



**CEPPS/NDI Quarterly Report: January 1 to March 31, 2005**

**ALGERIA: STRENGTHENING POLITICAL PARTIES &  
CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (04856)  
Cooperative Agreement No. DGC-A-00-01-00004-00**

**Project dates: July 1, 2004 to August 31, 2005**

**Total budget: \$710,000.00 Expenses to date: 226,218.73**

**I. SUMMARY**

Public confidence in the Algerian state and political class are at an all time low. While the security situation has considerably improved in recent years, many Algerians' quality of life has not increased commensurately. Confronted with the dysfunctional nature of the executive and legislative branches, citizens increasingly rely on well placed friends or bribes to help them to procure basic public services or resolve even the most minor administrative issues. Political parties and civil society organizations, supposedly the key intermediary institutions between citizens and the state, have neither succeeded in developing credible policy alternatives, nor in working together to channel this citizen frustration with the current system into a constructive and sustainable movement for change. So while Algeria currently boasts the trappings of representative governance – elected local, provincial and national level organizations – its political system is far from democratic. If this gap between the official rhetoric and reality persists, not only will the very concept of democratic governance be badly tarnished in the eyes of many Algerian citizens, but the country's stability and that of its neighbors may also be at risk.

For Algeria to become a functioning democracy, real-decision-making authority must be devolved from the rentier class to the country's elected political institutions and the citizens that they represent. NDI began working with Algerian political parties and civil society organizations in 2000 and 2003, respectively, to assist them to become more effective advocates for this reform. Building upon this prior work, NDI seeks under the current grant to: strengthen and reform parties to make them more effective, representative, transparent and democratic; promote an informed and active citizenry on issues related to elections and political processes; assist political parties and civil society organizations to build a broad consensus for reform on key national issues; and increase the participation of women and youth in political life.

While the current grant was awarded in July 2004, NDI did not begin expending funds under this program until October 2004, as there were remaining monies in the previous Algeria: Assistance to Political Parties and Civil Society (03837) grant. During the January through March 2005 reporting period, NDI organized several activities, including:

- A strategic planning session for the women’s working group to develop their 2005 objectives and activities, as well as a second planning session for the women’s section of the Movement for a Peaceful Society;
- Individual workshops for the national leadership of three parties on local branch development;
- Two advocacy skills development workshops on “*Human Rights Education and Advocacy*” and “*Framing your advocacy issue: identifying the specific problem of your constituents, proposing a concrete, realistic solution, and developing a campaign strategy*”;
- The launch of civic education activities via the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Algerian Muslim Scouts and the recruiting and training of 20 discussion group moderators; and
- Program development consultations with senior NDI staff in Rabat, Morocco.

## II. BACKGROUND

Algeria today is emerging from over a decade of deadly civil strife. Fueled by years of political and economic mismanagement under the one-party system, the conflict escalated when the Algerian military assumed control of the country’s government after the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) won a landslide victory in the December 1991 legislative elections. Following the loss of over 100,000 lives, billions of dollars worth of infrastructure and years worth of progress on the human development front, Algeria’s long-suffering citizens yearn to turn the corner to a more peaceful and prosperous future.

If Algeria’s political and military leaders have succeeded in greatly reducing the incidence of terrorist-inspired violence in their society, they still face daunting challenges. Peace and security must be restored to all areas of the country. Critical economic and financial reforms must be enacted so as to encourage private investment, relieve the treasury of the burden of numerous loss-making state-owned industries and combat the country’s high unemployment rate. Solutions must be found to key social problems such as the severe housing shortage, the failing educational system, and the sad plight thousands of families whose relatives were killed or “disappeared” during the conflict. And, no less urgently, public demands for greater respect of political and civil liberties must be met, via measures such as the lifting of the state of emergency, the opening of the country’s state media sector and the amendment of the onerous family code.

Algeria’s civilian political leaders have, at least rhetorically, committed themselves to protecting and expanding political pluralism, reforming the country’s judicial system, and fostering a society governed by the rule of law. While a constitutional revision and series of elections since 1996 have installed multiparty local and national assemblies, most Algerians view these institutions as at best, ineffective, and at worst, a civilian façade for a military-dominated regime. As official voter turnout figures of less than 50 percent in the 2002 national and local elections attest, Algerian citizens neither view these institutions as credible, nor believe that they have the power to change their government via the ballot box. As a result, they see little reason to

participate in the country's political process. Governing parties are viewed as self-serving parts of the system, rather than independent actors working on behalf of the ordinary citizen. Opposition parties, meanwhile, are seen as weak and divided, and their inability to offer a credible, concrete alternative to the regime limits their capacity to mobilize either activists or voters. Civil society organizations fare little better in the public esteem: plagued by internal leadership battles and poor management practices, and unable to mobilize citizens as part of a long-term strategy for change, these associations often find themselves reacting to events rather than acting as advocates for public policy reform. Furthermore, the level of mistrust that currently exists between governmental institutions, political parties and civil society organizations, and the confusion that persists as to the role played by each sector in a democratic society, also make cross-sector cooperation for political reform extremely difficult.

