.

The ALSP team provided a paper in Armenian regarding auditing ethics to the Control Chamber for their review. The paper issued by the International Association of Auditors and Accountants was based on international best practices.

Further assistance to the Control Chamber was provided in initiating the expansion of their Local Area Network.

3. *Summary of this Quarter's Milestones and Outputs*

Cross-Cutting Tasks

ALSP responded to questions from USAID regarding the preparation of a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Assembly and provided the Armenian translation of the draft MOU.

ALSP presented to USAID a draft Information Technology Assessment of the National Assembly Standing Committees and recently established or reorganized departments within the

National Assembly. The report includes the priority technology needs of various standing committees and departments of the National Assembly.

The Feasibility Study and Cost Benefit Analysis on Establishing an In-House Offset Printing Facility at the National Assembly examining the options of USAID's supporting such a facility at the National Assembly was presented to USAID for their review and comment. The report was also translated into Armenian in preparation for presenting the report to the National Assembly.

Task 1: Facilitating and institutionalizing the involvement of Armenia's legislative community to advocate, lobby and advise the National Assembly on policy and legislative issues;

ALSP's database consultant Tigran Zagaryan continued working with the Citizen Letters Division of the National Assembly on eliminating bugs from the Public Inquiries Tracking System (PITS).

Use of the External Contacts Database as an essential tool for the legislature to interact and draw on the resources and expertise of civil society (legislative community) was discussed at quarterly meeting of the Committee Staff Working Group on Public Participation.

Staff representatives from six standing committees members of the Committee Staff Working Group on Public Participation (CSWGPP) within the National Assembly met to discuss the use of the Newspaper Inserts to disseminate draft laws and to discuss the experience of public hearings conducted during the past legislative session.

The Draft Health Law was published as a Newspaper Insert and distributed as well to NGOs and donor implementing partners working on healthcare reform issues.

ALSP staff provided expertise on issues relevant to the legislative-executive relations in the process of preparation of the package of recommendations by coalition of Armenian NGOs "Civil Society Initiative for Constitutional Reforms" and advised the CSICR on effective approaches to appeal to the National Assembly and the authors of the constitutional amendments to include civil society experts in the discussions of the constitutional drafts.

ALSP met on several occasions with the Regional Policy Analysis Division to identify effective ways to solicit feedback from regions on the implementation of legislation and potential legislative gaps.

The ALSP team worked with the Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs to review what new procedures might be introduced in their April 2004 public hearing on local self government.

ALSP also provided assistance to the Standing Committee on Social Policy, Health and Environmental Affairs for its legislative hearing on June 15 on the draft Health Law.

ALSP worked with the Standing Committee on Social Policy, Health and Environmental Affairs to publish the Draft Law on Healthcare as a newspaper insert in April.

Guidelines on Preparing a Draft Law as Newspaper were completed and disseminated to NA standing committee staff for their review.

Task 2: *Improving the functioning of key committees and departments of the National Assembly by having them work closer with the legislative community in jointly analyzing, researching, commenting on and drafting legislation;*

ALSP assisted the Human Resources Department of the National Assembly in soliciting feedback from Heads of Departments to complete the schedule and implement the 2005 training plan. A draft training plan was developed and submitted for approval to NA Chief of Staff Kotanian. This was done as a collaborative process engaging each department with the training team of the HRM Department. The Chief of Staff recommended separating the training into two sections: compulsory training required by the Civil Service Law (usually conducted by the Academy for Public Administration), and; optional training for professional development. The HRM has made the adjustments to the training plan and will post it on their page on the NA Intranet this summer.

ALSP provided assistance in the further development of the Staff Policy Manual and the Staff Procedures Manual especially regarding the development of procedures for printing and publishing in the National Assembly and style sheets and glossaries for the translation department.

ALSP worked with two experts from the Polish Sejm's Bureau of Studies and Expertise in June when they came to Armenia to participate in the ECPRD meetings at the National Assembly June 3-4. During the following week through June 13 they were able to share more specifically their experience in conducting legislative research with the colleagues from the research departments at the National Assembly. They also contributed a training session on "Legislative Research for Harmonization of Legislation" as part of a larger OSCE parliamentary committee and department staff training program conducted by OSCE from June 1-27.

In cooperation with the Eurasia Foundation Caucasus Regional Research Center ALSP facilitated training of National Assembly staff in use of SPSS (a statistical analysis software) in creating reports and doing analysis for National Assembly deputies, committees and factions.

The ALSP team attended the meetings of Standing Committees in order to be able to make recommendations regarding the conduct of the meetings, the opportunities for greater transparency and public participation. The National Assembly committee hearings of the Budget Execution Report were completed in May and the report was approved in an extraordinary session in June. ALSP provided assistance to the NA in copying the Budget Execution Report for deputies in preparation for these hearings and the approval of the report in plenary.

The paper New Opportunities for NA Innovations in the State Budgeting Process was distributed at the end of June to all deputies of the National Assembly as a reminder of the opportunity that the July 1 release of the Mid-term Expenditure Framework provides them for advance analysis of government budget requests.

Seven participants were chosen by an NA Staff Peer Review Committee from among 21 National Assembly staff who applied for the NA Staff Innovations Fellowship to mentor with colleagues from other CIS parliaments. All seven visited the Russian State Duma in June. These included staff from the PR Department, the Legislative Analysis Department, the Secretariat, the Human Resources Division and the Information Department.

Additional materials on Gender Impact Assessment and Gender Proofing translated by the British Embassy were distributed by ALSP to the NA Staff Working Group on Gender Analysis.

