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# FINAL REPORT

## IRAQ LEGISLATIVE STRENGTHENING PROGRAM

Contract No. 263-I-03-06-00015-00 (REDI Task Order No. 3)

March 2012

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REDI Task Order No. 3

USAID/Iraq Strategic Objective 10: Capacity of National Government Institutions Improved

**Submitted to:**

USAID/Iraq

**Prepared by:**

AECOM International Development

**DISCLAIMER:**

The authors' views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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## Acronym List

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BRD	Budget Research Department
BSA	Board of Supreme Audit
CLA	Constitutional and Legislative Affairs, Political Section US Embassy
CMI	Change Management Initiative
COR	Council of Representatives
COR PC	COR Presidency Council
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DG	Director General
FY	Fiscal Year
GOI	Government of Iraq
HR	Human Resources
HRD	Human Resources Development
ICPD	Iraqi Center for Parliamentary Development (Previously called the Parliamentary Institute and Parliamentary Development Center)
IPEP	Iraqi Professors Educating Parliament
IT	Information Technology
LMS	Legislative Management System
LSP	Legislative Strengthening Program
MAPDC	Members Affairs and Parliamentary Development Committee
MP	Member of Parliament
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCCMS	Networked Constituency Case Management System
NDI	Nations Democratic Institute for International Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PI	Parliamentary Institute
PO	Provincial Offices
POD	Provincial Offices Department
RGAC	Regions and Governorates Affairs Committee
ROP	Rules of Procedures
SG	Secretary General
SMG	Senior Management Group
TIA	Training Impact Assessment
TNA	Training Needs Analysis
TOT	Training of Trainers

Iraq Legislative Strengthening Program (LSP)

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USG United States Government



## Executive Summary

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The United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Iraq Legislative Strengthening Program (LSP) was designed to build the capacity of Iraq's highest democratic institution: its national parliament, the Council of Representatives (COR). The program, which commenced in late 2008, focused on providing broad-based technical support to enhance institutional development, build staff capacity, support Members of Parliament (MPs) in their roles as legislators and promote transparency and accountability in the legislative process. LSP was originally organized across six key objectives, which were streamlined into two primary objectives in the program's third year of operation.

LSP sought to address a vacuum in international donor support to the COR, as many programs had left Baghdad in the turbulent 2007-2008 period. During its first two years of implementation, LSP laid the groundwork for rule reform to be considered in the successor parliament, improved committee functioning and assisted in strengthening the capacity of the Parliamentary Affairs Directorate to support committees and the legislative process. LSP also provided technical support to build the skills and expertise of parliamentary staff, advised on institutional development and reform and promoted enhanced COR outreach. LSP also worked with the COR Presidency Council (COR PC) to help develop tools and materials to facilitate a transition to the successor parliament, following national elections which were, at that time, scheduled for late 2009.

Navigating the political dynamics of the COR – which extended beyond MPs to the politically configured COR Secretariat - remained an on-going challenge for the program. This was further complicated by political and sectarian divides which extended across the institution. Despite these challenges, LSP maintained a strong constituency of support within the COR. The Parliament's committees emerged as strong advocates of LSP programming, with demand-driven requests for technical assistance covering a range of activities. In addition, specific parliamentary directorates, led by reform-minded Director Generals (DG), actively sought out LSP assistance. LSP also focused on establishing and maintaining strong working relationships with the Office of the Speaker, whose advisors were receptive to LSP's technical support.

During its period of implementation, LSP was forced to constantly react and adjust to changing political dynamics within the COR which directly impacted the programs activities. Since LSP's beginnings in late 2008 and through to 2011, the COR experienced a substantial turnover of MPs following the 2010 elections, had three Speakers and two new members of the three member-COR PC, saw an experienced, reform-minded Secretary General (SG) replaced for largely political reasons, and importantly, witnessed a growing sentiment of non-cooperation with LSP as a US-funded program. This was entrenched by a Sadrist political bloc who, following the 2010 election held the balance of power in the current governing coalition and maintained the position of 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Speaker within the COR.

The LSP team of international and Iraqi experts worked to establish strong relationships with the COR PC, the COR Secretariat's SG, the DG of the COR's eight directorates, advisers, COR staff, MPs, committees and political blocs. A regular bulletin was distributed within the COR to keep stakeholders informed of LSP activities. The vast changeover of MPS following the national elections and a reconfiguration of authorities within the COR – including a new Presidency Council and Secretary

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General, presented a challenge for the program. This was further hampered by the uncertainty within the COR during the nine month period of post-election government formation, during which time a power vacuum existed within the institution. As the parliament did not sit during this period, there was limited opportunity for the program to engage with newly elected MPs and to deepen professional relations. During the last six months of programming LSP struggled to maintain relationships across the parliament. This was complicated by the Sadrist's refusal to cooperate with LSP, the loss of a SG who was a strong



*The future site of ICPD*

proponent of the program, uncertainty among COR Secretariat DGs of their own job certainty, an increasing politically fractious environment in which proponents of the program grew increasingly silent and larger USG-GOI political issues which overshadowed LSP's implementation challenges.

*The Iraq Center for Parliamentary Development (ICPD)* was designed under the auspices of the parliament to offer non-partisan capacity building and analytical research for MPs and parliamentary staff through seminars and workshops, providing a sustainable platform for ongoing

institutional development. Specifically, as envisioned by stakeholders in the COR at its inception in 2008, the Center would allow the COR to orient and further train MPs and staff; liaise with regional and international experts; and publish studies, analytical reports, newsletters and annual reports.

In its three years at the COR, LSP provided extensive support to improve the function of parliamentary committees. In 2009, the Civil Society Committee hosted the COR's first ever open public hearing and discussion of proposed draft legislation governing unions and associations. LSP prepared the committee to manage the hearing by outlining the goals and procedures of such an event. The hearing was a major advancement of democratic governance in Iraq, as citizens joined politicians and the press in a free and open discussion of the proposed bill's impact on the rights and functions of Iraq's unions and associations. In an unprecedented move, security concerns were acknowledged and addressed so that Iraqi citizens were not kept out of their parliament.

LSP provided the fundamental information COR committees needed to draft legislation on such topics as education law and illiteracy, and assisted in the development and drafting of the COR's Rules and Procedures (ROP) for both the plenary and committees. LSP encouraged and supported committee public outreach efforts and promoted best practices in transparency, human rights, anti-trafficking and executive branch oversight.

COR committee outreach activities publicizing public hearing schedules became an accepted practice. As a result, the Education Committee now publishes a bi-weekly newsletter that describes the committee's activities, outlines its agenda, and invites comments and suggestions from the general public. The

Women's Committee issues press releases when it schedules public hearings on draft legislation and the Civil Society Committee regularly reaches out to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to ensure their awareness of draft legislation that impacts CSO formation and function. In addition, most committees regularly publish such information on the COR's website.

*LSP's Institutional Development Management Initiative (IDMI)* focused the COR's leadership and staff on the delivery of effective and appropriate services to MPs. Working with individual directorates, LSP trained senior staff in Strategic Planning and Institutional Performance Assessment, encouraging the realignment of departmental structure resulting in improved, codified staffing patterns and increasing staff productivity across the institution.

Under LSP's successful *Fellowship Program*, COR committees received quality research provided by experienced Iraqi professionals who conducted comparative studies, prepared background papers and made recommendations that informed the drafting and amendment of laws, and provided background information for COR conferences, forums and public hearings. Similarly, LSP's *Apprenticeship Program* provided an opportunity for young professionals to receive on-the-job training while the COR benefited from the augmentation of its staff. Apprentices obtained new skills and, with a minimum of training, took on tasks and responsibilities, allowing overburdened staff to attend to other, equally pressing job responsibilities.

In response to a burgeoning but primarily untrained staff, the COR sought to equip a critical mass of staff members with consistent knowledge and skills while addressing gaps in aptitude. LSP provided training and professional development courses tailored to the specific responsibilities of participants. It instituted a rigorous selection process to ensure that participants attended the most appropriate workshops for the skill sets they needed. Overall, some 140 courses were offered over the life of the program.

The COR's Human Resources (HR) department developed a modern HR policy employing international best practices, addressing staffing shortfalls, improving COR staff retention and development, and introducing fair hiring and promotion practices. LSP support enabled the implementation of an improved HR management system, increasing the level of HR professional capability and standardizing HR functions across the institution.

In 2008, LSP began working with the Budget Research Department (BRD) of the COR to help analyze the 2009 budget. LSP helped the BRD and other MPs develop the research skills and knowledge necessary to take part in future budget debates and to hold ministries accountable for financial oversight. Less than a year later, the BRD produced a comprehensive budget analysis, marking the progress of democratic governance in Iraq. Such a detailed and thorough analysis was unprecedented at the COR. By mid-2010 the BRD expanded its mandate to work with the Executive branch of government to provide better oversight of public policies and programs. With LSP training on performance-based budgeting, the BRD was able to analyze, predict and meet Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 budget targets.

*The Members' Professional Development Program (MPDP)* was developed to offer a comprehensive array of workshops highlighting international best practices in a variety of government functions designed to build the skills of MPs as legislators. The MPDP enabled MPs to effectively manage legislative processes and oversight responsibilities, and covered courses on such subjects as the role of caucuses, the

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representational role of MPs, and the parliamentary code of conduct. The workshops provided an unprecedented opportunity for participants to share ideas in an open and supportive environment, fostering collaboration and enhancing relationships between MPs of all political party affiliations.

The COR's Parliamentary Affairs Directorate, Archive Department and Information Technology (IT) Directorate collaborated on research which led to the procurement of a legislative automation platform, known as *Legistar*. The platform was designed to support the development of a customized Legislative Management System (LMS), which, when implemented, would handle bill tracking and status, plenary agenda generation, plenary minute preparation, legislative workflow, member management, committee assignment, agendas and the approval of minutes. LSP provided background information in support of this research and trained staff on the how to manage the platform with the goal of enhancing transparency and accountability in the legislative process.

LSP trained journalists on parliamentary procedure and public hearings, greatly improving the quality of COR media coverage. Journalists learned how to interview MPs with agility and, through LSP media training courses MPs began to use rhetorical techniques to enhance their focus on messages that were primary to their agendas. With time, the MPs became more comfortable on-camera and in print interviews.

After several years of LSP support, the COR's Media Directorate is now ready to expand its reach and effect through the use of new media tools. The directorate's activities have been clearly articulated by a multi-year work plan developed in close collaboration with technical assistance provided by LSP.

LSP's capacity building training for the COR's provincial office staff enabled them to organize successful MP oversight visits. This professional development was provided to more than 70 percent of the staff working in 17 of the COR's 19 provincial offices. LSP provided training on the organization of media events by using communications and outreach strategies. MP visits to the provinces enjoyed expanded press coverage and as a result the citizens were better informed about provincial office services. These staff were also instructed in carrying out effective local government relations in support of MPs and COR committee oversight activities, and also provided enhanced services to the COR Complaints Committee by establishing a unified complaints form and employing more effective constituency case management techniques.

LSP was forced to refocus its efforts after the 2009 parliamentary elections were postponed until March of 2010. This delay was then followed by a nine-month hiatus between parliaments due to a political stalemate in government formation. The fluidity of Iraq's political landscape in the post-election period led to revisions in LSP's activities and approach. The political vacuum resulting from the nine-month delay in government formation created particular challenges for the program. Although LSP was able to mitigate this situation by shifting its efforts to providing technical support to COR staff, programming designed to assist newly elected MPs was subject to extraordinary delay. This was further hampered by uncertainty and indecision within the COR Secretariat's leadership, along with a weakened, caretaker COR PC pending the election of a Speaker.

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In October, 2010 a decision was taken by USAID to reduce the program's technical support to the COR's IT and Research Directorates. Following this action, the DG of the Research Directorate began to limit direct interaction with the program.

In early 2011, USAID extended LSP for an additional two years. LSP's work plan for the extension period reflected its cumulative experience dating from the project's inception in late 2008 and drew upon lessons learned in the subsequent implementation period. This resulted in the streamlining of objectives to better support the increased cross-cutting nature of the program.

However, the political make-up of the second parliament – in particular, the political influence of the Sadrist bloc both within the executive and the parliament presented serious difficulty for program implementation, as the bloc advocated a policy of non-cooperation with the USAID-funded LSP. The result was a sudden and diminished degree of support for LSP on the part of the COR leadership during the first two quarters of calendar year 2011. This new resistance to a US-funded program grew in scope and virulence, reaching its nadir in October 2011, when the COR PC nullified LSP's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the COR.

Despite a long list of commitments to committees and MPs who had requested LSP training and support, the program was forced to curtail its work in the COR soon after the dissolution of its MOU, and USAID requested that programming cease in early November 2011. USAID directed LSP to cease its operation in December, 2011.

Despite these events, LSP's impact on the Iraqi parliament is manifest across a wide range of COR committees and directorates and its impact is visible every day that the COR is in session and succeeds in advancing its legislative mandate. LSP's capacity building of the COR staff and Members of Parliament resulted in a qualitative improvement in that body's efficacy and productivity and this will benefit the Iraqi people for some years to come.