Whether as participants in discussions in local cafés, radio call-in programs or even periodic riots, Algerian citizens continue to express their desire for genuine political reform and democratic governance. Intermediary institutions between citizens and the state – parties and civil society organizations – must become effective vehicles to channel this popular frustration with the status quo into a sustainable, peaceful movement for change. Parties and civil society organizations must take steps to encourage women and youth, who make up over 50 percent and 70 percent of the Algerian population respectively, to engage in political and civic life so as to shape the future of a country still largely dominated by men of retirement age. They must work to ensure that Algerian citizens are informed about the issues at stake and can contribute to the process of finding solutions to persistent societal problems as voters and activists. They must put in place mechanisms, both to facilitate greater communication and cooperation between their sectors and to oblige the country's elected officials become more responsive and accountable to the citizens they are supposed to represent.

With these conditions in mind, and in keeping with the overall Middle East Partnership Initiative goals of expanding public space, giving people a say in governance, promoting effective and accountable government and fostering respect for the rule of law, NDI has developed a 14-month program for work with political and civic actors in Algeria to foster more democratic and participatory governance by:

- Strengthening and reforming parties to make them more effective, representative, transparent and democratic;
- Promoting an informed and active citizenry on issues related to elections and political processes;
- Assisting political parties and civil society organizations to build a broad consensus for reform on key national issues; and
- Increasing women's and youth participation in political life.

### **III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

#### **Assistance to Algerian Political Parties**

During this quarter, activities with Algerian political parties focused primarily on promoting women's political participation and fostering the development of active local party branches.

### *Strategic planning session with the “Win with Women” women’s working group*

On January 13, 2005, NDI invited members of the women’s working group created in May 2004 to a half-day strategic planning session to determine their objectives for 2005 and develop an action plan to help achieve them. This session built upon a half-day evaluation session conducted in December 2004, and was attended by 10 working group members, representing seven different political parties.

During this session, facilitated by NDI staff, participants first re-affirmed the mission of the working group, which is “to oversee the implementation of the recommendations [to party leaders and the Algerian government] of the July 2004 women’s leadership skills training retreat.” They then developed three main objectives for 2005, namely: 1) training members of the working group and Algiers-based activists in leadership skills, campaign preparation and training of trainers methodology, such that they can then in turn train other activists outside of the capital; 2) launching an awareness raising campaign targeting party leaders and officials, to educate them on the importance of putting women in eligible places in candidate lists and of integrating women into all party executive and leadership bodies (national councils, etc.); and 3) beginning an awareness campaign targeting the public, to familiarize citizens with the activities of the women’s working group and the leadership retreat recommendations.

Working in three small groups, one per objective, the participants developed rudimentary action plans to help them meet these objectives. The working group then chose a committee of three women, who were to draft a summary report of the objectives and action plans and submit them to the rest of the group by February 1.

### *National-level workshops on branch office development*

With the overall goal of assisting Algerian political parties to become more effective, representative, transparent and democratic, party strengthening activities under the current grant are divided into two closely interrelated components, namely, 1) national-level workshops on party organization, and 2) training modules on local branch development and voter outreach for local level party activists and elected officials (“Walk and Talk”).

From February 7-10, NDI held individual one-day workshops with the national leadership of three of the Institute’s main political party partners on local branch development. Johan Hamels, Secretary General of the Green Party of Flanders, Belgium, joined NDI for this activity, which was designed to: emphasize the role of local branch offices and the importance of direct voter contact, both during, as well as between elections; assist participating parties to develop action plans for local branch development between now and the 2007 elections; and secure buy-in from the party leadership, local elected officials and activists for a series of five local branch development and voter outreach training activities in partnership with NDI.

In workshops with the Movement for a Peaceful Society (MSP), Socialist Forces Front (FFS) and Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD), Hamels drew on the experience of his own Green Party to demonstrate the critical work done by members of local party branches to build electoral

support via activities in their communities in the period between elections. By raising the visibility of the party between elections, Hamels argued, a party would increase its credibility during the electoral campaign. Together with NDI staff, he then facilitated discussions with participants on the role of their local party branches and their current strengths and weaknesses. With an eye to the 2007 legislative and local elections, participants then worked in small groups to develop draft local branch action plans for 2005, which were then shared and discussed with the full group.