Ukraine's Parliamentary Development Project specialist Edward Rakhimkulov visited Armenia for five days to share the Verkhovna Rada's experience in developing a competitive internship program. The Ukrainian practice discussed with Armenian colleagues included drafting guidelines for a pilot program to be implemented at the National Assembly this fall.

ALSP cooperated with AED to send two National Assembly staff specialists to a training program in Poland for the ISIS database development.

ALSP prepared reports on key agenda items under consideration at the NA sittings/ sessions and the outcome of the deliberations for dissemination to USAID and implementing partners.

The ALSP team prepared a Guide to Reading the NA Sitting Agenda, which will allow the politically active civil society representatives to better track the progression of legislative drafts in the National Assembly.

Task 3: Improving the ability of select units and individuals within the National Assembly to be more transparent, representative and responsive to citizen priorities, interests and concerns

As part of its efforts to assist National Assembly deputies in conducting constituency relations events ALSP provided assistance to Habitat for Humanity program to launch the "Parliament Build" initiative on June 20. Deputies from three factions participated in the event which coincides with the Jimmie Carter HfH Build project in Armenia's sister community, the state of Michigan. The Speaker of Parliament participated in the event for most of the day. One deputy commented that this should become an annual event.

Volunteers from Vanadzor of the NA Citizen Information and Communication Center (CCIC) began their information outreach services. The City of Vanadzor installed a phone line and ALSP investigated the possibility of installing an internet connection and supporting connectivity for 6 months.

ALSP contacted the SIS NGO Union in Masis to initiate the next CICC in that Integrated Social Services Center there as well as the Goris Youth Union NGO about their interest in serving as a CICC. NA informational materials were provided to both sites.

The Committee on Foreign Relations completed the editing of the reports at the March public hearing on Karabakh.

ALSP provided continued support of an STTA to work with the National Assembly Web Division to make adjustments to the website (www.parliament.am). These included primarily working to eliminate problems with the search mechanism in Armenian language which proved to be a particularly challenging problem to fix. Other work included expanding the webpage capacities and detail for NA departments and committees.

ALSP provided assistance in the organization of the Parliament-wide constituency relations event working with “Armenia Habitat for Humanity” in the organization of the first ever “Parliament Build” in Armenia on June 20, 2005.

ALSP worked with the Public Relations staff to organize a meeting in May of Standing Committee staff with NA accredited journalists to discuss the importance of clear, concise and timely press releases in ensuring that standing committee events are adequately and accurately reported to the Armenian public.

ALSP also worked with the staff of the National Assembly’s Speaker’s office on strategies for effective public communications in the context of the “Parliament Build” event.

Additional materials on Gender Impact Assessment and Gender Proofing translated by the British Embassy were distributed by ALSP to the NA Staff Working Group on Gender Analysis.

***Task 4:** Developing the National Assembly’s ability to improve oversight of the executive branch through existing mechanisms and, to the extent possible, through assisting in the creation of new mechanisms via Constitutional and legislative amendments.*

ALSP staff attended the plenary discussion of the draft constitutional amendments and prepared an analysis of the provisions of the first reading draft which took into consideration the recommendations of the Council of Europe Venice Commission.

ALSP provided the English translation of the draft constitutional amendments adopted in the first reading for review by the Council of Europe Venice Commission, including a tracked version which illustrated what new amendments had been made.

ALSP prepared an analysis of the articles regarding legislative authority in the draft constitutional amendments adopted in the first reading and submitted it to the authors of the amendments, to the deputies who are members of the lead committee considering the constitutional amendments in the National Assembly, and to Armenian and international organizations (including the Council of Europe Venice Commission).

ALSP completed the Armenian Translation of the Venice Commission’s Interim Report on the First Reading Draft of the Constitutional Amendments .

ALSP assisted in the publication of the small volume On Different Functions of Parliament written by Standing Committee Chair Hranush Hakopyan, the longest tenured sitting member of the National Assembly. The book was distributed to all deputies of the National Assembly, libraries and academic institutions, NGOs and Youth Parliament members.

ALSP undertook the analysis of the historical data of the Question and Answer Session of the National Assembly, developed a questionnaire, and began interviewing deputies who most actively participated in the Q&A sessions throughout the fall and spring sessions of the NA.

ALSP provided assistance to the Control Chamber in the preparation of its summary Annual Report submitted to the National Assembly deputies in May for their approval.

ALSP provided the Control Chamber with an English translation of the Summary 2004 Annual Report of the Control Chamber which has been posted on its website.

The installation work on the extension of the Local Area Network at the Control Chamber was initiated.

4. Results This Quarter

A specific reportable results framework with measurements reflecting significant progress made during the course of the three years of the ALSP (2004-2007) and results attained due to the combined efforts of the ALSP team and the work of the National Assembly has been submitted to USAID for approval in its Performance Management Plan (PMP). Data for this reporting framework is primarily collected annually. The table of these measurable results is presented here with the data which has been collected to date.