This final report outlines LSP's activities during its three years of providing technical assistance to the COR. The report provides an overview of activities and offers comment on implementation challenges and lessons learned. The paper is organized in accordance to the original six objectives which constituted the program's overall Scope of Work.

## **Objective 1: Development and Strengthening of the Iraqi Center for Parliamentary Development (ICPD)**

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### **BACKGROUND**

The concept of an independent parliamentary development center, designed to foster on-going institutional development, was advocated by the COR's first Speaker, Mahmood Mashadani. The center, along with associated activities involving research and training emerged as a key objective of LSP programming, designed to serve as a legacy of USAID support to parliamentary development in Iraq. A 2008 evaluation of COR capacity by an LSP program assessment revealed that the governing body needed better procedures with which to run the legislative assembly, as well as assistance in the assessment of specific legislative content, and the passage of bills. The goal in establishing the ICPD was to "...enhance parliamentary capacity, provide services to Parliament in areas of research and analysis on a non-partisan, credible, accurate and timely basis as needed".

A Parliamentary Institute (PI) was subsequently recommended by the COR leadership – specifically the Members Affairs and Parliamentary Development Committee (MAPDC) – as a solution to these pressing needs. Programmatic oversight of the proposed institute by the COR was recommended in order to address urgent concerns regarding government performance. Administrative staff support was also emphasized as part of the need to improve processes and enable COR staff to better build the capacity in member's offices to respond to constituent demands as well as to debate bills in a more informed fashion.

The primacy of the PI in terms of MAPDC priorities was made clear to LSP throughout its original assessment mission. While the COR Speaker was the strongest proponent of the proposed institute, there seemed general support for the concept among the members of the COR PC.

From a Parliamentary Strengthening perspective, such an institute could fulfill a range of developmental needs at the COR and provide a sustainable platform for ongoing institutional development. The institute would have both a training and research function available to both members and staff. The MAPDC's long-term vision for the institute also included the provision of training for members and staff of provincial councils, as well as the members and staff of regional parliaments. In addition to training, the COR lacked sufficient capacity for developing independent research, and the institute could help fill this gap.

The MAPDC indicated a strong desire for the institute to be fully operational by the end of parliament's initial session in late 2009, so that the institute would have an established reputation and stature before it was handed over to a new governing body. Having achieved this, it would be more likely that sufficient support to continue the institute would exist after the change in leadership that was likely to occur with the elections.

As the pace of the institute's implementation would depend on decisions outside the immediate control of the program, it was decided that LSP would retain a degree of flexibility regarding the speed with which training and other project activities would be transferred to the center.

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In addition to issues of timing, it was essential that the institute be viewed as nonpartisan and separate, supporting parliamentary development independent from the COR. Efforts would be made to support a broad, inclusive approach to the institute's governance; for example, by supporting the development of a civil society advisory board. The program would also help to clarify the institute's mandate. It was anticipated that both the institute and the COR Research Directorate would have a research mandate. Given that the institute would not be part of the COR Secretariat, it would have more flexibility to commission research from subject experts and could focus on more detailed research projects that were less time-sensitive.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RESULTS ACHIEVED**

By the final quarter of 2009, considerable progress had been made in refining the conceptual design of the PI, reviewing governance options and organizational structures, and identifying an interim director.

In September 2009, the COR PC identified and approved the former National Council Building for renovation and use as the PI's home. By this time, LSP had recruited an architectural firm to conduct a formal site assessment and facility audit and finalize a report covering the physical site assessment. This report was submitted to the COR SG and the DG of the IT Directorate. Based on the report, the COR was able to determine the work required to install a computer network and provide equipment for what was now being called the ICPD.

In a letter to USAID dated December 10, 2009, the COR SG conveyed the decision of the COR PC to formally establish the ICPD as a unit of the Secretariat. The COR's vision for the ICPD was of an institution that would offer training to MPs and parliamentary staff, organize seminars and workshops, and enhance the COR's representation at international parliamentary bodies, providing a sustainable platform for ongoing institutional development of the COR. The SG described this vision as the basis for the ICPD's mission statement. During this period, LSP supported the ICPD's mission by developing job descriptions, identifying staffing needs in collaboration with the COR, developing an organizational structure and a governing board, as well as ongoing refinement of the center's mission as its previous independence from the COR became increasingly diminished. LSP remained active with programs that would eventually fall under the ICPD, including the fellowship program and a range of capacity-building training.

Also in late 2009, the COR began the required renovations at the National Council Building. The renovations of the ICPD site were completed in September 2010. Soon thereafter, the SG determined that further changes would be useful. Specifically, the COR identified training rooms that could be divided to provide additional space, and identified an area that would serve as a cafeteria. These renovations were then put out to bid by the COR.

LSP provided a floor plan of the ICPD to the COR IT DG and the head of the COR Security Department Camera Unit to assist them in determining appropriate locations for security cameras at the ICPD site. Informed by this map, the COR produced a cost estimate along with a request to issue a tender for the work. At the same time, LSP presented the COR with a report containing

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recommendations for equipment procurement, inventory control and the prevention of fraud and waste at the ICPD.

The renovations to the ICPD building were completed ahead of schedule. They included work on major systems (e.g. electrical and plumbing), activities such as insulating the roof and the installation of water pumps, and more minor activities (e.g. installing new door locks, repairing ceiling cracks, painting, cleaning). The COR issued tenders for local companies to repair the sound system in the training rooms and auditorium. LSP recruited an Office and Design Specialist who completed a site assessment and developed recommendations for the building's space allocations including the provision of suitable paths for movement of public, visitors and staff.

In mid-2010, the COR formed a committee to review the current ROP in order to incorporate the ICPD into the COR's institutional structure. The committee included the SG, several DGs and COR Advisors. The committee's recommendations would supersede the previously signed administrative order that created the ICPD. LSP continued to advise the committee on necessary changes to the ROP. The committee also chose a director for the ICPD.

Programmatically, LSP held the first ICPD Speakers' Forum in December 2010 on "Laws and Regulations Governing Legislative Drafting," delivered by Dr. Ali Abbas Mourad. The forum was very well received and attendees expressed the strong desire for more seminars.

Along with procuring a generator for the ICPD building, LSP designed and finalized a draft of what would become the ICPD webpage.

Select LSP deliverable in support of the ICPD	Description	Delivery Date
Concept paper on ICPD Mission	Concept paper submitted to the COR leadership providing comparative examples of parliamentary centers, including mission and mandate.	01/09
Report on Physical Site Assessment of ICPD location	A review with recommendations of the ICPD site submitted by an architect/specialist.	10/10
Case Study of ICPD establishment	An analytical paper outlining the challenges associated with the establishment of the parliamentary center.	03/11
Training Plan and Timetable	A strategy to engage Iraqi higher education institutes in MP training	06/11

## IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

In June 2011, the COR Secretariat reached a stalemate on how best to move forward with ICPD implementation. The initiative was stalled primarily due to serious internal disagreements among the COR Directorates. The failure of the Secretariat to reach consensus on the management of the ICPD and

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the related failure of the COR PC to appoint a governing board and senior staff, left the ICPD implementation to languish.

LSP continued to promote the development of the institute by urging the COR PC, through the SG, to appoint a board and to meet key benchmarks. Additionally, LSP sought to reduce institutional resistance to the creation of the ICPD by recommending that the ICPD engage in only staff and MP development, not research, thus assuaging the concerns of the DG of the COR Research Directorate, who strongly resisted the possible emergence of what was perceived to be an institutional competitor to the directorate.

## **LESSONS LEARNED**

Enduring both avid support and political inertia, and with oversight by an ever changing cast of senior COR leadership and committees, the ICPD was nevertheless kept on a rigorous schedule of physical and strategic advancement by LSP to ensure it would be ready to begin operation as soon as COR senior management finalized its approval.

However, the institute's establishment was ultimately dependent on the COR's political will, which was at first favorably inclined toward the project – and then, with the sitting of the second parliament – negatively biased against it. In some minds, the concept of the center was associated with a controversial and polarizing former Parliamentary Speaker; for others in positions of influence, the center was seen as a potential threat to their own base of authority and influence within the COR. The notion of an independent center was never fully understood nor recognized as a value for the COR as a whole.

By working closely with the COR leadership in 2008 to further refine and articulate a concept for the ICPD, it was assumed the venture would be more likely to meet with success as a consequence of its deliberate inclusiveness. During the course of the ICPD's development, priorities and planning became increasingly defined by the COR leadership, which was particularly sensitive and responsive to a potent change in the political climate. While this permutation of political ideology was perhaps evident with the results of the 2010 parliamentary election, it could not have been foreseen when the concept for the institute was discussed in 2008.

## **THE LSP FELLOWSHIP AND APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS**

The Research Fellowship and Apprenticeship Programs were included in the original LSP design document and ultimately emerged as one of LSP's most successful activities. The program's early work plan also had provisions for an Internship Program, which would place new graduates within the COR as a means of obtaining unique and valuable work experience. Given sensitivities related to the recruitment of COR full time staff and the politicization of the hiring process, this proposal had little support within the COR, and was strongly opposed by the DG of Parliamentary Affairs, who felt it risked further weakening the human resources regime with under-qualified staff. Recognizing the COR's sensitivities, LSP quietly withdrew the program, but incorporated elements within the Apprenticeship Program, which had a high level of acceptance within the COR.

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While fellows and apprentices were initially conceived as being managed and deployed through the Iraqi Center for Parliamentary Development, the COR's inertia in supporting the center's development led LSP to administer the two programs independently, led by a locally-engaged program manager. While the concept of using fellows to conduct much-needed research for COR management and committees was strong on its own merits, it was also hoped that by introducing fellowship and apprenticeship programs that recruit top-quality advisors and assistants through meritocratic procedures into what was essentially a transitional parliament, the expectations of performance placed on the professional staff might be raised. LSP noted that much of the research requests were demand-driven by committees, who played an integral role in identifying topics and approving the engagement of fellows. Fellows also worked directly with Committee Chairs in order to ensure that the research, while under development, would reflect the needs and expectations of the Committee. The program also fostered the notion of "independent, quality and verifiable" research, an aspect often found lacking within the COR's own Research Directorate.

As LSP implemented a series of activities that would in time effect significant change in COR hiring practices, thereby improving staff capacity, there was nevertheless an urgent need for quality research to support the MPs consideration of draft legislation. LSP Research Fellows represented the highest quality PhD-level scholars available from Iraq's premier academic institutions and they provided authoritative analysis of issues required to inform the COR's legislative decision making. The program gave Fellows the exposure and experience they needed to develop their careers, while emphasizing LSP's commitment to meeting the COR's needs by tapping into Iraqi talent.

The fellows were guided in their research by the COR's MAPDC, which also selected them from a pool of qualified candidates recruited by LSP. They conducted comparative studies, prepared background notes and made recommendations in a timely, comprehensive and objective manner. COR committees came to depend on this research for drafting and amending laws, and informing COR conferences, forums and public hearings.

A partial list of research publications provided to the COR includes:

- "The Democratic Development in the COR and its Impact on Citizens' Lives."
- "Provision of Adequate Housing: Investment Required"
- "Monitoring Government Performance on the Economy, Reconstruction and Investment"
- "The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights,"
- "Drafting Laws"
- "Public Freedoms: The Freedom of Assembly and Peaceful Demonstration."
- "Social Safety Law"
- "Unemployment and Terrorism: Providing Job Opportunities for Youth for Peaceful National Development"
- "Co-management between Foreign Companies"
- "Trespassing on State Property: Reality and Solutions"
- "Iraq's Water Supply Problem"

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- “The Rules of Procedure of the Iraq High Commission for Human Rights”
- “Prisons Inside Iraq: Between Reality and Ambition”
- “Religious Tourism in Iraq”
- “Comparative Study on Agriculture”
- “Legislative Protections for Civil Society Organizations”
- “Comparative Study on Social Legislation”
- “Best Practices of the Supreme Judicial Council”
- “Comparative Paper on Rules of Procedure and Ethics Committees in Parliament”

### APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

LSP’s Apprenticeship Program provided an opportunity for young professionals to receive on-the-job training while providing the COR with additional, specialized staff. Apprentices were able to obtain new skills and with a minimum of training, take on required COR tasks and responsibilities assisting overburdened COR staff. The program addressed the fundamental weakness inherent in the original internship program, as it provided the COR with *experienced* young professionals who could bring genuine value to the institution.

In the first year of the program, three young men with a basic knowledge of journalism and media were placed in the Media Directorate’s Television unit. Their work resulted in 26 original television segments, a short documentary film for MPs, and an ad break for the Media Directorate. At the time of LSP’s closure in late 2011, several requests from directorates and committees remained outstanding including the placement of several apprenticeship candidates in the Media Department of the Speaker’s Office.