Each of the three workshops saw the active participation of 25 or more members of the national party leadership, local elected officials and grassroots base. In the case of the RCD, party president Said Sadi also attended the entire workshop and encouraged participants to speak with candor and to offer constructive criticism.

Following the workshops, NDI staff met with each party to evaluate the activity and prepare for the launch of the series of five “Walk and Talk” modules (local level public opinion research and voter outreach activities) that will begin in April. The “Walk and Talk” modules, include: 1) Identifying priority local issues and potential party supporters via questionnaires and door to door canvassing; 2) Strategic planning: devising a strategy and action plan to help solve a local problem; 3) Communications I: explaining what you plan to do about a local problem via the print media and radio; 4) Communications II: reporting back to citizens on what you’ve done via party newsletters; and 5) Evaluation and ToT: helping other party branches put the “Walk and Talk methodology to work. Each of the five modules will consist of a workshop, a “homework assignment,” whereby the party branch puts the new concepts into practice via action in their community, and ongoing consultations with NDI staff and the party’s national headquarters throughout the course of the program.

Each party has been asked to identify two pilot municipalities, one in the greater Algiers region and one in a neighboring province, in which NDI will work with them for the course of the program. NDI has also requested that each party designate a member of the national party leadership as the main point of contact for the program. This person will be responsible for helping NDI staff to organize the trainings in each locality with his/her party, will assist with follow up, and will help to ensure that the party leadership is kept abreast of all that work being done at the local level.

#### *Strategic planning session with the women’s session of the MSP*

From March 24-26, NDI Women’s Program Manager Kristin Haffert joined in-country staff for two activities with members of the women’s working group.

In a March 25 meeting with five members of the women’s working group, Haffert provided participants with a progress report on the “Win with Women” initiative and sought their input on “Phase II.” Haffert shared NDI’s plan to develop an interactive website and listserv to enable women politicians from around the world to access documents and exchange information. The Algerian participants were delighted to learn about this new resource, and in particular that the listserv would include French and Arabic among its working languages. This meeting also provided an opportunity for participants to “compare notes” as to the progress being made by

each of their parties in implementing the working group recommendations distributed to all party leaders in November 2004.

On March 26, at the request of women's working group member Aicha Belhadjar (National Bureau member in charge of women's and family affairs), Haffert and in-country staff facilitated a full-day strategic planning session for over 30 members of the women's section of the Movement for a Peaceful Society (MSP). Via this activity, participants first discussed the mission of the MSP women's section, and its specific role in promoting women's participation, not only as voters and activists, but as members of the party leadership and candidates for elected office. The session included a review of the "Win with Women" Global Action Plan, and a discussion of how it might be used by members of the MSP's women's section as a tool.

During the second half of the session, the participants, who were mainly drawn from the regional level women's section secretariats, outlined their specific objectives for 2005-07, and the types of activities that they would undertake to meet these objectives. During this period, the MSP women's section aims to: Create women's structures in each locality where the party is present; increase the number of women party activists by 10-20%; identify potential women candidates for 2007; and increase the number of women candidates in the MSP's lists for the 2007 legislative and local elections.

Working in small groups with others from their own regions to develop province-specific action plans for 2005-07, which were then presented to and discussed with the full group, participants likewise identified a number of activities that should be undertaken by the regional level party secretariats in 2005-07. These include, providing training for women activists in communications and leadership skills; identifying potential voters; reaching out to prospective women party members; and lobbying male party members on the importance of integrating women in party leadership positions and candidates.

### **Assistance to Algerian Civil Society Organizations**

Assistance to Algerian civil society organizations this quarter included the first of a series of five workshops on public policy advocacy, as well as the launch of a pilot participatory civic education program targeting voting age youth.

#### *Evaluation and Program Development Session with Advocacy Workshop Participants*

On February 3, staff brought together 17 civil society activists with whom NDI has worked most closely since the launch of the civil society development component of its program to present the 2005 advocacy-training curriculum and jointly define the roles and responsibilities of the Institute and its partners. Via this session, NDI staff emphasized that, building on the 2003-04 trainings, the Institute would be seeking both to assist participants to deepen their understanding of advocacy strategies and techniques, and to place greater emphasis on actions oriented specifically toward policy change. The 2005 curriculum consists of a series of five workshops, which will be supplemented by more intensive "guided practice" or "coaching" between sessions, so as to encourage participants to put the new techniques into practice. NDI staff asked each participant to discuss the 2005 curriculum with other members of their organizations. Each

interested organization has been asked to designate the appropriate people to attend each workshop, as well as put in place internal communications and evaluation mechanisms, so as to help ensure that the training will translate into practical results on the ground.