ALSP II MEASURABLE RESULTS REPORTING FRAMEWORK				
SO 2.1 IMPROVED DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE				
IR 2 Targeted Governance Institutions Strengthened				
RESULTS Indicator	Measurement	Baseline 2004	Target 2005	ACTUAL 2005
<i>1. Rating of legislative authority – basic tenets of legislative authority, responsiveness, and accountability in normative acts and guidelines</i>	NDI Legislative Assessment Tool	As Per Appendix 1	As Per Appendix 1	Will be based on Constitutional Amendments August 2005
<i>2. Ratings of Citizen Access</i>	USAID administered Scorecard (35 Points Total)	14.4 pts.	20 pts.	(for Fall 2004 Session) 12.37 pts.
<i>3. Ratings on Legislative Process</i>	Scorecard (55 Points Total)	28.5 pts.	35 pts.	(for Fall 2004 Session) 28.81 pts. or 22.49%
<i>4. Number of Public Meetings Conducted at the National Assembly According to Established Criteria</i>	Number of Hearings	1	12	Assessment ongoing
<i>5a. Percentage of Deputies who consider that the National Assembly has adequate oversight authority, and information to conduct oversight.</i>	Deputy Survey	52% (Authority) 40% (Information)	70.0% 50.0%	<i>Data Available Fall 2005</i> <i>Data Available Fall 2005</i>
<i>5b. Percentage of NA Staff Aware of the Oversight Role of Parliament</i>	Staff Survey	62.0%	78.0%	<i>Data Available Fall 2005</i>
<i>6a. Percentage of Deputies who believe that the public has a good understanding of the role of the National Assembly</i>	Deputy Survey	20.0%	35.0%	<i>Data Available Fall 2005</i>

<i>6b. Percentage of Deputies who indicate they use the media to inform constituents</i>	Deputy Survey	19.0%	50.0%	<i>Data Available Fall 2005</i>
<i>6c. Percentage of NA Staff Aware of the Representative Role of Parliament.</i>	Staff Survey	25.0%	35.0%	<i>Data Available Fall 2005</i>
<i>7a. Percentage of activist NGOs aware of the oversight role of parliament</i>	Measured in annual polling (Last Used: ALSP Report on Analysis of NGO Questionnaires - Jan. 2005, Question 2)	24.0%	29.0%	<i>Data Available Fall 2005</i>
<i>7b. Percentage of activist NGOs aware of the representative of parliament</i>	Measured in annual polling (Last Used: ALSP Rport on Analysis of NGO Questionnaires - Jan. 2005, Question 2)	11.0%	16.0%	<i>Data Available Fall 2005</i>
<i>7c. Percentage of activist NGOs satisfied with the information the receive from parliament</i>	Measured in annual polling (Last Used: ALSP Report on Analysis of NGO Questionnaires - Jan. 2005, Question 8)	18%	25.0%	<i>Projected Fall 2005</i>
<i>8a. Percentage of the general population indicating an awareness and understanding of the representative role of the National Assembly</i>	Survey (Annual LGP Household)	26.4% (2003)	35%	58% (March 2005)
<i>8b. Percentage of the general population indicating an awareness and understanding of the oversight role of the National Assembly</i>	Survey (Annual LGP Household)	7.8% (2003)	12%	16% (March 2005)
<i>9a. Use of the NA Website Legislation page</i>	Website Statistical Report	Apr-04 40,322 Hits per month	50,000/month	70,170// month (Apr-05)
<i>9b. Use of the NA Website Draft Legislation Page</i>	Website Statistical Report	Apr-04 16,629 Hits per month	20,000/month	19,623 /month (Apr-05)
<i>9c. Use of the NA Website Committee Information Page</i>	Website Statistical Report	Apr-04 3,933 Hits per mo.	5,000/month	4,063/mo. (Apr. 05)

Additionally, some less specifically measurable results can be reported in program areas as well. Results achieved during this quarter are indicated below as they relate to specific program task areas.

Task 5: *Improving the functioning of key committees and departments of the National Assembly by having them work closer with the legislative community in jointly analyzing, researching, commenting on and drafting legislation.*

- 1) Committees effectively engage outside expertise in the legislative process.

The Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs conducted on April 27, a hearing on the draft law adopted by the first reading “On Making Additions and Amendments to RA law “On Local Self-Government Bodies.” Representatives of local governments were invited to present their feedback to the deputies of the committees on the important changes which were proposed to legislation which guided their activities. In response to public announcement of the pending hearing, representatives of seven Armenian NGOs participated in the meeting at their own initiative, including representatives of the Community Finance Officer’s Association, Union of Armenian Communities, Center for the Struggle against Corruption, and other regional-based NGOs.

The ALSP team has been consistently and particularly persistent in its consultations with the National Assembly regarding the need to remove or at least increase the constitutional limitation on the number of permanent standing committees in the National Assembly (currently set at six). In this regard, ALSP both verbally and in writing presented to authors of the draft constitutional amendments and members of the lead committee considering the constitutional amendments strong comparative and substantiated examples why, as a core legislative prerogative for exercising oversight over the executive branch, this number should be established not in the constitution but in the National Assembly’s Rules of Procedure.

STTA David Olson drove this issue home to deputies during his consultations at the National Assembly in November 2004. On June 8, after the passage of the first reading of the Constitutional Amendments, ALSP Constitutional Law Specialist Lusine Abovyan had a meeting with one of the co-authors of the draft constitutional amendments Rafik Petrosyan (also the Chairman of the Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs) and discussed some of the issues raised in the post-first reading analysis ALSP had issued on that draft. In particular they discussed the question of specifying the exact number of the National Assembly standing committees in the constitutional text. Mr. Petrosyan agreed that specifying the number of the standing committees in the constitution is not desirable (the number of the committees foreseen in the first-reading draft increased the number of committees from 6 to 10). In the April, 2005 issue (#4) issue of the National Assembly Bulletin, Mr. Petrosyan had addressed this issue – arguing that the number of standing committees of the National Assembly should be set in the Rules of Procedure and not in the constitution and referenced directly the ALSP analysis and Mr. Olson’s comments on this issue. ALSP will monitor the final draft to see whether his argument has been accepted by the other coalition authors of the constitutional amendments.