Select LSP deliverable in support of the Fellow and Apprenticeship Programs	Description	Delivery Date
Fellows/Apprenticeship Handbook	Developed in collaboration with the office of the DG, Parliamentary Affairs, the handbooks outlined program mission, recruitment and joint responsibilities of participants and the COR.	03/09
Case Study of Fellows, Apprentices and Interns in utility and factor in change management	An analysis of program development and its impact on building COR capacity.	03/11
Evaluation Report - Fellowship Program	Evaluation of the effectiveness of LSP’s Fellowship Program, with recommendations for greater effectiveness and building on best practices.	09/11

## **Objective 2: Strengthened Staff Capacity and Political Will for Staff Reform**

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### **BACKGROUND**

While staff capacity at the COR had improved by 2008, significant shortcomings existed, including the lack of a clear, enforced distinction between nonpartisan and partisan staff positions; the absence of a meritocratic hiring process for nonpartisan staff, and – perhaps most importantly – a manifest disinterest on the part of the COR leadership in redressing either problem. DGs often complained of new staff being assigned to their offices for strictly political reasons, without consultation or vetting through any formal recruitment process. Managers tended to rely on smaller numbers of qualified and competent employees, while those assigned without the requisite abilities and training increased the COR’s staffing rosters but provided no contribution to the COR’s institutional development.

LSP’s first year work plan included a significant commitment to building staff capacity through training. The program would also institute fellowship and apprenticeship programs, which – by introducing high quality “employees” into the COR’s workforce – could encourage a degree of interest on the part of COR leadership to improve hiring practices in the medium term. Finally, the program called for the introduction of a Change Management Initiative (CMI) which would assess and potentially restructure the COR directorates by reassessing staffing needs and organizational structure – engendering within each directorate, and at the COR as a whole, the political will for staff reform.

Programmatic support for revising the COR’s human resources policy was not initially integrated into LSP’s approach to improving staff capacity during the program’s first year.

However, at an LSP-facilitated senior management group retreat held in Istanbul in 2009, discussions led to the leadership’s unprecedented consideration of a wholesale revision of the COR’s structure. The conceptualization of a modern and efficient governing body provided LSP with the opportunity to recommend to the Senior Management Group (SMG) the adoption of new HR policy which would better manage organizational change while redefining the quality of service the secretariat was mandated to provide MPs.

LSP seized on the opportunity to capitalize on the COR leaderships interest in modernizing its human resource structures, providing the SMG extensive documentation of the trends and practices it could use to successfully implement new HR policy. The COR Secretariat was responsive.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RESULTS ACHIEVED**

In February 2010, LSP’s HR Specialist completed a Training Needs Analysis (TNA) of the COR staff and an integrated training plan to support the COR’s staff requirements in the context of the organizational transformation process inherent in the Change Management Initiative (later renamed the Institutional Development Management Initiative). The TNA was conducted of four COR directorates: Administrative, Media, Research, and Parliamentary Affairs and provided the data needed to inform a new HR policy for the COR.

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The structure and precepts of a new COR HR policy was developed during an April 2010 retreat in Erbil. The SMG focused on the central premises and organizational structures it would need to adopt if it was to realize the vision, values and objectives that they so carefully outlined in Istanbul six months earlier. LSP's HR Specialist focused the SMG on the timing of an assessment of the COR's staffing needs. She then facilitated the discussion process of redesigning an HR management system that would eventually become the Secretariat's legacy to a new generation of parliamentarians.

A new COR human resource strategy and policy, jointly drafted by the Human Resources Department (HRD) in cooperation with LSP, was developed and presented to the COR for approval. The new policy was designed to dramatically improve staff retention and development through fair hiring and promotion practices with implementation running concurrent with LSP's planned programming cycle.

By conducting a gap analysis with the COR's HR staff well in advance of the new strategy's implementation, LSP was able provide the data needed to inform the department's consideration of a new staffing pattern. LSP's HR Specialist was also available to mentor staff members as they prepared to implement new procedures. Her guidance and support –as well as her familiarity with the new strategy's function – enabled the HR staffers to enjoy a degree of confidence as they approached what would normally be a stressful transition from outdated to modernized procedures.

LSP produced and published four manuals in support of the new HR policy, covering such topics as Recruitment and Retention, Performance Management, Equality and Diversity and Training and Development.

Select LSP deliverables in support of building COR staff capacity	Description	Delivery Date
Initial/Basic Curriculum Plan	Designed in collaboration with the COR Secretariat, and reflecting priorities articulated by the SG, the plan focuses on building basic staff competencies.	01/09
Intermediate Level Curriculum Plan II	Improved training developed under Curriculum I, with the following modifications: (1) Courses refined and adapted to better target the unique needs of the legislature and adapted to the specific performance improvements in the COR (2) Additional courses added to support new sets of procedures developed by LSP, such as the Committee Operations Manual, and Rules of Procedure, and (3) LSP will also add courses to support the introduction of office automation.	06/09

Select LSP deliverables in support of building COR staff capacity	Description	Delivery Date
Human Resources Strategy	Developed following consultation with the Senior Director of Human Resources. The document sets the strategic direction and actions for the Human Resources (HR) Department in the Council of Representatives (COR) covering the period 2010 to 2014. Its purpose is to align the agreed vision and mission of the COR into a comprehensive HR strategy, and to develop a process by which HR can better meet the expectations of its stakeholders and to enhance HR's ability to make decisions. The intent is to build a cadre of professionals to support the work of legislators.	11/10
Human Resources Manuals	Four key manuals which support the CORs efforts to implement a modern human resource regime. Equality and Diversity; Performance and Management; Recruitment and Selection; Training and Development.	03/11
Staff Handbook for Provincial Offices	A comprehensive guide for employees of the COR's provincial offices, outlining mandate, vision, organization and the method of addressing constituent concerns. Maximizing the office's use to support the work of MPs and Committees. The handbook was an important training guide for the COR's Provincial Offices Directorate and its affiliated offices across the country.	04/11
LSP Training Plan and Timetable	The Training Plan and Timetable supports the overall objectives of the program to strengthen the Council of Representative's (COR's) legislative and oversight functions. Training is subject to continual evaluation and refinement. Training of MPs is coordinated with the MAPDC and aims to provide MPs with a wide range of information and skills to undertake their roles in the COR and to build MPs capacity as legislators. With respect to training targeting COR staff, the response to emerging needs and the needs captured in LSP's Training Needs Assessment (TNA), conducted in 2010. The training plan presents the various courses offered by LSP (divided by objectives and sub-objectives), an overview of their content and their delivery method.	06/11

## IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

Despite significant efforts on behalf of LSP to modernize the COR's human resources regime, the extent of political influence and consideration in the recruitment and hiring of COR staff remains formidable. Addressing these challenges will require a significant realignment of the current culture within the

institution, but given the increasing politicization of the COR Secretariat, this issue will not be resolved in the short-term.

## LESSONS LEARNED

The implementation of an effective HR process within the COR is completely dependent upon political will. Unless the COR PC and the SG demonstrate their commitment to clear policies, processes and procedures, the COR's institutional development will continue to be undermined by inefficient and ineffective human resources methodologies. LSP is confident that the tools provided – including HR manuals and specialized training, will enable the COR to address this deficiency directly. However, this is dependent on the COR leadership commitment to implement and enforce fundamental change.

### 1.1. COR staff effectively trained

Of all the potential parliamentary strengthening activities under consideration during the LSP assessment team's extensive interviews with the COR SG in 2008, none were perceived by the SG to be as urgently needed as a wide-ranging and comprehensive training and capacity building program for COR staff. The catalog of courses suggested by the SG was extensive, containing 130 subjects targeting a variety of professional career levels present in more than twenty COR offices and directorates.

Originally conceived as an integral part of the ICPD, LSP's training component was initially implemented independent of that activity, ensuring that the pace of the center's development would not impede the rapid roll-out of a comprehensive staff training program at the COR.



*Ms. Jwan Hasan Mohammed, Administrative Specialist from the Sulaymaniyah Provincial Office is sharing best practices of her office with the group.*

Close collaboration between LSP, the SG, and the MAPDC was imperative at program start-up so that the delivery of training courses could be prioritized based on the COR's immediate needs. Priority was given to training that supported the achievement of other program objectives (such as oversight and budget review, COR outreach and the role of provincial offices, long-term planning for parliamentary institutional development, etc.).

While LSP planned to deliver training within the context of the existing requests, considerable effort was also expended to develop a workable curriculum of basic courses to be offered through the ICPD.

Training schedules and cycles were also given careful consideration. Staff training could not conflict with the performance of core staff functions. As a result, courses for existing COR staff were primarily offered during parliamentary session breaks, when the COR was not meeting. Training was job-based and carefully targeted to specific staff functions. While certain elements of the curriculum were initially taught by members of the donor community and by

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international trainers, LSP planned to shift responsibility for these courses to national trainers accessed by the ICPD as soon as was possible.

LSP provided training directly to the COR for the first two years of the program's implementation. The ICPD's development moved forward in fits and starts according to the degree of consideration it received from COR management. After generating support during the first parliament, the center's progress languished under the governing body elected in 2010. By early 2011 it was clear that training would remain a COR function.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RESULTS ACHIEVED

From the program's inception, LSP provided the COR with training and professional development courses covering such subjects as Budgeting, Budget Oversight, Finance and Accounting, ICT and Office Automation, and Press and Media Relations. In its first 11 months, LSP delivered 72 training courses for more than 1350 participants. A training quality control plan was developed and implemented, and requests for staff training increased. MPs also began to ask for professional development courses to improve their job performance.

At the end of its first year, LSP restructured its approach to training for both COR staff and MPs. It conducted a TNA and developed a comprehensive plan to equip a critical mass of COR staff with consistent knowledge and skills while addressing gaps in aptitude. Courses were tailored to the specific responsibilities of participants, and a more rigorous selection process was employed to ensure that participants attended the workshops most appropriate to their job functions. LSP training was well received and often overbooked.

To streamline participant selection, LSP bundled the courses required for specific skill sets to ensure that each subject was presented as a part of a continuous and interconnected training cycle. Training packages were separated into management and administrative cycles. LSP provided the COR Training Department with forms and organizational tools to manage the process of registering and evaluating participants.

Based on LSP's informed assessment of the COR staff training needs, long and short-term technical advisors restructured the LSP training catalogue to reflect a more consistent and skills-oriented training approach. Utilizing best practices in adult-education, LSP also improved the way it delivered training. While lectures remained a component of the training process, the program progressively adapted its methods and trained its own staff to employ more interactive training techniques – routinely including icebreakers, simulations, interactive exercises and short videos.



***LSP COR staff train on parliamentary best practices***

In the second quarter of 2011, with the approval of the DG of the Administration Directorate,

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LSP conducted a Training Impact Assessment (TIA) of the COR staff members who had completed LSP training cycles. The DG also agreed to assist LSP to perform another TNA by making directorate unit heads available for interviews.

In preparation for carrying out the TIA, LSP held focus group meetings in which participants were asked to evaluate the impact of training on the quality of their work. The program then interviewed the participants' supervisors to ascertain their views regarding the impact of LSP training on staff performance. Common themes emerged from the evaluations, with participants requesting training relevant to their positions and supportive of their professional development, while supervisors recognized the need to focus training to build staff capacity leading to greater institutional development. The actual assessment was planned for the third quarter of 2011, but political pressures at the COR delayed the TIA implementation. LSP had planned to deliver data from repeated TIAs to the Administration Directorate DG on a regular basis.

**IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES**

In the first year of the program, access to training for COR staff was determined by favoritism and/or a participant's political affiliation. COR leadership used access to training as a form of reward to some staff while punishing other by denying them training. In successive years, LSP enforced a policy of offering participant's only job-appropriate training.

The increasingly difficult political environment at the COR in the post-election period – which was also present in directorates that had formerly collaborated closely with the program – had a profound impact on LSP training delivery and the ability of the project to collect quantitative and qualitative feedback during the program's final year. While some directorates continued to request and attend training, others actively impeded LSP assistance. The Sadrist movement against USG-funded programs certainly accounted for some directorate's retrenchment from LSP's technical assistance; however, some DGs never fully accepted the notion of reform and institutional development which they saw as a direct threat to their positions within the COR Secretariat. This was particularly evident with the Research and Administrative Directorates.

**LESSONS LEARNED**

The results of a 2010 TNA were the basis for an extensive overhaul of the LSP training curriculum, resulting in a greater number of courses being tailored to the specific needs and responsibilities of participants. Had this analysis been undertaken during the program's first year, a greater number of participants would have received the training best suited to their skills and needs. The TNA enabled the program to broaden its training scope and bring greater integration of training modules across the institution, a weakness of the program's first 18 months of training activities.

With the introduction of a more rigorous participant selection process, it was no longer possible for participants to sign up for courses based on their individual interests as opposed to their actual needs. This meant that access to training was less likely to be used as a reward for political allegiance. Nor was it possible to attend training merely because you were "related" to someone with influence over training

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assignments. This resulted in more participants receiving the training best suited to their professional needs. Earlier implementation of these rigorous selection processes would also have facilitated the provision of job-appropriate training to a greater number of COR staff.

Courses in IT enjoyed the greatest attendance and it was necessary to schedule them on a regular basis to fulfill the training needs of a majority of offices and directorates. This popularity is indicative of the evolutionary nature of software adoption across parliamentary institutions, and future capacity-building programs at the COR should plan on devoting a significant portion of their training schedules to IT course work.