### *Advocacy Skills Development Workshops*

From January 29 to 31, NDI and the Center for Information and Documentation on Women's and Children's Rights (CIDDEF) joined forces to organize a three-day workshop on *Human Rights Education and Advocacy*. This activity, which was funded by the Canadian and French Embassies, was a requirement following CIDDEF Director Nadia Ai Zai's participation in a three-week, Canadian-funded training program on this theme in June 2004. Ait Zai called upon NDI to assist her in sharing this new approach to human rights advocacy with a broad Algerian audience.

The workshop opened with an introduction by the Algerian Minister of Women's and Family Affairs and panel discussions featuring Algerian and French experts on international human rights conventions dealing with women and children's rights. Some 80 people, including civic activists, Algerian government officials and journalists attended the first day of the workshop. On days two and three, NDI staff provided an introduction to advocacy campaigns based on a case study illustrating women and children's rights violations. The 40 participants were introduced to the stages of the advocacy process, setting realistic goals and objectives, techniques for analyzing their political environment and tools for crafting and communicating impact-oriented messages for their target publics. This workshop marked the first time that most participating civic activists had worked together with officials from the public administration, and thus afforded them the opportunity to identify common interest issues on which they could work together with these officials to bring about constructive political change.

On March 2-3, NDI organized the first in a series of five advocacy skills workshops planned under the current grant. Entitled "*Framing your advocacy issue: identifying the specific problem of your constituents, proposing a concrete, realistic solution, and developing a campaign strategy,*" this workshop saw the participation of 26 activists from 16 different Algerian organizations. Participants worked to create realistic strategies for their 2005 advocacy campaigns through interactive discussions and small group exercises aimed at: 1) identifying their constituents' priority concerns, 2) developing realistic solutions to these problems; and 3) analyzing their NGO's ability to carry out these campaigns, in light of their organizational capacity and the current political environment.

The workshop opened with exercises aimed at distinguishing between the manifestation of community problems (ex. violence against women) and their root causes (ex. economic, social, political and legal factors), thereby aiding participants to more specifically define the issues on which they would work (ex. Eliminating sexual harassment in the workplace) and their constituents (working women). On the workshop's second day, NDI staff led participants in a situational or "SWOT" analysis (analysis of an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats), which enabled them to grasp more concretely the relationship between their internal and external operating environments.

To assist participants to grasp what were in many cases new concepts, NDI translated relevant materials into French from the “ *A New Wave of Power, People and Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation* ” guide by Lisa VeneKlassen and Valerie Miller. Following the workshop, NDI staff likewise developed a reference guide based on the material presented during the workshop, which was distributed to all participants.

### *Civic Forum*

During the course of its consultations with civic associations in 2003, one of the organizations with which NDI is currently working, the Algerian Muslim Scouts (SMA) repeatedly expressed interest in receiving training to become civic educators. Emphasizing that civic education is not part of the Algerian public school curriculum, and that the majority of Algerian citizens have an extremely limited understanding of core democratic principles and institutions, the leaders of the SMA are keen both to provide civic education to their own members and to engage these latter in civic education work in their communities. NDI sought to encourage this initiative and believes that this organization, which has local branches in all 48 provinces of the country, has the necessary interest and institutional capacity to become a full partner for a pilot civic education program targeting youth of voting age. <sup>1</sup>

NDI and the SMA determined that a moderated discussion group methodology would be particularly well suited to Algeria, a country with an oral culture, and one in which nearly one third of all citizens are illiterate. In addition, both organizations have noted that voter turnout is particularly low among members of the 18-25 year old age group and that youth are likewise less likely to be involved in political parties and civic organizations. The two organizations thus decided to model the pilot civic education program in Algeria upon similar “Civic Forum” programs that NDI has successfully implemented in numerous fledgling democracies and post-conflict countries around the world. By actively targeting youth via this activity and including them in a dialogue about the country’s political and electoral processes, NDI and the SMA likewise sought to reinforce the importance of political participation among the members of this important stakeholder group.