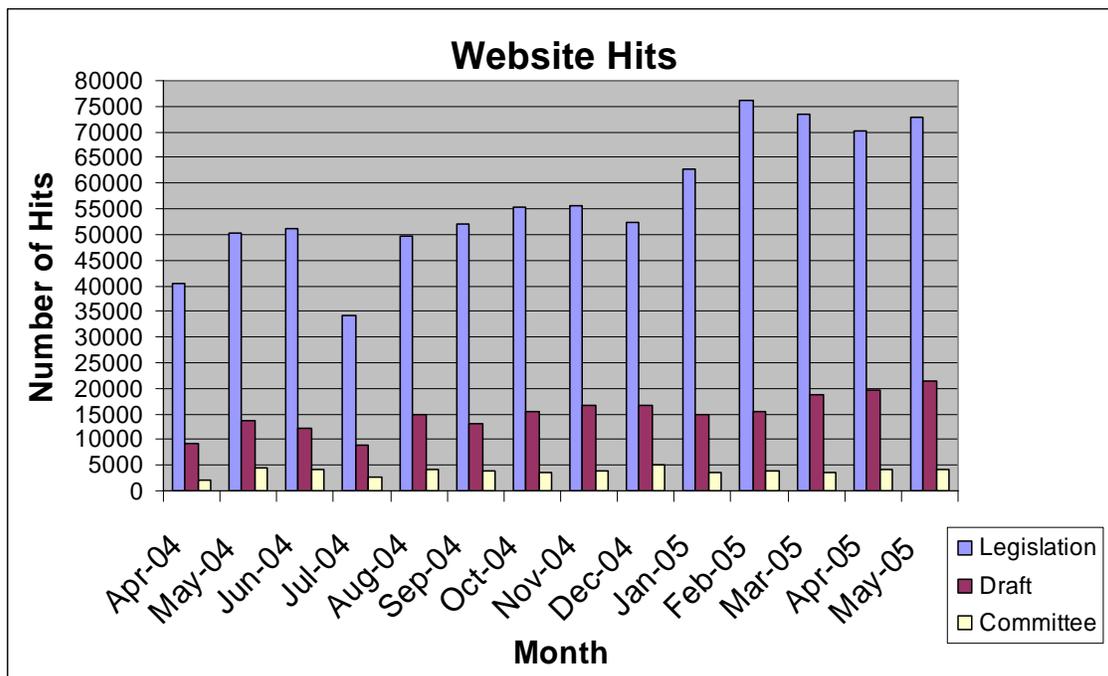
- 2) Policy Analyses regularly consider how the policy may differentially impact men and women.

The Center for Gender Studies prepared a Gender Impact Assessment of the Draft Law on Health Care and incorporated it into the presentation of the Healthcare Professionals Union’s comments at the June standing committee public hearing on the Draft Healthcare Law.

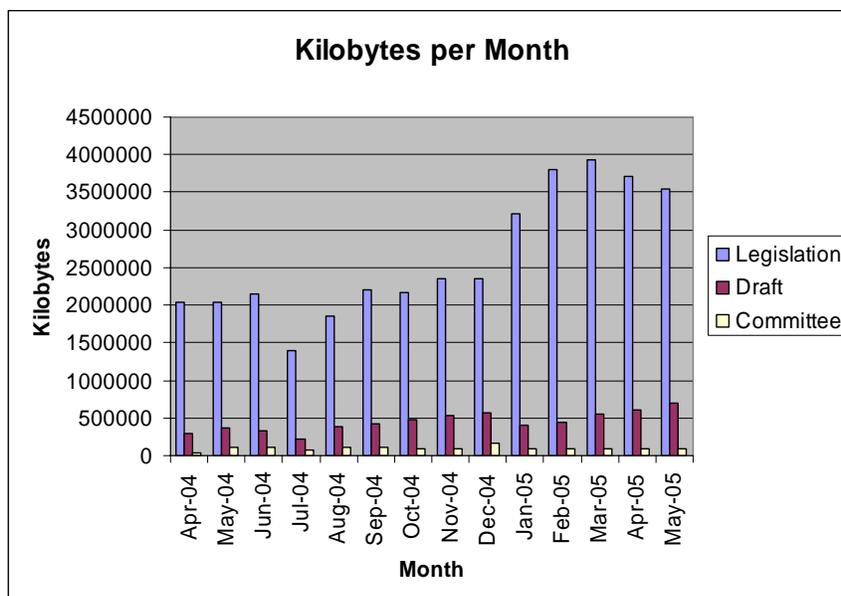
Task 6: Improving the ability of select units and individuals within the National Assembly to be more transparent, representative and responsive to citizen priorities, interests and concerns:

- 1) Information flow to and from the National Assembly is regularized to better reflect citizen input.

A review of the NA Website usage statistics for the past year show an increasing use of the “legislation” feature of the website which proves the National Assembly’s leading role as a source for citizens to turn to when current laws in force are required. Additionally, the “legislative drafts” feature is also showing an increased usage – reflecting the public’s increasing knowledge of the availability of the legislative drafts on the National Assembly’s website, but also increasing access and use of draft legislation as manifested by the kilobyte/download statistics. The website statistics for the same period on the access to “Legislative Committees” pages shows some slight increases of access during the period of the consideration of the constitutional amendments (December 2004 and May 2005) which may indicate that website users were searching the pages of the Ad Hoc Committee on Matters of Integration into European Structures for the most recent documents relating to the constitutional amendments.