By bundling courses by the skill sets they provided and opening them to qualified participants from across the institution, rather than scheduling them directorate by directorate, course attendance was increased and workshops were at capacity on a regular basis.

## **2.1. Improved services of the COR Secretariat to MPs through the Institutional Development Management Initiative (IDMI)**

### **BACKGROUND**

All parliaments have categories of staff that support political functions and for which hiring is made on the basis of political allegiance and loyalty. These are generally distinct from nonpartisan posts in the parliamentary secretariat, which should have the confidence of all the members and should be based on meritocratic considerations.

The distinctions between partisan and nonpartisan staff members were blurred in the COR of 2008. As a result, members of the secretariat were not universally trusted. Rather than addressing the issue by seeking to introduce a clearer distinction between partisan and nonpartisan staff, the issue was dealt with by seeking a level of fairness through allocation, i.e., not by reducing perceptions of patronage and partisanship in the secretariat, but through entrenching it by extending it more broadly to all groups.

In 2008, staff capacity at the COR was considered by COR management to be weak. While increasing the capacity of key staff could be addressed through training and a thorough review and revision of the COR's HR policy, there remained an underlying lack of political will for staff reform. If left unchallenged, this complacency would result in a parliament whose function was debilitated by a diminishing work ethic, where limited skill sets were the status quo and the very contemplation of an efficient workforce was precluded by entrenched patronage. LSP determined that senior leadership would have to institute staff reform across the entirety of the COR by undertaking an unflinching assessment of its current staffing patterns and policies as compared to its actual staffing needs.

*LSP's Institutional Development Management Initiative (IDMI) – formerly the Change Management Initiative (CMI) – served as a cornerstone for structural and human resource reform in the COR. The Initiative's emphasis is on providing enduring capacity building tools in areas of oversight, human resources and training.*

The IDMI was a reform process introduced to refocus the COR Secretariat on its core business of delivering effective services to MPs in an efficient manner. The results of management reviews performed in pilot directorates and prepared by LSP staff, formed the basis for introducing structural reform, human resource (HR) management initiatives, and developing HR capacity.

## **ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RESULTS ACHIEVED**

At the request of the COR's SG, LSP facilitated an intensive strategic planning and reform session for the COR's Senior Management Group (SMG) in Istanbul, Turkey in December 2009. This retreat – the first of its kind in the history of the COR – resulted in an unprecedented exploration of the membership's shared cross-COR visions, values, and goals for the Secretariat. This resulted in the group's unanimous decision to structure and implement significant change at the Iraqi parliament.

A follow-on SMG retreat in Erbil in April 2010, focused on the COR's HR policy. The SMG convened with a predetermined goal of visualizing a new approach to Human Resource Management at the COR and designing an organizational structure that would serve to make this conceptualization a reality.

LSP's HR Specialist guided the leaders as they mapped out a framework of HR reforms and prioritized the ones that could be best implemented in the short term. These initial reforms became the focus of the SMG's HR strategy. The success of this retreat generated the momentum LSP needed to launch the Institutional Development Management Initiative – a six-phase organizational reform process that dovetailed with LSP support activities across COR Directorates.

LSP launched the first phase of the IDMI with a presentation to the COR SG and DGs illustrating the methodology to be employed by the IDMI to achieve rapid results in organizational change. The SG, in consultation with LSP, decided that the IDMI would be initially launched in the Administration, Parliamentary Affairs, Media, and Research Directorates.

LSP delivered a comprehensive survey to staff members in the pilot directorates. The completed surveys provided insightful feedback on staff roles and responsibilities, the challenges facing the directorates, and internal perceptions of the structural reforms necessary to meet the demands of the COR.

The IDMI team met regularly with the COR Secretariat to plan activities, build support for the initiative and to identify and meet the Secretariat's needs.

Between December 2010 and January 2011, IDMI staff conducted initial interviews and field-tested the IDMI's functional review format. The IDMI team interviewed senior managers in each directorate to ascertain their perceptions of how COR leadership viewed their directorate's functions, powers, structure, job responsibilities, office processes and training needs.

## **IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES**

In February 2011, LSP briefed the Speaker's Chief of Staff on the delays LSP was encountering in obtaining the COR's approval to expand IDMI to the remaining COR directorates. The Chief of Staff was enthusiastic about reforming the COR Secretariat on the basis of international best practices. He promised support from the Speaker's Office to overcome the impediments hindering IDMI implementation.

In April 2011, the COR SG verbally informed LSP that the First Deputy speaker had approved all LSP activities in the Secretariat with the exception of the ICPD. In May, LSP did its best to expedite its work with key directorates on the IDMI. Functional review interviews were carried out with the heads of departments in the Parliamentary Affairs, Legal and Finance Directorates. Fifteen interviews were conducted with managers, followed by individual staff surveys.

In August of 2011, the SG reiterated his support for the initiative and its component activities, despite LSP's inability to get complete buy-in from COR DGs for the initiative. The SG suggested that LSP focus on the directorates that had shown commitment to IDMI so far. The SG expressed his opinion that the outlying directorates would be more enthusiastic about becoming involved in IDMI as soon as progress and results were visible in the participating directorates.

## **LESSONS LEARNED**

Significant institutional reform requires broad-based support. In the case of IDMI, the COR's SG and certain reform-minded DGs actively supported LSP's efforts to bring far-reaching institutional reform to the parliament, recognizing that this was required if the COR was to effectively discharge its mandate. Other DGs, however, saw reform efforts as undermining their own authorities. This was particularly evident in the Research and Administrative Directorates. Part of this reflected some confusion on the part of DG's as to what the ultimate goal of the exercise constituted. This indicated an inability on their part of fully understanding their role within an integrated system. LSP needed to be more demonstrative in presenting results from targeted directorates, which would have alleviated any concerns articulated by reluctant DGs. LSP learned, for example, that the initiative's title, "Change Management Initiative" actually proved threatening for many DGs, who interpreted it as "change *the* management", thus accounting for certain non-participation on the part of some DGs. LSP took corrective action, rebranding the initiative as the Institutional Development Management Initiative (IDMI) in order to alleviate any of these concerns and to further promote the program as a cross-institutional initiative. Participation in the program was also negatively affected by internal politics, with two key directorates – IT and Administration – refusing to participate without the express approval of the Speaker's Office, despite the fact that the initiative had the full backing of the COR Secretariat's SG, to whom the DG's report. Commitment to the initiative was further weakened when the reform-minded SG who served as its original champion and who assisted in the initiative's design was replaced for political reasons by an individual less committed to institutional reform.

## **Objective 3: Streamlined Parliamentary Process and Improved Committee Operations**

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### **BACKGROUND**

Procedural ambiguities can complicate already-difficult legislative processes. Moreover, weak mechanisms to manage legislative debate can undermine the public image of a parliament and, in extreme cases, raise questions about the value of the democratic process. In 2008, the COR had made significant progress in terms of tracking the status of legislation as it progressed through the governing body. It had also improved the movement of routine business through the legislative system. However, many fundamental problems remained unresolved with respect to the management of the plenary and the legislative process generally. Procedural challenges had been heightened by the number of important pieces of legislation that the parliament had to consider under tight timelines.

Some of the more glaring issues in evidence at the COR in 2008 included the use of un-parliamentary language, the boycotting of sessions by members and parliamentary groups, walk-outs by the Speaker and Deputy Speakers – including an incident which left the COR without a chair, procedural ambiguities regarding the use of secret ballots and quorum requirements, unofficial notices of vetoes by the national COR PC, amendments alleged to have been adopted without advance opportunity for review and last-minute changes in the session schedule.

When LSP began its work in the COR, the DG of Parliamentary Affairs requested training for the large number of staff that had been hired to support the committees. While a number of donors were working with specific committees, many of them were focused on the substance of specific committee work, rather than supporting improvements in committee operations and procedures. For this reason, LSP determined it would support improvements in the legislative process and in committee operations.

For its first two years, LSP implemented activities that would lay the groundwork for rule reform to be considered in the second parliament – which was, at that time, scheduled to begin sitting in late 2009. Its Work Plan called for LSP to establish positive examples of good committee practice during the current parliament; further strengthen the capacity of the Directorate of Parliamentary Affairs to support committees and the legislative process; work with the staff of the current COR PC to help develop tools and materials that would facilitate a transition to the successor COR PC; and deliver post-election training to the leadership of the new COR.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RESULTS ACHIEVED**

Through their work with LSP, COR MPs have experienced a deepening interest in utilizing public hearings and forums to better understand proposed legislation, make better policy decisions and increase the amount of valuable information that can be gleaned from civil society, experts and academics. LSP workshops and manuals assisted in these goals. Civil society in Iraq has welcomed public hearings and forums as a method to directly express their concerns to elected officials.

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A further indicator of progressively more mature committee operations is the increasing number of committee requests for detailed background information on issues, and for technical support in legislative drafting. The nature of these requests indicates that partner committees are considering legislation in greater depth than in previous reporting periods and have identified the limitations of the information available solely within the COR.

As one of its first activities with COR Committees, LSP developed and disseminated a paper on the special legal status of Parliament. The paper introduced the concept of parliamentary privilege and the rights and responsibilities of MPs as office holders. The paper served as a guide for MPs as they sought to assert parliament's authority in a responsible and professional manner. It was also beneficial to COR staff, the media and civil society representatives.

In 2009, with LSP's help, the COR's Civil Society Committee hosted the COR's first open public hearing, advancing democracy by increasing public participation in the legislative process. Representatives from a variety of unions and associations, politicians, and members of the media, discussed common challenges and concerns regarding draft legislation on unions and associations. Uncharacteristically, security concerns were anticipated and handled so that Iraqi citizens were not kept out of their parliament. This public hearing was a milestone in the COR's history. LSP assistance in the preparation for public hearings influenced legislation on such topics as education law and illiteracy. The program was intricately involved in the re-drafting and development of the COR Rules and Procedures (ROP) for both the Plenary and committees, and delivered critical research on best practices in promoting transparency, human rights, anti-trafficking, executive branch oversight and legislative drafting.

In 2010, the Education Committee hosted a public hearing on accreditation of Iraqi university degrees. Dr. Alaa Maki, the committee's deputy chair, convened the hearing to highlight concerns regarding the quality control of university degrees issued in Iraq, as well as the system used to validate the authenticity of degrees issued to Iraqis abroad. The Minister of Higher Education, deans of five major universities, the students' union, university professors and several Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) representatives made verbal and written submissions.

LSP provided technical and logistical assistance to the Higher Education and Scientific Research Committee, which convened its first public hearing session on the Iraqi Private Higher Education Law in April of 2011. More than 114 people attended the event, including MPs, an advisor to the Prime Minister, representatives of civil society organizations, and the COR's DGs and Advisors. Also present were university representatives, members of professional associations and officials from three ministries. Iraqi media covered the hearing, which facilitated a discussion of common challenges and concerns about Higher Education in Iraq.

Committee Chair Dr. Abd Dhyab Alajeel, praised the success of the event and thanked LSP for the technical assistance and logistical support provided to the committee. Dr. Alajeel decided that the committee would hold additional public hearings in the near future, and would use the public hearing format as a legislative and oversight tool.



***The Education Committee's public hearing on Iraqi Private Higher Education Law***

Also in 2011, the deputy chair of the Education Committee, Dr. Alaa Makki, hosted a forum on “The Role of Civil Society in Illiteracy in Iraq”. Seventy-six individuals from 50 civil society organizations participated in the forum. They were deeply engaged, requiring the forum to extend for an additional 90 minutes. Several MPs took part in the forum. The chair of the Human Rights Committee made the opening speech, stressing the importance of focusing on issues of significant interest to a majority of COR committees so that these issues can be jointly addressed.

In August 2011, LSP facilitated a conference hosted by the Regions and Governorates Affairs Committee (RGAC). The Governor of Baghdad was also present at the proceedings, during which the committee discussed the implementation problems it was experiencing with various projects.

From the program’s inception, LSP worked closely with Committee staff in an effort to build a cadre of trained professionals who could support the committee’s oversight work. Committee secretaries and staff were offered a range of training and workshops to help build their skills – with the technical assistance covering a range of issues, including management, planning and organization, media relations and research. Staff participation in the program’s core skills training remained high. This was particularly important after the committees were formed in the Second Parliament, in February 2011. Effective committee operations were complicated by the addition of new MPs and Committee Chairs, who comprised more than 80% of the COR’s membership and lacked parliamentary experience.

Under LSP’s new work plan, USAID supported LSP efforts to broaden the scope of programmatic work to support committee development. This included providing technical assistance to committees that had not previously benefited from LSP technical assistance. LSP experienced an increasing number of committee requests for detailed background information on issues and for technical support in legislative drafting. Committees sought out LSP assistance in locating and utilizing research related to legislation under consideration. The nature of these requests indicated that partner committees were considering legislation in greater depth than in the past and had identified the limitations of the information available solely within the COR. Committees also actively sought out assistance through LSP’s Fellowship Program. In its third year of programming, LSP received more requests for fellows than it could fund. COR committees used the research provided by fellows as the basis for drafting and amending laws, as background information for COR conferences, and for informational materials for COR forums and public hearings.