### Memorandum of Understanding

Following several discussions between the SMA leadership and NDI senior Algeria program and Civic Participation team staff, the two organizations finalized and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the implementation of a pilot civic education program in February 2005. This agreement lays out the two organizations’ respective roles and responsibilities for the duration of a nine-month program targeting young Algerians who will have reached voting age by the 2007 elections (see appendices). In particular, NDI pledges to provide training and on-

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<sup>1</sup> The Algerian Muslim Scouts (SMA) defines itself as a “national, educational, humanitarian, volunteer, independent organization” that has the status of a “public interest association” under Algerian law. The organization has been legally registered under Algerian law since 1989, and is a member of the world scouting movement as well as other regional scouting associations. The SMA is active in all 48 provinces of the country. They claim a total of 120,635 members. Both boys and girls are members of the SMA. According to the national leadership of the SMA, some 20 percent of the members of this organization are 18 years of age or older.

going support to 20 discussion group moderators (moderators, facilitators), as well as reimbursement for program-related expenses, for the course of the program. The SMA, meanwhile, commits to recruiting the 20 discussion group moderators from within their organization, providing facilities for training workshops and the monthly discussion group sessions, ensuring that the discussion groups do in fact take place, and providing NDI with monthly programmatic and financial reports for the course of the program. In addition, the NDI-Algeria and the SMA have each nominated a program coordinator to oversee program implementation.

Upon signature of the MOU, NDI worked with the SMA to develop criteria for and identify 20 discussion group moderator candidates. As required by the MOU, every effort was made to ensure a gender and geographical balance in the choice of moderator candidates. Ultimately, 17 men and 3 women were selected. The 20 moderator candidates are all local SMA troop leaders, ranging in age from 22 to 30 years old. They hail from all regions of the country, with nine different provinces represented including Algiers (4), Biskra (2), Oran (2), Ain Defla (2), Tizi Ouzou (2), Laghouat (2), Saida (2), Blida (2) and Sétif (2).

### Training Sessions

As the first step in this process, local Program Assistant Nadjat Bouda, who had been designated the NDI program, coordinator, traveled to Washington, DC for a one-week training course in participatory civic education methodology and program development. Together with Washington, DC based Program Officer Robert Peri, Bouda acquired new skills in adult education and discussion group moderation techniques, as well as curriculum development, via daily training seminars, practical exercises and a simulation organized by Civic Participation team staff. Bouda and Peri, together with NDI civic education expert Mary Margaret Dineen, who had previously developed Civic Forum in Albania and Sierra Leone, would thus form the core of the in-country training team.

From March 24 – March 28, 2005 the NDI training team organized an intensive five day training session for the 20 discussion group moderators at the Scouts camping facility on the outskirts of Algiers. The specific objectives of this activity were to prepare the group of 20 discussion group moderator trainees to: organize and facilitate two discussion groups/month in their province with SMA members aged 16-25; participate in the development of the discussion group curricula and module design; and complete monthly narrative and financial reporting forms for the SMA leadership and NDI.

Given that the discussion group moderators would implement the program in teams of two in their home provinces, the trainers first facilitated several team building activities, both in large groups and in two-person teams. The initial phase of the training also extensively covered discussion facilitation techniques. Participants examined the characteristics of a discussion, as opposed to a debate, a lecture, or any other form of communication. They were likewise trained in techniques for encouraging the contribution of all members in a discussion group – a critical part of the Civic Forum program methodology. It was explained that, in such a program, the methodology must mirror the content, as this is what creates an atmosphere of “learning by doing,” a very powerful educational tool. Activities specifically targeted: the use of icebreakers;

the practice of active listening; the setting of ground rules; sensitivity to different learning styles; time management; and managing difficult personalities within a group.

During the second phase of the training, the discussion group moderators participated in the development of the program curricula and practiced facilitated real discussions using the new techniques. The discussion group moderators, working in teams of two, will host sessions on one module per month from April to December 2005. Each module will be delivered to two different groups of 15-20 participants in each province. Modules are cumulative in nature, and thus the continuity of the discussion groups is important to the success of the program. During the training sessions the facilitators thus played an important role in discussing the content of the modules that will be delivered, and in adapting them to the Algerian context. The first module will be entitled "What is a Discussion?" and will cover participatory methodology as well as the setting of ground rules and the modalities of the sessions. Subsequent modules include: the Elements of Democracy; Rule of Law and the Constitution; the Structures and functions of Government; the Responsibilities of Elected representatives; the Role of political parties; Elections; the Role of the Media in a Democracy; and the Role of Civil Society in a Democracy.

Facilitators had the opportunity to work with the content of the modules and they practiced until they were comfortable delivering the modules and answering questions related to the content of the program. The content of each module will also be laid out in a detailed written outline, in Arabic, and provided to all the discussion group moderators prior to the delivery of each module.

The facilitators were also made familiar with the proper procedures for the management of the program. Topics covered included: scheduling, group selection (including seeking gender balance), purchasing of necessary supplies, financial reporting, narrative reporting, and evaluation. At the conclusion of the training session, NDI provided each team of moderators with a Civic Forum facilitator's kit comprised of an easel, flipcharts, and markers. NDI will reimburse participants for the purchase of additional supplies throughout the course of the program.