However as the kilobyte download statistics show (below), there is still not enough information on the committee sites to satisfy the information need of the Armenian public. On the other hand, the use of the NA Website to download current laws remains high and has grown significantly in the spring 2005 legislative session.



Further more, a recently released rating of official websites in the South Caucasus reveals that yet again, the National Assembly Website is rated the number one quality government website in Armenia

Rating of Internet Resources of Official Government Sites by Google.com

(data as of 15.06.05. compared with [15.12.04](#), and [30.05.04](#).)

INSTITUTION	URL	Rating	Rating Placement Comparison		
		15.06.05	15.06.05	15.12.04	30.05.04
National Assembly	www.parliament.am	28300	1	1	1
Constitutional Court of RoA	www.concourt.am	11400	2	6	2
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	www.armeniaforeignministry.com	10000	3	5	4
National Statistical Services	www.armstat.am	9430	4	3	-
Government of the ROA	www.gov.am	9060	5	4	5
Central Bank of the ROA	www.cba.am	8280	6	2	3
President of the ROA	www.president.am	4640	7	7	8
Ministry of Trade and Economic Development	www.minted.am	3720	8	10	9
Department of Migrants and Refugees of the Government of ROA	www.dmr.am	1060	9	9	-
President of the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh	www.president.nkr.am	962	10	11	7

- 2) Committees and department staff increase their constituency outreach and respond to their constituency’s needs

The Citizen Letters Division is now using the Public Inquiries Tracking System (PITS) to manage their case load of citizen letters. On average, the department processes about 350 letters

per month. PITS is used to collect data on citizen appeals and track the history of how each inquiry was answered as well as to prepare aggregate reports on citizen appeals.

In April, the CLD issued its first report based on using the new PITS. In total, the department processed 2849 letters during the first quarter of 2005. 993 applications of RA citizens received and registered were referred to the NA Speaker and Vice-Speaker; 515 letters were referred to NA Standing Committees; 160 applications were referred to NA factions and deputy groups. The department was able to track the status of that correspondence and confirm that all applications had been answered in written form or orally – thus confirming compliance with the Armenian Law on Citizen Appeals. Additionally, they were able to issue a report on the scope of problems which were addressed in the appeals: legislative, legal, healthcare, social, educational, financial, housing, employment, privatization, domestic issues are raised in the letters. Based on the report, individual deputies and factions are able to also understand the dynamics of this citizen correspondence activity. Potentially, standing committees could also access the authors of letters on specific topics in order to solicit citizen feedback on certain problems or issues.

Task 7: Developing the National Assembly's ability to improve oversight of the executive branch through existing mechanisms and, to the extent possible, through assisting in the creation of new mechanisms via constitutional and legislative amendments:

- 1) NA increases ability to perform oversight functions through possible constitutional and internal rules amendments.

Several recommendations incorporated in both ALSP analyses of three constitutional drafts submitted to the National Assembly in the fall of 2004 and also incorporated into the recommendations drafted and submitted by the coalition of Armenian NGOs “Civil Society Initiative for Constitutional Reforms” to which ALSP staff contributed its expertise on balance of powers issues, were taken into consideration in the draft constitutional amendments adopted in the first reading. In particular, as a result of changes in Article 80, the mechanism of government interpellations was introduced.

B. SUMMARY OF PLANS FOR NEXT QUARTER

Cross-Cutting Tasks

- DA will hire a temporary Deputy Chief of Party to fill-in for Kregg Halstead who is recuperating from spinal surgery.
- ALSP will hire a State Institutions Specialist to take the place of Lusine Abovyan, the Constitutional Law Specialist who will be departing the project in August 2004 to become a Yale World Fellow.
- DA will submit its draft ALSP II Work Plan for Year 2 to USAID for its review and approval.
- USAID will sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Assembly and the first meeting of the Legislative Strengthening Advisory Group will be convened.
- ALSP will present its Information Technology Assessment to the National Assembly’s Legislative Strengthening Advisory Group (LSAG) for their review and comment.
- ALSP will submit the local STTA’s cost-benefit analysis/feasibility study on the options of installing an offset printing facility at the National Assembly to the LSAG for their

review and comment.

- ALSP will begin the procurement of essential equipment for the National Assembly.
- ALSP will conduct Performance Management Plan – related activities, including working with the Human Resource Management Department to conduct a staff survey in the National Assembly and solicit bids to conduct a survey of elected deputies in summer/early fall 2005.

Task 1: Facilitating and institutionalizing the involvement of Armenia’s legislative community to advocate, lobby and advise the National Assembly on policy and legislative issues;

- ALSP will work with the National Assembly Information Department to organize meetings with standing committee staff on how they can more effectively use the resources and the use of the External Contacts Database.
- ALSP will continue its work with the National Assembly Citizen Letters Division on the developing the Public Inquiry Tracking System (PITS) and install PITS in the Speakers’ offices and one standing committee and train staff to use the PITS.
- NA staff who participated in the Warsaw ISIS training in June will conduct consultations and trainings of other staff units using the ISIS system.
- Continue assistance to the standing and ad-hoc committees in organizing public hearings.
- A meeting of the Coordinating Council of Constituency Groups will be convened with NGOs who had participated in recent hearings to solicit their feedback on how the new innovations introduced to the practice of parliamentary hearings are working.
- The Committee Staff Working Group on Public Participation will meet to review drafted Public Hearings Guidelines so that they might be disseminated to all chairs of the standing and ad hoc committees as well as all committee staff.