Select LSP deliverables in support of strengthening the legislative process	Description	Delivery Date
Model Committee Operations Manual	Developed following consultations with 5 target COR committees, the document serves as a guide for Committee Chairs, MPs and staff on best practices for committee operations.	09/09
Oversight Manual	A guide for MPs on how to conduct their oversight responsibilities and hold the Executive accountable.	02/11
Final Rules of Procedure Document	Developed at the request of the COR Research Department – Legal Studies and Legislative Drafting Section – LSP provided technical analysis and recommendations directed at modernizing the COR’s Rules of Procedure.	03/11
Legislative Drafting and Analysis Manual	Developed to assist the COR Research Directorate to formulate a COR-specific drafting manual to be used by COR members.	03/11
Committee Clerk Training Manual	Following consultations with Committee chairs and staff, the manual provides guidance to Committee Chairs on how to discharge their functions and optimize committee work.	03/11
Guide to the Legislative Process in the Iraqi COR	A guide for MPs, committees and COR staff. Designed to assist Iraq Civil Society Organizations, academics, development practitioners, students, researchers think tanks and donors better understand the legislative process.	07/11
Concept Paper on Executive-Legislative Branch Relations	The paper reviews the challenges of legislative-executive relationships in emerging democracies and fragile states, with specific implications for Iraq. Recommendations and possible programs for Iraq are proposed for strengthening and improving relationships between the executive and legislative branches in Iraq.	10/11

## **IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES**

Prior to the 2010 national elections, LSP focused its committee development activities on five key “pilot” parliamentary committees identified in collaboration with the COR leadership: these included the Finance, Women, Families and Children, Education, Complaints and Member’s Affairs and Parliamentary Development committees. Following government formation, and in response to requests for additional technical support from committees beyond the originally identified five, LSP expanded its scope of committee support. This presented specific challenges with respect to resource and staff allocation, but programmatically, these requests highlighted the fact that requests for support were increasingly demand driven – and further made in response to demonstrative actions taken by committees through direct assistance from LSP. Challenges began to emerge early in the second quarter of 2011 however, when the 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Speaker, a member of the Sadrist bloc, issued a policy of non-cooperation with United States Government (USG)-funded programs to affiliates of his political bloc, thereby reducing LSP’s ability to work with a wider cross-section of MPs and committees. This escalated in the following months. LSP was able to continue working with some Sadrist-led committees (such as Civil Society) by working with staff or a Vice-Chair rather than directly with the chair.

## **LESSONS LEARNED**

Civil society is eager to communicate its experiences and needs to the local communities in which they work. This should be supported with extensive assistance and trainings so they become at ease with this process.

Committee chairs and members have expressed a desire to have formal committee meetings and have requested information on the methods and official procedures needed to accomplish this.

COR MPs have made a significant number of inquiries regarding federalism and what type of model would work best in Iraq. While LSP provided the COR with written and audio material on the issues that surround federalism, further exploration of the topic will continue to be of particular interest to them.

Legal advisors and the COR legislative drafting offices have requested high-level educational sessions to draft quality legislation. Study missions and mentoring, as discussed in the needs assessment, should support this important goal.

Passage of the ROP by the COR is imperative if legislation is to move forward efficiently, and the COR’s legal advisors have sought further direction on how to ensure superior ROP that will best assist the legislative process.

Executive-legislative relationships vary widely among COR committees and ministries and assistance is needed to help build stronger relationships.

There has been an expressed interest in the COR about the development of human rights observers in Iraq. This should be encouraged with the assistance of international groups, conferences and mentoring to develop such a program.

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The COR has been working on key issues and legislation, such as trafficking, women's social insurance and support for widows, political parties, provincial oversight, education, human rights and budgetary concerns. LSP has provided technical support to committees and chairs in all of these areas, including public hearing support on various issues. However, the COR's momentum on addressing these issues should not be allowed to slow in the absence of a USAID-sponsored parliamentary support program.

A planned reorientation of LSP programming, developed in September 2011 as the COR distanced itself from USG-funded technical assistance, recognized that committee development was the critical pillar for transparency, legislative review and institutional reform within the parliament. It advocated an expansion of LSP activities aimed exclusively at parliamentary committees, which would enable the program to work with MPs, professional staff and key legislative structures. This further supported conclusions that LSP, after three years of programming, had drawn with respect to the design of the original program: that its overall effectiveness had been compromised by its scope, which was too far reaching to be fully achievable. This is further elaborated in the concluding section of this final report.



## SUCCESS STORY

# Public's Voices Heard in Parliament

**Education committee holds its first hearing, allowing citizens to debate a proposed law**



Hal Lipper, USAID



*Dr. Abd Dhyab Alajeely discusses the importance of public hearings at outset of his higher education committee's proceedings in Iraq's Council of Representatives.*

**USAID's Iraq Legislative Strengthening Program worked with committee members to maximize the benefits of their hearings and with journalists so they could report on the relevance of the proceedings.**

U.S. Agency for International Development  
[www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)

Iraq's Council of Representatives (COR) continues taking steps to advance democracy by increasing public participation. On April 19, 2011 the COR's Higher Education and Scientific Research Committee (HESRC) hosted its first open public hearing. Some 114 people attended the event, which was held inside the COR, to discuss the Iraqi Private Higher Education Law.

Representatives of universities, professional associations, and three ministries, raised and discussed with the HESRC a wide range of common challenges and concerns. USAID Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR), representatives from IREX and NDI, Iraqi media, an advisor to the Prime Minister, civil society organizations, Members of Parliament, and the COR's Directors General and Advisors attended this event.

USAID's Iraq Legislative Strengthening Program (LSP) worked with the HESRC for two weeks to help prepare for the event. The Committee's members and staff participated in LSP workshops on the importance of public hearings in a representative democracy, and how to organize and conduct these public hearings. LSP also supported this event on the day. Its efforts included: preparing the announcement and printing invitations, banners, and posters. In addition, LSP worked with independent journalists to train them on how to appropriately cover such public hearings.

There were approximately twelve speakers with each allowed seven minutes to present their views. At the end of this process, the committee discussed issues raised in the speeches with all the attendees, including: the quality of education in the private universities, standards of education in Iraq and steps towards standardization, international accreditation, strengthening the relationship between government universities and private universities in Iraq, the lack of academicians in the private universities, and acceptance of overseas college degrees by local employers



Mohammed Sarter, USAID/ISIP

*Professor in Baghdad University and civil society activist discuss the quality of education in private universities*

over degrees from Iraq private (as opposed to public) universities.

The Committee Chair, Dr. Abd Dhyab Alajeely, said the event was a success and he was pleased with the technical assistance that included the training of Committee members and staff, and the logistical support. He especially noted: "We are proud to conduct this public hearing and our Committee will hold more public hearings in the near future, using this mechanism as a legislative and oversight tool".

## 1.1. Strengthened legislative document management systems

Prior to LSP's implementation, the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs (CLA) unit of the Embassy's political section developed a system for transmitting legislative documents among the Iraqi institutions engaged in the legislative process (e.g., from the Council of Ministers Secretariat to the Consultative Council, to the COR, to the national COR PC, to the Ministry of Justice Gazette. While the CLA initiative was designed to support the flow of documentation between, rather than within, these institutions, LSP chose to focus on streamlining the legislative process within the COR itself by encouraging the increased use of IT tools to streamline the legislative process.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RESULTS ACHIEVED

In its first year, LSP supplied the COR with the information and guidance it needed to establish an intranet, enabling the secure sharing of information and documents.

In close collaboration with the DGs of the Parliamentary Affairs and IT Directorates, preliminary specifications were drafted for a legislative tracking system which could provide users with critical information about the movement of legislation through parliament, including the status of bills and amendments. The specifications included the system's customization to accommodate both Arabic and Kurdish translation.

By the final quarter of 2010, the facets and functionality of the "Legistar" system had been demonstrated for COR senior management, which approved its selection as the appropriate platform to support the internal bill tracking system. The COR SMG also approved the selection of a companion product, "InSite", which would allow for *ad hoc* queries about legislative status and history. At year's end, after overseeing an objective solicitation and evaluation of potential "Legistar" vendors, LSP determined that the Daystar Corporation was best equipped to provide the COR with both the system and remote installation services, which were scheduled for January 2011.

In LSP's second year activities provided continuing support for the projects established during the program's first year, including the development of a COR intranet; the development and publication of a legislative drafting and analysis manual; coordination and implementation of the archival database, and the creation of a series of in-house training programs for all of the above mentioned systems to ensure long-term sustainability.

A comprehensive training program was framed in January 2011, to accommodate the necessary Training of Trainers (TOT) who would become the COR's in-house providers of instruction on the use of Legistar for COR staff. The Daystar team provided this TOT training in February.

By August 2011, designated COR Parliamentary Affairs and IT staffs were completely trained in the operational functions of the system. In total, LSP conducted three cycles of Legistar training between January and August 2011.

The procurement process to provide the COR with a "Hansard" system was initiated in early 2010. Specifications for the system, which provides printed transcripts of parliamentary debates, were

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developed by LSP with the Parliamentary Affairs and IT DGs, and a draft Request for Quotations was circulated for approval. However, the Hansard procurement was eventually integrated into the existing Legistar implementation.

LSP developed an ‘Archival Strategy’ to guide the design specifications for the Electronic Archival System mentioned above. The system, designed to be accessible via the COR intranet and the Internet, would contain records of debates, votes, attendance and the public reports of committees and other public information. A comprehensive survey of COR directorates determined their archival requirements and was used to define the final system specifications, which were put out for tender during the first quarter of 2011.

LSP also worked closely with the IT Directorate to create a plan for installing its basic IT infrastructure. The LSP team provided regular guidance, expertise and training to the directorate’s staff in anticipation of COR approval to move forward with the infrastructure plan. In April 2011, LSP provided the directorate with completed schematics, diagrams, reports and four network switches in support of the anticipated renovation of IT infrastructure.

Electronic Information Panels were installed around the dining and conference area of the COR in early 2011 and were operational during the MPDP. The Information Panels use templates – designed by LSP – to segment information in a rotating broadcast model. The content provided by the information panels includes the daily COR session schedules and meetings, and is presented in Arabic and Kurdish. The panels enable a further degree of parliamentary transparency.

Finally, LSP worked closely with the Media and IT Directorates as they developed their vision for comprehensive Content Management System (CMS) and Web Services Platform which would benefit all the COR directorates. In response to the COR’s request to redesign its website, LSP recommended a new, secure and sustainable CMS which would allow the COR to manage and control a sophisticated, dynamic website. These consultations resulted in LSP’s initiation of a procurement to implement the website initiative.

Select LSP deliverables in support of strengthened document management systems	Description	Delivery Date
Computerized Constituency Service Case Management System	Developed in collaboration with the COR Provincial Offices Directorate, the feasibility study proposes a methodology to assist the COR in better managing and tracking constituent queries and to increase COR outreach activities.	03/11

Select LSP deliverables in support of strengthened document management systems	Description	Delivery Date
Evaluation Report- Legislative Tracking System	(Report unfinished due to program close out). An analysis and historical account of the development and implementation of a legislative tracking system in the COR.	02/12

## IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

The third quarter of 2011 saw political pressures that had been building within the COR escalate. The COR PC was suddenly reluctant to approve further LSP contributions. The IT Directorate never installed the switches LSP had provided for its infrastructure network and as a consequence, no statistical assessment of the network's improved performance could be established.

LSP was also faced with the challenge of installing state-of-the-art IT hardware in a building with less than optimal infrastructure to support it – as well as an IT team which lacked the technical experience and knowledge to support IT investments. This was further compounded by a fear of professional retribution should one of these very public systems fail during use. Consequently, there was a tendency on the part of the COR IT team to avoid responsibility for any IT operations, which was frequently exhibited through delays in equipment deployment, shallow complaints about suitability and a reluctance to begin deployment of the systems.

The DG of the Media Directorate released LSP from further activities in support of the procurement of a CMS for its proposed website, citing a preference to have a system developed locally. Despite the fact that LSP had held an open procurement and contracted with a vendor, a decision was made to immediately terminate the contract, in order to mitigate unwarranted expenses. As of September, 2011, COR PC approval for implementation of the Legistar system remained outstanding.

## LESSONS LEARNED

For any parliamentary strengthening program, there is an inherent risk in IT investment. Such investments are demonstrative and consequently, any minor perception of failure can easily undermine the initiative and cast doubt on an entire technical assistance program. An unused electronic voting system, installed more than five years ago in the COR by another donor provides a stark example of this risk. Within the COR there is a substantial gulf between what is *wanted* and what can be realistically *supported* – in terms of technical knowledge, infrastructure and political will. In the case of IT, small, incremental supports proved to be the most effective in assisting the COR. It is premature for the installation of large-scale, complex IT systems. The capacity of the COR IT Directorate and the fear of retribution should systems fail or malfunction vastly outweigh the risks attached to efforts to advance the institution through IT modernization. The COR, as it currently exists, is simply not prepared or able to take such a large step.