Once trained, the discussion group moderators will now work with their national leadership and the heads of their local branch offices in the East, Center, South and West of the country to form local branch level discussion groups of 15-20 members aged 16 years and over. Working as part of a team of two, discussion group moderators will be responsible for organizing and leading discussion groups in two SMA local branch offices in their province each month. These monthly sessions will begin in April.

#### *Roundtable discussion on "National Reconciliation and the Democratization Process in Sierra Leone"*

Taking advantage of civic education specialist Mary Margaret Dineen's prior experience as the NDI Country Director in Sierra Leone, staff organized a roundtable discussion on "National Reconciliation and the Democratization Process in Sierra Leone" on March 29. NDI invited the civic organizations that currently participate in its advocacy program to this activity. Attended by nearly 20 activists drawn primarily from the families of the disappeared and victims of

terrorism organizations with which NDI works, this activity provided an opportunity to discuss transitional justice and national reconciliation in both the Sierra Leonean and Algerian contexts.

### **Other Program Activities**

#### *Consultations with Maghreb Regional and NDI-Morocco Staff, January 24-25, 2005*

From January 23 to 26, the Algeria office Country Director traveled to Morocco to renew her Algerian entry visa and consult with Morocco and Maghreb regional staff. These consultations included program development meetings with Maghreb Regional Representative and Morocco Country Director Gerard La Tulippe and Political Party Program Director Audrey McLaughlin. She also met with Knight Fellow Michelle Betz, who is currently housed in the NDI-Morocco office, to discuss the possibility that this latter would travel to Algeria in May as part of the ongoing advocacy workshop series.

#### *Conferences*

During this quarter, NDI staff participated in several conferences or public meetings organized by political or civic actors with which the Institute works closely.

NDI staff were invited to speak on the “Win with Women: Strengthen Political Parties” initiative as part of an international women's day event, organized by women’s working group member Kahina Bouagache, who is likewise Vice-president of the municipal council (APC) of Tizi Ouzou. As staff arrived in Tizi Ouzou on March 7, however, they learned that the APC had just been denied permission to hold this event minutes before. The local authorities justified their decision to deny permission for the event with the claim that “the organization of this meeting is inopportune.” Of particular note, the APC received the cancellation notice some 90 minutes before the activity was to have begun, whereas an official request to hold the event had been submitted to the local authorities on February 13, and Bouagache had received oral assurances from the local authorities that the event would be permitted. NDI staff later learned that the APC of Tizi Ouzou was unable to hold two additional activities, which were to have featured the participation of the Austrian Ambassador, later in the month of March.

On March 15, NDI staff again traveled to Tizi Ouzou, this time at the request of a committee of university law students organizing a debate on “The Emancipation of Women and the Algerian Family Code.” As part of a panel including family code and sharia law experts, NDI spoke about the “Win with Women” initiative and work being done to increase Algerian women’s political participation. This student-organized activity, which attracted the participation of over 500 students, faculty members and journalists was one of the rare recent public debates held on women’s rights and the family code amendments, and helped to demonstrate both the interest in, and necessity for, such fora.

At the invitation of the House International Relations Committee, NDI staff also prepared written testimony for a March 3 Subcommittee on International Terrorism and Nonproliferation hearing on “Algeria’s Struggle with Terrorism.” The testimony was presented before the subcommittee

by MENA Regional Director Leslie Campbell. Staff also prepared written responses to follow-on questions from Congressman Ted Poe following the hearing.

### *Cooperation with American and International Organizations*

Also during this quarter, NDI regularly met or had phone or e-mail contact with members of the international community based in the United States, Europe and Algiers.

NDI staff provided in-country political and/or logistical briefings to several visiting delegations, including representatives of the: Solidarity Center, IFES (also provided political contacts), the Director of Radio Canada International, Senator Russell Feingold and two members of his staff, Internews, the UNDP, FRIDE/the Spanish Cooperation and Development Agency and journalist William Wallis of *The Financial Times*.

NDI staff likewise provided political or logistical briefings to other contacts via telephone or e-mail, including prospective UN employee Anne-Cecile Kaplan, University of Syracuse Masters' candidate Angie Mizeur, freelance journalist/researcher Ms. Kachadourian, Eric Goldstein of Human Rights Watch, Richard Paton of the American Bar Association and Dr. Steven Weinberg of the University of Luxembourg.

Staff met on several occasions and/or fielded written requests from United States Government personnel, including: Fran Belisle of the US Embassy, Ross Kaplan of MEPI, Kirk Wolcott (MEPI-Tunis) and Faouzi Chaouch (MEPI-Tunis). In addition, staff briefed other members of the diplomatic community in Algiers, including: Filip Vandenbroeke of the Belgian Embassy and Ambassador Robert Peck and Eric Mercier of the Canadian Embassy.