Task 2: Improving the functioning of key committees and departments of the National Assembly by having them work closer with the legislative community in jointly analyzing, researching, commenting on and drafting legislation;

- The Guide to Reading the NA Sitting Agenda, will be disseminated to NGOs and placed at the NA website.
- ALSP will work with the Human Resource Management (HRM) Department on the methodological and technical skills training which will introduce modern analyses techniques in the National Assembly.
- After appropriate revision of the intranet the HRM will post the training plan on the intranet.
- A National Assembly Staff Innovations Fellows will submit their reports and make presentations to their staff colleagues.
- The HRM staff will continue to work with individual units to write with them their policies and procedures.
- Guidelines for a competitive student intern program at the National Assembly will be drafted, recruitment materials written and solicitation for applications issued for student interns to begin working at the National Assembly in fall 2005.
- Continue observing meetings of standing committees and work with individual committees on the organization of public committee meetings/hearings.
- Work with NA staff attending the IFLA Parliamentary Library and Research Centers

section meeting in Oslo, Norway in August on issues identified for follow-up implementation at the National Assembly.

- Review NA research department reports and with the department heads convene focus groups of deputies and staff to solicit feedback to these reports from deputies and other staff units.
- Convene the Gender Initiative group at the National Assembly to discuss their analysis of selected legislation using the Gender Impact Assessment.
- Invite USAID EREO staff to present their portfolio of assistance to National Assembly staff in September.

Task 3: Improving the ability of select units and individuals within the National Assembly to be more transparent, representative and responsive to citizen priorities, interests and concerns

- Work with the Committee on Foreign Relations to publish the report of the March public hearing on Karabakh and posting the report on their committee page on the NA Website.
- ALSP will explore the feasibility of live webcasting on the National Assembly Website of NA Plenary Sessions (at the request of the NA Speaker).
- ALSP will conduct an assessment of locations in at least two *marzes* (*preferably three*) with already existing advantageous physical infrastructure to set up to host the targeted regional Constituency Information and Communication Center (CICC)s.
- ALSP will provide the Lori *Marz*/Vanadzor CICC with Internet Access (for six months).
- ALSP will work with the Lori *Marz*/Vanadzor CICC to convene a meeting of NGOs of Lori Marz with authors of the Constitutional Amendments.
- ALSP will issue a report on the work of the Vanadzor CICC to date and “lessons learned” which may be applied when setting up CICC operations in future locations.
- ALSP will facilitate the visit of CICC volunteers from Masis and Goris to the National Assembly for an orientation to the departments and committees of the National Assembly.
- ALSP will provide Masis and Goris CICC’s with questionnaires to do a baseline assessment of the degree to which NGOs in their region are aware of the National Assembly’s activities. These questionnaires will provide insight to the kinds of services and activities of the CICC’s which would be most needed in these locations.
- Work with Habitat for Humanity to identify possible follow-up activities to the June 2005 “Parliament Build” including connecting deputies with NGOs and communities engaged in Habitat-for-Humanity Build activities which will emphasize problems NGOs have with rules on volunteerism, for example, or other issues such as access to affordable credits for housing.
- Staff of the Speaker’s office and the first standing committee will be invited to the CLD to see how the PITS works and the computer resources of the speaker’s office and the standing committee will be assessed to ensure that it can support the ISIS program on which the PITS is based.
- ALSP will introduce the Public Inquiry Tracking System (PITS) into at least one standing committee and identify ways that the reports on citizen case work can be used in constituency work.
- ALSP will work with the Public Relations staff to prepare for the new accreditation process of journalists at the National Assembly for the fall session.
- ALSP will provide support to the National Assembly in publishing an updated and

“renewable” staff directory.

Task 4: *Developing the National Assembly’s ability to improve oversight of the executive branch through existing mechanisms and, to the extent possible, through assisting in the creation of new mechanisms via Constitutional and legislative amendments.*

- Attend the second and third-reading debates on the constitutional amendments at the National Assembly and advise deputies on improvements to the articles addressing the authority of the National Assembly to exercise oversight over the executive branch.
- Continue providing expertise to the coalition of Armenian NGOs “Civil Society Initiative for Constitutional Reforms” (CSICR) in further stages of consideration of the draft constitutional amendments.
- Continue interviewing the deputies of the National Assembly regarding the Question and Answer Sessions in parliament and prepare recommendations for distribution among the Deputies and NA staff on how this oversight tool can be improved upon.
- Deliver comments on the Rules of Procedure and recommendations on how the work of committees can be improved for increased legislative effectiveness during the non plenary weeks.
- Complete the installation of the expanded Local Area Network at the Control Chamber.

C. COOPERATION WITH OTHER DONORS

ALSP continued its cooperation with both USAID implementing partners and donors and partners from other donor organizations. Notable among the cooperation with USAID partners, was the cooperation with PADCO’s Social Reform program in setting up Citizen Information Centers at the Integrated Social Services Center (ISSC) in Vanadzor as well as the ISSC in Massis. Additionally, in the Vanadzor location, a lawyer trained by ABA/CEELI was providing consultations to citizens and NGOs on recently passed legislation as well as best approaches to advocating for amendments to legislation. Other cooperation with ABA/CEELI included work with the Civil Society Initiative for Constitutional Reforms. In the context of that initiative, ALSP also coordinated with NDI and the Counterpart CAPS project in their plans to assist or support civil society organizations’ work on constitutional reforms. ALSP COP Valentine was invited to participate on a Eurasia Foundation panel to review applications for a South Caucus Public Policy Initiative grant program. ALSP Public Policy Specialist Edward Safaryan was included in the National Assembly’s working group on drafting the Law on Potable Water which is working under the technical guidance of USAID’s contractor PA Consulting.