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Cognizant of the institution's ability to implement and administer advanced IT systems, USAID informed the COR in October 2010 that further investment in IT would be limited to the completion of the Legistar system.

## **2.1. Members Parliamentary Development Program**

### **BACKGROUND**

Despite months of delays in forming a government following Iraq's second democratic election and transition to a newly elected parliament, in early 2011 LSP was able to implement the Members' Parliamentary Development Program (MPDP), an initiative specifically designed to build the capacity of MPs. LSP developed a comprehensive program of workshops catering to a wide variety of interests and addressing the full range of key skills required by legislators. LSP offers workshops highlighting the best practices in areas of interest to MPs, enabling them to enhance their professional development and increase their skills in performing their legislative, oversight, and representative roles

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RESULTS ACHIEVED**

The MPDP provided MPs with introductory information on the building blocks of legislative development and a crucial time in their political careers. The first series of workshops, focused on Parliamentary Effectiveness, Oversight and Policy Development, Leadership and Management, IT, and Media and Communications. Senior members of several parliamentary blocks chaired individual seminars and two former UK Cabinet Ministers and the head of information services at Westminster offered collegial insight and support during a tour to observe COR practices. By the conclusion of the first phase of MPDP, fully three-quarters of the COR's MPs had participated.

For MPDP Phase Two, LSP expanded the program's curriculum to include such subjects as the Iraqi National Budget Process, Stakeholder Relations and Engaging Civil Society, Introduction to the Iraqi Government, Introduction to Government Policy-making, the Role of a Minister in Government, and Diplomatic Etiquette. Select modules were developed through cooperation with outside Iraqi institutions and experts.

Response to the program was overwhelmingly positive and in 2011, LSP went on to offer workshops on more than 15 new topics including Public Hearings and Consultation, Financial Management Law, Parliamentary Oversight, Constituency Outreach, Media Relations, Interview Skills for Print and Broadcast Media, Strategic Planning and Human Rights Conventions and Agreements. By the middle of 2011, more than ten of twenty-six COR committees had taken part in MPDP, with nine more on a waiting list.

MPDP was designed to provide MPs with an unprecedented opportunity to meet and collaborate on developing methods to refine the work of the COR. MPDP training workshops were designed to accommodate the MPs busy schedules. Topical and popular sessions were scheduled on a rotating basis so members would have the opportunity to attend as many workshops as possible.

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MPs provided LSP with formal feedback on workshop content, training material, training methodology and the performance of the trainer. Participants gave the workshops top ratings in formalized evaluations, and indicated they would recommend them to colleagues. MPs particularly appreciated MPDP's training on Strategic Planning, Budget Oversight, and Public Hearings. Suggestions for improvement included increasing the number of practical exercises, comparative studies with other countries, and increasing class time to allow for in-depth discussion of hot-button issues.

Workshops were tailored to meet the needs of individual committees. The Foreign Affairs committee approached LSP with a specific interest in strategic planning. The committee outlined concerns unique to their mandate, as well as restrictions they were facing regarding travel and timing. LSP responded by formulating a workshop to meet committee's needs and offered to present it in Baghdad at a time which would be convenient for the majority of committee members.

Similarly, public hearing and budget workshops were expanded or reworked according to the requirements of several individual committees. In response to MP feedback, MPDP seminars in Erbil were expanded from two to three days to ensure that more time would be allocated to in depth discussions of the subject matter.

The number of requests for dedicated multi-day MPDP sessions in Erbil outweighed LSP's capacity to address them all in a timely fashion. From April through November of 2011, 208 COR MPs and staff took part in MPDP training. Prior to program closeout, a long-term training plan was in development to accommodate regular, monthly workshops in Erbil.



*A total of 241 MPs attended the first phase of MPDP for a period of three days at the Iraqi Council of Representatives.*

Select LSP Deliverable in support of the Member's Parliamentary Development Program	Description	Delivery Date
MP Orientation Manual	A comprehensive guide to the role of an MP – developed in close collaboration with the COR Secretariat with contributions from a number of donors who supported the MPDP. Ten chapters address the key roles played by an MP in addition to the function and mandate of an elected parliament.	03/11

Select LSP Deliverable in support of the Member's Parliamentary Development Program	Description	Delivery Date
Manual on Code of Conduct	Code of Conduct was an issue discussed during the MPDP as a part of MP orientation. The Manual of Code of Conduct was designed as a tool to promote discussion with an aim to establishing principles related to MP conduct. The Manual was provided to the COR's cross-party sub-committee on Code of Conduct. The Committee's Chair asked LSP was to serve as a resource to the Committee; however, support ceased with the cancellation of the USIAD-COR MOU.	10/11

## LESSONS LEARNED

The first phase of LSP's MPDP brought together a large number of MPs at the COR for multi-day workshops dedicated to providing them with the skills they needed to perform well in their legislative capacity. Although successful, the length of time it took to secure all necessary permission to conduct the workshops was prohibitive. LSP built a momentum from the MPDP's first phase, but failed to fully capitalize on it as it sought to unroll phase two. Scheduling was tied to the COR's agenda, and the result was a significant delay in implementation which cost the program political capital. As a result, LSP reconsidered its program implementation strategy, and began working with MPs in smaller numbers. LSP also re-evaluated the rigidity attached to the curriculum, recognizing that greater flexibility would enable the workshops to be specifically tailored to meet unique needs. It became more feasible to provide MPs with a directory of topics, and to revise the content to meet the specific needs of the participant. It was also apparent – given the diverse professional backgrounds of the Members – that a “one size fits all” approach was not effective, and in some cases, workshops and training were too simplistic for some members. In addition, MPs were resistant to “lecture-style” training; in response, LSP revised its training approach to be increasingly flexible and interactive.



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**IRAQ**

# SUCCESS STORY

## Members' Parliamentary Development Program engages Iraqi MPs

**Members' Parliamentary Development Program assists MPs as they form a democratic, independent Parliament to build a prosperous Iraq**



*A total of 241 MP attended the first phase of MPDP for a period of three days at the Iraqi Council of Representatives*



*Secretary General and panelists discuss with the MPs how parliamentary committees work*



*MPs consulted a wide range of matters*

Fully three-quarters of all Iraqi Members of Parliament (MPs) registered for the Members Parliamentary Development Program (MPDP), an initiative of USAID's Legislative Strengthening Program (LSP). His Excellency, Mr. Speaker Osama Al-Nujaifi, opened the first session. In speaking of the friendship between Iraq and the United States, the Speaker welcomed USAID involvement with the Council of Representatives (COR). USAID Mission Director, Alex Dickie, saluted the close cooperation between the COR and USAID, and told the assembled MPs that they could expect ongoing assistance as they forge a democratic, independent Parliament and build a prosperous Iraq. COR Secretary General Amjad Abdul Hameed characterized the March, 2010, elections as an important milestone in cementing a vibrant Iraqi democracy.

Speakers and panelists for the three-day event featured LSP personnel, specialists from partner organizations (Global Partners, IREX, NDI and RTI) and parliamentary experts from the UK, including two former Cabinet Ministers. COR Secretary General, Amjad Abdul Hameed, chaired the conference, and senior members of the several parliamentary blocs presided over individual sessions.

An underlying goal of the event was to assist MPs in better understanding their roles as legislators, their responsibilities in conducting oversight and their roles in serving the needs of constituents. UK panelist, Lord Archy Kirkwood, noted that politicians can enhance their standing and transcend identity politics by defending the COR's institutional legitimacy, focusing on questions of policy, and demanding effective administration.

The importance of COR committees in policymaking and oversight was a recurring theme in observations put to the forum. Panelists stressed that, while committee members will often have diverging opinions, an effective way to influence government behavior is for committee members to adopt a spirit of compromise and work towards issuing committee reports that reflect consensus. LSP stressed that the success of Parliament's oversight role depends on a permissive media environment: a political culture of transparency will serve the interests of MPs in the new Parliament, reinforcing the institutional strength of the COR by harnessing a vibrant media to increase public awareness, thereby generating popular demand for a responsive executive.

For their part, MPs sought precise advice on a wide range of matters and took full advantage of the question-and-answer periods. Most notably, they sought guidance on how to



*LSP personnel focused on the need for Parliament to work with civil society*



*The Speaker welcomed USAID involvement and spoke of the friendship between Iraq and the US.*

harmonize political strategy with their parliamentary obligations, and focused on a number of key issues, including the need for Parliament to listen to civil society, the use of the COR's provincial offices and MP participation in inter-parliamentary groups. The subject of constructive opposition in the COR was of particular interest, with one MP noting that with almost every list represented in government, "What should an effective opposition look like in my country?"

For most MPs, it was their first involvement in a USAID-funded event. Many of them made supportive comments about the conference, seeing it as both timely and helpful. They encouraged LSP to organize further capacity building initiatives for their benefit.

The conference provided many opportunities for MPs to interact with their colleagues and to gain a fuller understanding of services available to them through the COR Secretariat.

The conference was the first phase of LSP's MPDP. Iraq's MPs will have further opportunities to develop their parliamentary skills during the weeks and months ahead as LSP rolls out Phases two and three, a series of two six-week in-depth workshops aimed at assisting all MPs to enhance their effectiveness.

## **Objective 4: Strengthened Oversight and Budget Review Capacity**

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### **BACKGROUND**

Oversight capacity is the power of the purse and specifically, the legislature's ability to hold the executive accountable for national expenditures. The COR's ability to influence or shape budget discussions and play a meaningful role in the development of fiscal policy is particularly critical in Iraq. Pressures to use budgetary surpluses to grow the public sector, in the absence of stronger private sector development will have long-term consequences for the Iraqi economy. Fiscal decisions on allocation of revenue among the regions and governorates of Iraq are made through the budget process. The ability of the government to effectively implement its capital budget is critical to rebuilding Iraqi infrastructure and improvement in the delivery of essential services such as electricity, water and sanitation.

In 2008, when LSP conducted its assessment of COR capacity oversight – and in particular budgetary oversight – were conceptualized but not yet practiced. At that time, the chair of the Finance Committee requested a broad range of assistance from the assessment team and expressed his concerns about being able to fully support the coming review of the 2009 budget. Committee members acknowledged that their capacity was nowhere near sufficient to the task.

The assessment team encountered strong demand from individual MPs for support for budgetary oversight and planning. With elections looming, many MPs emphasized their desire to hold the government to account, and referenced the relative weak capacity of the COR with respect to the executive branch.

Newly democratic parliaments are often able to add more value to democratic processes through oversight and budget review. Precedents relating to oversight are often established in the first several sessions of post-transition parliaments. The 2008 LSP assessment team determined that it would be important for the COR to assert its oversight role strongly during this period. Moreover, given increasing government revenues and the prospects of increasing oil wealth, the COR would need to solidify mechanisms for financial oversight and accountability as early as possible.

### **ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RESULTS ACHIEVED**

LSP's Budget and Oversight program set an immediate goal of supporting the COR to review and analyze the national budget for the upcoming year and strengthen its oversight function. LSP began providing ongoing mentoring to committees, thereby increasing the committees' ability to oversee laws and to evaluate the fiscal impact of legislation. The program provided similar support to MPs and staff. LSP evaluated the budget process in the COR in late 2008 in order to strengthen research and programmatic approaches.

To promote improved communication between the COR and Ministries, LSP assisted in the compilation

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of an inventory of government statutory and non-statutory documents and reports needed by the COR.

LSP organized events ranging from small group workshops to larger seminars for MPs, their staff, various committees and the BRD. A detailed, in-depth analysis of the COR's involvement in the FY 2009 Budget process was completed and reviewed with key counterparts.

A report on the role of the Iraqi Board Supreme Auditor (BSA) was prepared and delivered to the COR, and LSP launched the Iraqi Professors Educating Parliament (IPEP) initiative by assisting two Baghdad University professors in developing seminars and workshops for BRD and COR researchers.

A series of workshops was developed for newly elected MPs utilizing best practices in oversight techniques. LSP delivered MP Orientation materials and a curriculum on oversight and the budget cycle for the new 2010 Parliament. Through successful cooperation with the BRD, LSP enhanced the ability of MPs to ask more 'how and why' questions on budget issues.

Less than a year into the LSP, the BRD produced a comprehensive budget analysis, marking the progress of democratic governance in Iraq. Such a detailed and thorough budget analysis was unprecedented within the COR. It was impartial and practical, providing readers with substance and useful facts. By mid-2010 the BRD expanded its mandate to work with the Executive Branch of the Iraqi Government to provide better oversight of the policies and programs of the electorate. With LSP's technical assistance on extensive performance-based budgeting practices, the BRD was able to analyze, predict and meet FY 2011 budget targets.

LSP worked diligently to enhance collaboration between the executive and Parliament without compromising the independence the COR needed to conduct energetic oversight. The program's primary goal was to foster COR acceptance of modern practices in performance-based evaluations of the government's activities and to establish several measurable criteria for vital projects in order to properly evaluate them.