Lastly, NDI staff also contributed to a study of governance and civil society in Algeria being prepared by FRIDE, a consultant to the Spanish Cooperation and Development Agency, as well as to a paper on press freedom in Algeria in 2004 that researcher Amy Hawthorne prepared for Freedom House.

## **V. RESULTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Through consultations with Algerian partners, written and oral evaluations of program activities and daily press reviews, the following progress on program objectives has been noted.

- **Strengthening and reforming parties to make them more effective, representative, transparent and democratic;**

In follow-on meetings with each of the three parties with which NDI organized local branch development workshops, staff learned that the parties found the sessions helpful, and were enthusiastic to begin work with the Institute at the local level. At the time of the writing of this report, and at NDI's request, each of the three parties has designated a program coordinator from within their National Bureau who will liaise with NDI and the pilot municipalities for the

duration of the program. The party leadership is likewise in the process of choosing the pilot municipalities in consultation with their grassroots activists.

- **Promoting an informed and active citizenry on issues related to elections and political processes**

#### *Institutional Development and Advocacy Consultations*

NDI staff met with Nadia Ait Zai, director of CIDDEF, to evaluate the Human Rights Education and Advocacy workshop jointly organized from January 29 to 31. Ait Zai told staff that she had received positive feedback from many workshop participants, and that the event had exceeded her expectations. She also expressed interest in organizing a second such activity in cooperation with NDI, which would specifically focus on lobbying for, and the monitoring of, the implementation of international conventions in the areas of women's and children's rights. The activity also proved useful to NDI, it helped to demonstrate increased interest on the part of both the public authorities and associations in working together to find solutions to problems such as violence of women and children.

The activity also enabled the Institute to further develop relationships with several participating associations, including the women's section of the country's leading trade union, the UGTA, which has been influential in lobbying for penal code reform in 2004 that officially made sexual harassment a crime. The women's sections of both the UGTA and SNAPAP unions actively participated in the March 2-3 workshop; members of the UGTA have also requested that NDI staff assist them in presenting of the material covered in the workshop to a larger group of their members.

#### *Civic Forum*

NDI prepared a group of 20 young leaders from the Algerian Muslim Scouts to conduct discussion groups using a participatory method on issues related to democracy and democratic processes. These 20 discussion group moderators now have a thorough grasp of the program methodology, and are ready to begin their discussion groups, the first session of which is to take place in April 2005. NDI's training team was very pleased with the progress during the training, and both the Institute and the moderators feel certain that they have the capacity to conduct a highly successful civic education program.

As was noted by one participant: *"When we came here we were unsure what it meant to conduct a civic education program. Now not only do we understand the program, but are sure that we will be successful in carrying it out."* -- Houda OUDAINIA, Facilitator from Biskra

- **Increasing women's and youth participation in political life**

Immediately after the FLN party congress, which took place from January 30 to February 1, NDI received a call from women's working group member, Saliha Lardjane with an update on the number of women named at the various different levels of the party leadership. According to Lardjane, the number of women delegates to the congress surpassed the number that she had anticipated; instead of 200 women delegates out of a total of 2000 delegates, she estimated that the total number was closer to 400/3000 delegates. Lardjane herself was one of nearly 20

women elected to the 120 member party executive body. In addition, some 54 women were elected to the party's 550 member National Council, of which working group member Samia Moualfi is one. Thus, the FLN has exceeded the 10% threshold for women's representation in most party structures, and two of the three working group members from the FLN are now in party leadership positions. Both women credit NDI and the efforts of the women's working group in helping them to impose this important increase in women's representation in party leadership structures. While disappointed that all seven members of the new party secretariat are men, they recognize that, nonetheless, the overall level of women's representation is more important than in the past.

NDI staff also learned in a February 2 meeting with RCD party president Said Sadi that increasing the number of women activists and identifying and training women to be party candidates are among his party's priorities for 2005-06. Sadi provided NDI staff with a document dated January 11, 2005, entitled "Note to members of the working group responsible for preparing the upcoming elections," in which he (Sadi) emphasized that this working group should have four main objectives. These include: "Determine how to include women candidates in as many lists as possible," and "Propose a training program for the future candidates." NDI was pleased to note that among the eight members of this intra-party working group is Ms. Lynda Messous, an Algiers-based activist that participated in the July 2004 women's leadership training retreat.