ALSP cooperated with the British Embassy on a number of activities including follow-up to the March 2005 Gender Impact Assessment Training; additional materials were identified this quarter for translation related to the workshops at the National Assembly on using the gender impact assessment tool to review policies and legislative proposals in terms of equal treatment and opportunity for men and women. We also discussed with the British Embassy the possibility to fund two staff from the National Assembly to attend the IFLA¹ conference in August and participate in the meetings of the Parliamentary Libraries and Research Centers Section; and the nomination of National Assembly deputies and staff to participate in special exchange programs sponsored by the British Foreign Office (Chevening Fellowships, for example).

¹ IFLA – International Federation of Library Associations

The OSCE organized a one-month NA Staff training event for staff of three standing committees and the Legislative Analysis Department and the Department for Social Policy Analysis. ALSP provided to the OSCE the opportunity for two staff of the Polish *Sejm* to conduct a half-day workshop on the Polish *Sejm*'s approach to harmonization of legislation with the requirements of the European Union. COP Valentine participated in brainstorming sessions with the UNDP and OSCE on developing a training program to encourage greater participation of women in local elections in Armenia both as candidates and as voters.

Discussions with UNDP are ongoing on how their support to the National Assembly might support the ALSP program goals of instituting regular reporting from standing committees on the deliberations at the committee level. Cooperation continued with GTZ's program to support the further development of the Control Chamber of the National Assembly and COP Valentine met with the German team to discuss areas of compliment and cooperation. ALSP met with specialists from the World Bank on their regional assessment of Supreme Audit Institutions and provided background materials on the Control Chamber to their assessment team. The US Treasury continues to design its proposed assistance to the Government of Armenia on developing both internal and external audit capacity. In that context, ALSP's COP Valentine met with US Treasury representatives to apprise them of on-going work with the Control Chamber. The ALSP team also met with the British-based International Association of Businessmen and Parliamentarians (IAB) which has a pilot project currently ongoing in Georgia. The IAB functions as an information provider and business environment lobbying organization in Britain. It was agreed that should the IAB begin their activities in Armenia, they would coordinate with ALSP.

During a meeting at USAID with the representatives of the Millenium Challenge Corporation, ALSP COP Valentine brought up the issue of accountability for MCC sponsored programs in Armenia and the potential role that the National Assembly might play as the institution which oversees government performance and expenditures.

D. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

ALSP experienced a number of personnel changes. Anna Ter-Ghukazyan joined the ALSP team in April as Office Manager upon the departure of Nona Alikhanyan in April. Anna Hovhannesian, Communications and Information Specialist took a three-month leave of absence to work on a temporary assignment for UNDP designing a communications plan for the government and parliament of the Maldives related to the Tsunami relief efforts. In mid-May, DCOP Gregg Halstead departed Armenia for the United States for an urgent surgical procedure and remained there through the quarter recuperating from the surgery and in physical therapy.

ALSP engaged two summer interns from Pepperdine University School of Public Policy. Brittany Jensky volunteered with ALSP for three weeks and Robert Khatchadourian is scheduled to continue through the end of July. ALSP also engaged two Armenian interns during the quarter, one from American University of Armenia and one from the French University of Armenia.

One expat STTA was engaged during this quarter. Edward Rakhimkulov from Ukraine's Parliamentary Development Project shared with colleagues at the National Assembly the experience of the Verkhovna Rada in administering a competitive student internship program for

the past ten years. Mr. Rakhimkulov also assisted the National Assembly in drafting a strategy, recruitment materials, a deployment plan as well as a draft orientation program for the intern program to be initiated in the National Assembly in the fall. Additionally, ALSP engaged two experts of the Polish Sejm's Bureau of Studies and Expertise on a pro bono basis. Mr. Mirosław Sobolewski and Mr. Mirosław Gwiazdowicz – both experts in environmental policy – met with legislative research staff at the National Assembly to identify ways in which the research work of the NA staff could be more supportive of the legislative process. Additionally, the Polish colleagues were also engaged in a training program organized by the OSCE for committee and research staff of the National Assembly making a presentation on the Polish Sejm's approach to harmonization of domestic legislation with the requirements of the European Union.

Three local STTA's continued their work with the project team on a part-time basis. Tigran Zagaryan continued to work with National Assembly staff in the design and maintenance of informational databases using the ISIS systems. Mihran Grigoryan worked with the National Assembly staff in addressing bugs in the existing design of the National Assembly website (www.parliament.am) and how best to incorporate new features – especially those required by recent changes in the Rules of Procedure. Armen Aivazyanyan completed a feasibility study regarding the National Assembly's expressed wish to acquire an off-set printing facility. Additionally, ALSP cooperated with the Eurasia Foundation Center Regional Research Center to provide training to the National Assembly staff on the use of SPSS software as a research tool.

E. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED AND REMEDIAL ACTIONS

Problem: It had been planned to convene a meeting of the Coordinating Council of Constituency Groups (CCCG) with NGOs who had participated in recent hearings at the National Assembly to solicit their feedback on how the new innovations introduced to the practice of parliamentary hearings are working; but much of the attention of ALSP staff was concentrated in working with the members of the CSCIR group relative to their discussion of the constitutional amendments.

Remedial Action: A meeting with the NGO participants in hearings at the National Assembly will be convened in the summer months so that feedback can be provided to the CSWGPP for consideration in the elements of the Public Hearings Guide.

Problem: ALSP continued its work with the National Assembly Citizen Letters Division (CLD) on the development of the Public Inquiry Tracking System (PITS), but as bugs are still being worked out, it did not yet install PITS in the Speakers' offices or standing committees.

Remedial Action: Staff of the Speaker's office and the first standing committee will be invited to the CLD to see how the PITS works and the computer resources of the speaker's office and the standing committee will be assessed to ensure that they can support the ISIS program on which the PITS is based.

Problem: While ALSP was able to conduct some activities foreseen in the Performance Management Plan (PMP) such as the post-session scorecards, and analysis of the household survey results, other PMP activities were delayed, including working with the Human Resource Management Department to conduct a staff survey in the National Assembly and soliciting bids to conduct a survey of elected deputies in summer/early fall 2005. This is in part because these

activities would require significant financial commitment and the PMP has not yet been approved by the USAID mission.

Remedial Action: Bids for the surveys foreseen in the PMP will be solicited and submitted to USAID for approval for surveys to be conducted no later than September 2005 so that results can be incorporated into the Mission's SO report for FY 2005.

Problem: While some of the issues related to the work of standing committees were addressed in the commentary ALSP staff provided on the constitutional amendments, ALSP was not able to deliver, as planned, comments on the Rules of Procedure and recommendations on how the work of committees can be improved for increased legislative effectiveness during the non plenary weeks as had been requested by Deputy Head of the Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs Hovhannes Margaryan. This task was delayed in part due to the concentration of ALSP staff on the constitutional amendments which was ongoing during this period.

Remedial Action: ALSP will complete the draft and submit the comments and recommendations during the next quarter.

Problem: ALSP's progress on preparing recommendations on how to improve the National Assembly Question and Answer Sessions was delayed in order to have more time to observe and analyze data on how effectively Question and Answer Sessions were conducted under the new four-day parliamentary sittings regime required under the amended Rules of Procedure (through May of 2005).

Remedial Action: ALSP will complete the analysis and submit recommendations on the effectiveness of the Question and Answer Sessions during the next quarter.

F. UNRESOLVED ISSUES OR CONSTRAINTS ON THE PROJECT

The Memorandum of Understanding which was to be signed at the beginning of the 2005 calendar year has still not been cleared through USAID for presentation to the National Assembly. While this has not hampered the ability of the ALSP team to operate on a day-to-day level, it has severely hampered the ability of the team to establish the primary working group envisaged in the project, the Legislative Strengthening Advisory Group. Likewise, the absence of a signed MOU also makes it difficult to justify any major equipment procurement as it is intended that the ALSP procurement plan be reviewed and discussed by the LSAG before major equipment purchases are initiated. This in turn, has hampered in some cases the ability of the team to work on some of the projects that require hardware installation. For example, replicating the Public Inquiry Tracking System in the speakers' offices and the Standing Committees makes much more sense when it is presented together with additional equipment rather than as something that will require more computer sharing among committee staff. The progress on the MOU, while slow, did appear to be coming to a final form by the end of the quarter. It is expected that as soon as the MOU is signed, other program operations will be accelerated as a result, despite the usual summer hiatus in activity at the National Assembly.

While a letter from the USAID Mission Director, suggesting the establishment of the Legislative Strengthening Advisory Group, was delivered in December, the actual establishment of the LSAG has been delayed due to the lack of an updated Memorandum of Understanding between

USAID and the National Assembly. While ALSP continues to believe that the LSAG is in the best interest of the National Assembly, establishment of the body prior to the signing of the MOU is unlikely. It is foreseen that as soon as that document has been signed, the first LSAG meeting will be convened.

One of the major problems of the committees and effective committee meetings at the National Assembly is the physical set-up of the rooms, and the relative immobility of the furniture in some of the meetings rooms. ALSP will continue to provide detailed options/plans and illustrations to standing committee chairs about the physical set up of the rooms which might improve the interaction between those called to report to committees in parliament. However, short of major renovations to the building, these constraints will simply have to be overcome creatively.

III. FINANCIAL REPORT

Contractor Name: Development Associates, Inc.
Contract No. AEP-I-00-00-00004-00
Quarterly Financial Report
Cumulative through 6/30/05

To No.	Country	Authorized Expenditures (\$)	Actual Expenditures (\$)	Balances (\$)	Estimated Completion Date	Actual Completion Date
800	EGYPT	274,062	264,998.50	9,063.50	1/11/01	1/11/01
801	BULGARIA	67,284	56,784.99	10,499.01	9/30/00	9/30/00
802	EGYPT	4,464,754	2,937,313.58	1,527,440.42	1/11/04	1/11/04
803	ARMENIA I	2,301,804	2,273,975.99	27,828.01	8/31/04	8/31/04
804	UGANDA	3,143,642	2,079,098.05	1,064,543.95	6/30/06	
805	ARMENIA II	2,483,853	560,408.23	1,923,444.77	8/31/07	
	TOTALS	12,735,399	8,172,579.34	4,562,819.66		

IV. RESULTS FROM COMPLETED TASK ORDERS

None this quarter.