LSP provided the assistance necessary to ensure that the BRD could explain performance-based evaluation and the importance of evaluation criteria to committees. The increased number of informed questions from MPs to the executive during the 2010 budget approval process underlined the efficacy of LSP's work. LSP had successfully trained and readied a new cadre of parliamentarians to analyze and manage the 2010 budget.

A newsletter, '*News You Can Use*,' was developed and distributed at the COR, providing information on fiscal activities and short articles on the budget process and issues of transparency and "*The Comparative Guide to Budget Offices*" was written and delivered to the BRD to identify the most efficient organizational structure for the department. Manuals on budget analysis and research were developed and delivered to the COR.

LSP helped the COR establish a modern performance evaluation system. COR committees were continually encouraged to discuss the National Development Plan and participate in budget planning. The BRD received support to undertake several types of fiscal analyses including analysis of budget execution

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and cost estimates. This support ensured the adaptation and implementation of the most modern techniques and 'best practices' from around the world.

At an LSP-sponsored master class, MPs discussed budget projections, inputs to the 2011 federal budget, and concept notes on performance evaluation procedures. Instruction on cost estimation and practical training skills was made available to the BRD to enable the COR to evaluate draft laws more effectively.

The program encouraged increased cooperation between the COR and Iraqi CSOs by supporting participation in the Iraqi Institute for Economic Reform's seminar: "Federal Budget of 2011 – Studying and Analyzing". Attendees included representatives from the COR, senior ministry officials, and CSO representatives.

To improve cooperation between the COR and independent commissions, LSP opened new channels of collaboration between the COR and the BSA to enable COR staff and MPs to participate in BSA fiscal training courses. LSP also provided MPs with major findings regarding the National Budget for FY 2011.



*LSP's budget training session*

The problems experienced by the members of the Regions and Governates Affairs Committee in implementation and budget expenditure were discussed in a workshop organized and facilitated by the program. The discussion led to the determination of new approaches to committee projects.

The BRD now electronically prepares and archives its materials. To increase archival consistency, LSP assisted the BRD in the creation of a unified budget database.

In February 2010, LSP delivered CDs of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's "Best Practices for Budget Transparency" and "Code of Good Practices in the Transparency of Monetary and Fiscal Policy" to the public areas of the Finance Committee office and the BRD. The CDs were translated into in Arabic and Kurdish.

The BRD, in collaboration with LSP, prepared an information and marketing pamphlet explaining the services it offered to MPs in the COR. The publication was hand delivered to every COR MP. A BRD staff member visited each of the standing committees. The marketing pamphlet was further revised and enhanced in February 2010 and again in 2011. The BRD plans to make the pamphlet available on the COR's new website.

Relations between the COR and the BSA are, at present, so cordial that the BSA now routinely distributes government audit reports to the COR, delivering copies to the Finance Committee, the Economic Investment and Reconstruction Committee, and the Speaker's Office. LSP also helped encourage an

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improved partnership between the COR and independent commissions by facilitating meetings between the COR Financial Advisor and the Head of the Auditing Department of the Integrity Committee.

Finally, LSP delivered a two-day master class to the Head of the BRD and BRD staff on analyzing the cost estimation of the “Iraqi Housing Fund” draft law.

Select LSP deliverables in support of strengthened budget review and oversight capacity	Description	Delivery Date
Comparative Guide to Budget Offices	A study of seven legislatures which have established independent budget offices. The paper examines the applicability of establishing a budget office within the COR. It concludes that a budget office in the Iraq Council of Representatives (COR) would have a number of important roles, however, its primary focus would be the preparation and dissemination of budget, financial, and economic analysis in order to hold the Executive accountable and engage the legislature to effectively and efficiently participate in Iraq’s budgeting process as required by the Iraqi Constitution.	10/10
Training Manual for Budget Office Analysis	This manual is intended to serve as a desktop reference and a companion to training materials for the BRD/BO staff. It identifies the most important activities, information sources, and analysis instruments. Some of these are in the process of development, but are mentioned to enrich the value of the manual and provide for future use. There are two sections to the manual: Section A describes the oversight function of the COR and outlines the role of the BRD/BO in carrying out this function. Section B contains an overview of the Performance Based Budgeting (PBB) ideology and the best international systems for performance evaluation	03/11

## IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

Receiving timely and accurate financial data from the government’s executive branch on planned expenditures remained an on-going challenge, impeding LSP’s budget team from providing the tools

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necessary to MPs and researchers in advance of parliament's debate on the proposed annual national budget.

LSP had long advocated for an independent budget research office, which would enhance its impartiality in the eyes of parliamentarians and enable the office to mirror the activities of its counterparts in other parliaments. Unfortunately, there was reluctance on the part of the DG of the Research Directorate to sever this function of her offices. Despite this, LSP worked closely with the BRD to establish an efficient organizational structure, drawing from the latest international model of budget offices.

## **LESSONS LEARNED**

When LSP began its Budget and Oversight support to the COR, most MPs and committee chairs were aware that their level of knowledge was insufficient to work with budgets. This lack of fiscal competency meant they were not able to perform any oversight functions.

While LSP made significant strides in the provision of training and materials to enable the COR to better cope with budgetary and oversight issues, much of the COR's progress was encouraged and enhanced through the creation of solid relationships between government bodies, committees and ministries. Future programming should incorporate such networking and relationship building to empower all parties to seek assistance from one another as they move forward with the intricacies of governance.

In the wake of LSP's early closeout, the program has taken pains to ensure continued progress toward a functional and independent BRD. LSP encouraged collaboration with external organizations to heighten the sophistication of the BRD's analytical skills. These institutions include the Central Bank of Iraq, the Iraqi Institute for Economic Reform, and the USAID Iraq Financial Sector Development project.



## SUCCESS STORY

### Multimedia workshop gives COR staff an “Insight to Oversight”

Sessions bring together staff of more than five committees



*Participants of LSP’s “Insight to Oversight” workshop learned about oversight techniques from around the world and watched videos of how they are used in various parliaments.*

A critical role of any parliament is to ensure that public funds are well spent. In representing citizens, parliamentarians must play an active role in ensuring that the government spends money as promised and that programs are delivered as efficiently as possible. Parliamentary budget oversight holds the executive accountable for its use of public funds.

To continue developing the budget oversight capacity of Iraq’s Council of Representatives (COR), the USAID’s Legislative Strengthening Program (LSP) Budget and Oversight Team led a five-day workshop in October called “Insight to Oversight.” As the second in a series of courses aimed at preparing competent financial observers at the COR, the “Insight to Oversight” workshop provided participants with a summary of international standard oversight tools, international and Iraqi examples, and inquiry and investigation techniques.

“Insight to Oversight” was the first workshop to bring together staff of more than five committees. Thirty-six participants— the highest number of attendees for any oversight course – represented the Complaints, Finance, Accountability, Integrity, Education, and Martyrs Committees as well as the Public Relations Directorate.

It was also the first workshop in which LSP used videos to show how parliaments in other countries conduct parliamentary sessions, hearings and debates. The videos included examples from Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany. These virtual visits enabled participants to see and hear the processes and functions of other parliaments.

LSP trainers highlighted to participants the idea that oversight concerns more than the Board of Supreme Audit, which focuses on money matters. They stressed the notion that oversight must exist in every directorate and should look at both the performance and economy of government projects.

“I learned from this training about issues and things that I considered vague in the past,” said one participant from the Finance Committee. “Now they are clear and beneficial not only to my work but also in my life.”

The LSP Budget and Oversight Team provides technical assistance to the COR’s Budget Research Department and Finance Committee on issues related to budget analysis through seminars, workshops, and roundtable discussions.



## SUCCESS STORY

### Budget Research Department Presents Thorough Analysis of Iraq's FY2010 Budget to Parliamentary Committees

Impartial and practical, 50-page analysis is first of its kind at COR



*BRD staff members regularly attend workshops on budget analysis. With support from LSP, the BRD will continue to provide comprehensive budget analysis to various COR committees.*

Fair and transparent use of public funds is a key indicator of a successful democracy. Elected officials must ensure that constituent resources are invested in projects, processes and activities that benefit Iraqi citizens and their nation. A thorough analysis of a government's budget is vital to helping them with this essential duty.

Less than one year after its establishment, the Budget Research Department (BRD) at Iraq's Council of Representatives (COR) has produced a comprehensive budget analysis, marking the progress of democratic governance in Iraq. With assistance from USAID's Iraq Legislative Strengthening Program (LSP), the BRD produced a 50-page analysis of Iraq's FY2010 budget that includes commentary, financial analysis, graphs and illustrations presented in a clear and logical format.

Such a detailed and thorough budget analysis is unprecedented within the COR. Previous budget analyses were done on an *ad hoc* basis within a committee or by outside consultants. Such analyses were partial to political maneuvering and served to advance narrow agendas or quash legitimate causes. By contrast, the BRD's budget analysis is impartial and practical, providing readers for the first time with substance and useful facts.

Making use of skills they developed during LSP training sessions, BRD staff members have presented their analysis to the Health & Environment, Education, and Finance Committees. Together with LSP, they will continue with presentations to a growing list of other committees at the COR.

Committee members were impressed with the thorough preparations provided by BRD, as one member of the Education Committee noted, "It is very good to see that our in-house staff of Iraqi experts are on top of this issue and on call to help us."

The BRD was created to provide impartial and objective facts, figures, and commentary on budget planning and execution and to counsel members of parliament in fiscal management oversight. Looking at numbers and analyzing their implications and potential impacts is a highly specialized activity. With training from LSP, the BRD staff are undertaking this role and becoming fiscal management experts at the COR.

The Head of the BRD Mrs. Najat Ali Ahmed said she anticipates the department will become a firm and useful resource for all parliamentarians to call upon as needed. The analysis of the 2010 budget proves that the BRD has started down the difficult and long road of fiscal realism that will help ensure the development of a good government in Iraq.

## Objective 5: Strengthened COR Outreach

### BACKGROUND

The COR established Provincial Offices (POs) under Article 151 of its bylaws which states that the Parliament is to open offices to “secure communication between the Members of the Council of Representatives and the people.” The Parliamentary Affairs Directorate (PAD) was tasked with developing the POs. It created an administrative unit under its structure, the Provincial Offices Department (POD), to carry out this task. On July 9, 2007, the COR began to employ the staff of its POs. By August 2009, the POD had established POs in 17 of Iraq’s 18 provinces. The POD established two offices in Baghdad because of the city’s large population.

Initially, the POs were conceived as an extension of the COR Complaints Committee. The POs soon came to be perceived by the COR and its MPs as appropriate staging areas for public outreach. Consequently, the COR expanded the POs’ role beyond receiving citizens’ complaints and embraced a general liaison role between the COR and the provinces. The POs now aim to facilitate constituent services, civic education,



and parliamentary oversight activities. While expectations for public outreach remained modest, the LSP assessment team recommended that a broad-based parliamentary strengthening program continue to encourage and support COR efforts to strengthen parliamentary outreach.

A consistent management structure was developed for each of the offices. The MAPDC and the RGAC were recognized as official stakeholders of the POs’ activities in the provinces. The following is a diagram of the management structure of a COR’s PO.

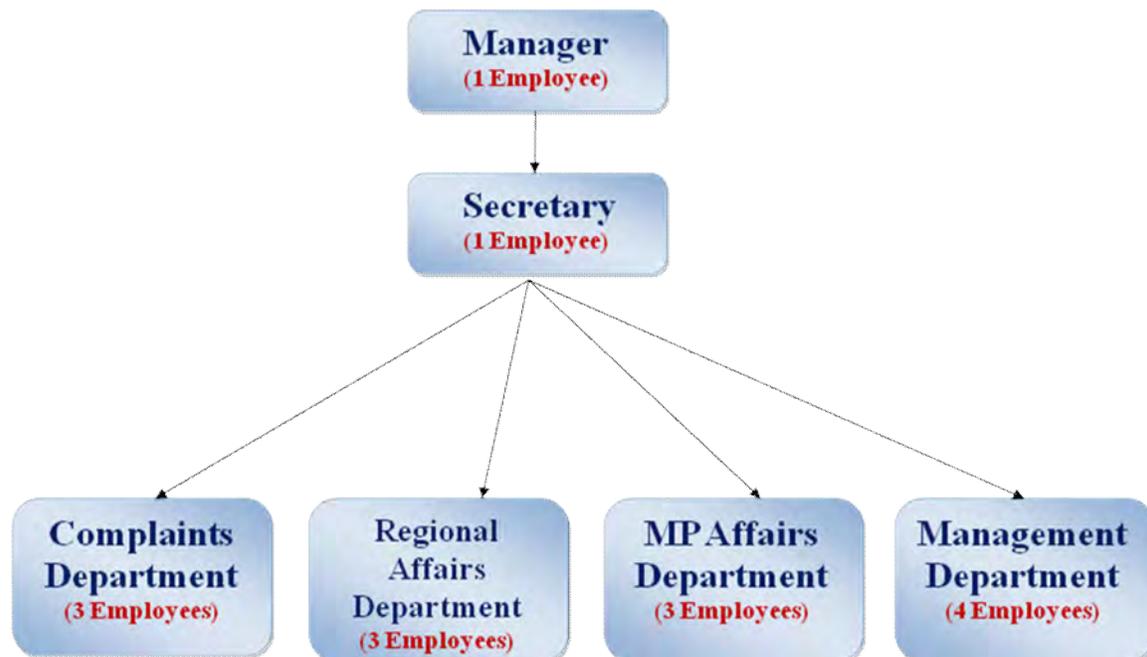
The Complaints Committee received grievances on a wide range of issues including human rights abuses, health and education services, delivery of basic government services and citizens access to social benefits or employment. The role of the Complaints Committee staff in the provincial offices in 2008 was to document complaints in a written format. These were gathered and sent once or twice a month to the committee in Baghdad. Once the committee received the complaint, it was reviewed, and if deemed to

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have merit, forwarded to the relevant ministry for a response. The Complaints Committee indicated to the LSP assessment team that the range of resolving citizen complaints was between 5% and 40% of cases depending on the ministry.