## V. EVALUATION

This reporting period saw the launch of several new initiatives (work on local party branch development and civic education) as well as the continuation of ongoing activities with women party leaders and civic activists. NDI was pleased to be able to organize several activities this quarter in response to specific requests from its program partners, including the January advocacy workshop jointly organized with CIDDEF and the March women's participation activities (speaking engagements and strategic planning session for the MSP women's session). These requests demonstrate that program partners are increasingly integrating the best practices and techniques presented in NDI training activities into their regular activities.

Less progress was made this quarter by the women's working group than had been expected following the January 13 strategic planning session. The three member committee charged with preparing a draft action plan for the group on the basis of this session did not complete this task in a timely fashion due to work commitments and the severe illness of two of the three members. It became clear to NDI staff that, while the members of the working group enjoy coming together for training activities and to share experiences, and insist that they must work together to achieve reform, progress on joint actions is still contingent on considerable initiative and follow-up by the Institute. As such, the group is not yet a "stand-alone" entity. NDI will continue to play this catalyst role, while seeking to empower and devolve more responsibility to the working group.

NDI staff are very encouraged by the degree of buy-in from the senior party leadership of its three party partners for the local branch development component of the program. MP and

National Executive member Abdelkrim Dahmen (MSP) told NDI that the 34 participants in the session with his party found that trainer Hamels' Green Party experience was similar to their own, and his efforts to strengthen his party from the base up following its disappointing showing in the 2003 elections were particularly instructive in terms of "how to recover after an electoral defeat." National Secretary for Training Djoudi Mameri (FFS), meanwhile, shared that his party had particularly appreciated Hamels' first hand experience as an activist, and said that his party needed training in outreach techniques, while Party President Said Sadi (RCD) said that the development of sample local branch development action plans had been very helpful in helping local activists understand how to better organize their work between elections.

Perhaps the most astute and encouraging comments came from National Secretary for Communications Karim Tabou (FFS), who, in evaluation the February local party branch development workshop noted that most of the activities that the FFS participants listed in their action plans were organic or internal in nature, and did not involve contact with citizens. *"We used to do a lot of activities in the community between elections and during campaigns. I remember prior to the 1997 elections when we instructed each member of my local branch to identify 15 members of his/her family and to ensure that all of those individuals turned out to vote...The party needs to get back to doing more of this kind of activity, and the 'Walk and Talk' pilot will help us to get out of our branch headquarters and into the habit again."*

On the civic front, in written evaluations completed by participants in the March 2-3 advocacy workshop, participants noted that they found the topics interesting, relevant and useful and particularly appreciated the interactive learning methods. Participants better understand the importance of involving their constituencies from the start in identifying and defining the issues on which their advocacy campaigns will be based, and of listening to solutions suggested by the affected groups. Via this workshop, the majority of participants also performed a situational (SWOT) analysis for the first time, and recognized the importance of this step in developing a realistic campaign strategy. They are now more likely to take into account their organizations' strengths and weaknesses in order to analyze the relation among resources, the forces and groups that influence the political environment in which they operate and other groups that can influence their advocacy strategy. After this two day activity, they came to understand that "SWOT" is not "an exotic word," but an effective tool that helps them to develop more realistic and successful strategies.

In written and oral evaluations with members of the SMA that participated in the discussion group moderator training, NDI learned that participants were delighted with the training team and material covered during the five day workshop. While a few participants found the workshop too intensive, most appreciated the active learning environment, which enabled them to grow as a team, as well as individually. Participants were understandably nervous, as well as excited to return to their home provinces and begin organizing and leading discussion groups around the first in the series of nine modules, "What is a discussion?" in April. As they told NDI staff:

*"I thank NDI and the Scouts for giving me the opportunity to attend this training; I look forward to working with young people in my region in order to help make them into active, aware citizens."* -- Karim DADDOUCHE, Facilitator from Oran

*“As Algeria moves towards a democratic system it is important for citizens to know their rights and responsibilities. I am happy that as a member of the Algerian Scouts I will have the opportunity to educate people about the democratic system.” -- Ilyes ABED, Facilitator from Blida*

## **VI. FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

During the next quarter, NDI anticipates organizing a series of activities to launch the new party development and civic education activities under this grant, as well as to continue to provide ongoing support party and civic activists. These include:

- A workshop for a broad cross section of women political activists to share the findings of the “Enhancing Women’s Participation through Special Measures in the Arab World” conference;
- The identification of pilot municipalities and party liaisons and the launch of work with local party branches; and
- The organization of two advocacy skills development workshops and ongoing consultations with a small number of organizations on institutional development and campaign implementation; and
- The provision of ongoing technical support, materials and supplies to the SMA discussion group moderators as they begin implementing the program in their home provinces, in cooperation with the SMA national leadership, via phone and e-mail contact, as well as a limited number of on-site visits.