Following Iraq's parliamentary elections on March 7, 2010, the Council of Representatives held its first session on June 14, 2010. After several months, parliamentary committees were formed and the COR Complaints Committee was eliminated from the list of COR standing committees. The COR then created an independent administrative unit under the PAD tasked with managing citizen's complaints and the COR's PO Complaints Department's staff in the provinces.

While aware that change would be unlikely in the short-term, LSP determined it would introduce the COR to work flow models which could disentangle constituent services from the provision of administrative support to MPs and support to the RGAC. The creation of a one-stop-shop, capable of handling both functions also held promise, but if not executed with a clear management structure, authorities and support, it was at high risk to fail.



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RESULTS ACHIEVED

In support of the COR's efforts to establish a presence in the provinces by creating representative offices in, LSP focused its activities on increasing the capacity of the COR POs' staff and stakeholders' to provide civic education to citizens, increase the legislative process' transparency, support government oversight activities, and manage constituents' complaints. LSP guided the PAD and POD through strategic planning, staff capacity building, and conducted workshops for provincial offices' staff over a three year period. LSP trained more than 70 percent of the personnel from 17 of the COR's 19 POs.

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Participants learned how to prepare for and organize MP outreach visits, establish relationships with provincial level councils, support oversight activities, and organize public events. They developed their report writing skills and were trained on international best practices in outreach tools and techniques necessary to maximize press and public attendance at MP-hosted activities. PO staff members and COR committees' stakeholders also received instruction on the standardization of workflow processes through an extensive LSP driven collaborative effort with COR POs' stakeholders that culminated into a "Staff Handbook for COR Provincial Offices". The handbook includes international best practices on for relevant to the administrative and technical management of the POs, guidance from the Iraqi Constitution, COR ROP, as well as instructions from the pertinent COR committees to their respective staff within the POs.

Although training was limited to parliamentary staff due to the delays resulting from government formation, training for MPs commenced shortly after the COR resumed sessions. More than 150 MPs attended LSP workshops on constituency outreach and effective utilization of the COR provincial offices.

A "Model Provincial Office" strategy document, developed by the LSP, provided a reference for the POs' COR management, MAPDC, and RGAC on the importance of parliamentary outreach and a shared strategic outreach plan. Similarly, a "Guide to Field Visits" outlining the necessary steps to successfully facilitate MP and committee field visits ensured that PO and COR committees' staff members provided uniform and improved services when MPs traveled to the provinces for constituency outreach.

To meet the challenges facing the POs in responding to citizen complaints, LSP conducted a three-day seminar for 46 Complaints Committee staff members on improving the management of casework and effective reporting constituent concerns and inquiries. In addition, LSP trained POs' and Complaints Committee staff on effective case management strategies and developed a Feasibility Study on an electronic internet based Networked Constituency Case Management System (NCCMS), which was disseminated among MPs and PO staff members. The NCCMS was designed to standardize and systemize the handling of constituent complaints across all 19 Iraqi provinces and effectively facilitate communication between the COR, the POs, and expedite the constituent complaint resolution process. LSP held consultations with COR staff and distilled their feedback to develop a prototype for the NCCMS. LSP delivered, installed and configured a Microsoft SharePoint server at the COR, which would be used as a platform for the COR's Intranet. The NCCMS was scheduled to be one of the first applications installed on the internal network.

A workshop on how to effectively conduct public hearings was held for the RGAC. The workshop was developed in consultation with the Committee and was also offered to provincial office staff. The topics covered included reading and analyzing the national budget, identifying and mitigating conflict in budget implementation, establishing reporting mechanisms for the COR provincial offices, and developing a working relationship with the BSA and the Finance Committee.

LSP provided legal and civic resource libraries in each Iraqi provincial office, with more than 750 media resources covering in excess of 35 critical topics. Additionally, LSP aided the COR POD in producing promotional materials advertising the services of COR PO to the Iraqi public and newly elected Members

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of Parliament. LSP also produced and delivered two courses aimed towards educating newly elected Members of Parliament on the effective use of COR POs and constituent outreach.

<b>Select LSP deliverables in support of improved COR outreach and constituency services</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Delivery Date</b>
Manual on Field Visits	A guide for Members of Parliament and staff on organizing and executing effective field visits. Focus is on identifying an issue for investigation and the appropriate methodology and approaches to guide participants toward an effective field visit with emphasis placed on oversight.	09/11
Design and Specifications of a Model Provincial Office	Developed in collaboration with the COR's Provincial Offices Directorate, the paper outlines the requirements for an effective and fully functional provincial offices which supports the PO's mandate. The document is designed to assist COR PO stakeholders with practical suggestions to aid in the development of the POs. while guiding staff in utilizing technology to effectively aid members of Parliament (MPs) and their constituents.	12/11
Journalism Training Curriculum	Curriculum developed specifically to assist journalists assigned to report on the COR. The objective was to assist in building a culture of parliamentary reporting amongst Iraqi journalists.	02/10
Comparative Analysis of Parliamentary Press Galleries	The document examines the role and function of parliamentary press galleries in various legislatures. Using examples from Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, Australia and the United States, this paper highlights various understandings of press galleries, their membership and governance practices, and their facilities and activities. It was designed to foster greater consideration within the COR of the potential for the establishment of a comparable parliamentary press gallery.	02/10

Select LSP deliverables in support of improved COR outreach and constituency services	Description	Delivery Date
COR Communications Plan	Developed in collaboration with the COR Media Directorate, this communications strategy aims to stimulate active involvement and participation among stakeholders and to inform them about the objectives, activities and progress in the COR, especially as it continues to evolve and reform itself. This strategy covers four years and corresponds with the period following Iraq's parliamentary elections (2010 – 2014).	08/10

## IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

Communication and cooperation among POs' stakeholders is close to nonexistent and the management protocol, although agreed upon, is not reflected in practice. There are no regular management meetings or discussions between different management authorities. The POs operate in a strategic vacuum and their activities are overwhelmingly reactive. The absence of strategic direction has persisted largely because of the inactivity of COR committees, in advance of and following the 2010 elections.

Additionally, internal rivalries within the COR secretariat have generated confusion and negative competition between management authorities. This confusion and competition limited the POs ability to grow in the right direction and effectively serve MPs, citizens, and the institution of parliament. PO staff persons are expected to act on conflicting instructions from their respective administrative and technical management authorities. These conflicting directives emanate from their local office management team, the POD, and COR committees, all of which have differing priorities and conflicting agendas. The POs cadre's position is further complicated and effectiveness hampered by conflicts between the COR's administrative management and COR committees.

For example, LSP provided technical assistance to the IT Directorate to enable the hosting of the NCCMS on the COR's servers, held numerous consultative sessions with all stakeholders, wrote a feasibility study for the system, built a prototype of the system and presented it to all stakeholders, and finally, built the NCCMS. During the process LSP consulted with the COR DG of Parliamentary Affairs, the COR IT DG, the Director of the POD, and the COR Complaints and RGAC to agree on a work-flow process for the NCCMS and citizens' complaints originating in COR POs. However, LSP's efforts to develop the NCCMS were stalled due to discrepancies between the Complaints Committee and the Parliamentary Affairs Directorate's understandings of the work-flow process and definitions of decision-making authorities of the complaint resolution lifecycle guiding the NCCMS' processes. A second hurdle in the development of the NCCMS was presented by the elimination of the COR's Complaints Committee several months following the parliamentary elections. It was later unofficially announced within the COR that an independent administrative unit would be created and tasked with managing constituents' complaints. LSP moved quickly to address these two obstacles by securing the political support needed to

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move forward with implementing the NCCMS through the support of the Speaker's Political Advisor, as well as undertaking steps to redesign the system. Further implementation of the system is now dependent on the will of the COR's IT DG to activate and manage the system.

LSP was successful in conducting a human resources functional review of the POD and won the approval of the MAPDC to administer a survey to all MPs, designed to elicit MP perceptions of POs' structure, mandate, and efficacy. LSP and the MAPDC planned to use the survey's data in a strategic planning workshop for POs' stakeholders. These LSP led consultative sessions; MPs' survey and the strategic planning workshop were all intended to reshape the POs' mandate and structure. These plans were underway at the time of the MOU cancellation.

## LESSONS LEARNED

Each PO faces unique challenges given its geography and local security situation. Each office has its own way of 'doing things' and there is no standardized approach for the provision of service or outreach to citizens. With few common internal processes, the wide variances in staff skills, abilities and understanding of their role is visible and frustrates the effectiveness of the PO to initiative, carry-out or to provide timely advice to citizens and even share that information with elected officials in the COR.



In several training sessions hosted by LSP, a number of other ongoing issues were identified: Most COR POs have little security protection, which is problematic because it means POs cannot host MPs, conduct public meetings or even encourage citizens to congregate at the POs. This limits the access of citizens to the offices. While the Manager and the Secretary of the PO's are permanent employees of the COR, the rest of the staff are not 'permanent' employees and are employed under temporary contracts. Such contracts means fewer benefits and entitlements than those granted to permanent COR staff in Baghdad, diminishing staff morale with the qualified staff within the POs. Moreover, an inherent lack of job security combined with fewer benefits has result in higher than normal turnover for supposedly safe government jobs and thus new openings are unappealing for educated Iraqis, which leaves the POs with a diminished pool of talented staff from which to choose. PO staff have also commented that they are grossly disconnected with colleagues in other offices and within the COR in Baghdad. In fact, many staff had only interacted with other PO staff when they were gathered for LSP training. This lack of connection is exacerbated by limited inter-office and Baghdad connectivity vis-à-vis technology since no video-conferencing, land lines and some cases even internet exists.

Few MPs have visited the "inside" of a PO and while some offices have helped host events in the respective province at alternative locations most MPs refuse to go to the POs citing security concerns, a

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lack of trust in PO staff and a lack of attachment to the offices, as they were elected by list and do not feel the need to do ‘constituency work’ for electoral or outreach purposes.

Lastly, few Iraqi citizens, governmental departments, agencies, ministries, and local authorities know of the existence of the POs and/or what their official role is supposed to be. When POs contact the government of Iraq (GOI) to help or advocate for a citizen, their correspondence and/or calls often go unanswered, which exacerbates the view of average Iraqis that the COR does not serve their needs. No organized awareness campaign has ever been initiated to educate other branches of the GOI as to the fact that these offices even exist or are front-line access. At the time of the dissolution of the MOU, LSP had begun collaborating with the Provincial Affairs Directorate on the development of a broad communications strategy to assist in promoting the offices.



## SUCCESS STORY

### USAID/LSP Assists in Bringing the National Government to Iraqi Communities

USAID is working to enlighten and support the Provincial Managers to assume their jobs in the provinces.



*Staff posing with LSP trainers at the end of the session.*



*Roundtable meeting with LSP staff to discuss the challenges of offering outreach services to MP's.*

In the last two years, the Iraqi Council of Representatives (CoR) has been working to expand its presence outside of Baghdad by bringing the national government closer to Iraqis by opening 11 parliamentary outreach offices located throughout the country.

Parliamentary Outreach Offices assist in linking Parliamentarians to their constituencies, while providing Iraqi citizens with access to their government. This promotes citizen's access to services or their ability to obtain government assistance. Parliamentary Outreach Offices have rapidly mobilized throughout the country, but personnel require training and support to assist them in conducting their important outreach work.

In April 2009, LSP, along with the Provincial Offices Department (POD) of the CoR brought together 11 directors of the various offices for an intense week long training session. Attendees participated in 40 hours of training focused on Strategic Planning, Modern Management, and Report Writing. LSP senior staff also held a round-table discussion with the staff to better understand their concerns and needs as LSP continues its work with the CoR in developing a strategic plan to guide constituency outreach through these offices.

Mr. Juma Abbas, the Duhok Province Office Director stated that he planned to implement changes, based on what he learned from his fellow Office Directors, as soon as he returned to his office.

This session was the first time that all of the Directors had been able to interact and learn from each other's experiences. The Director of the Provincial Offices Unit, Mr. Abdul Allah Hussain, was pleased he was finally able to bring his Directors together in shared trainings.

The variety of services and resources available in each office varies greatly based upon the security situation and the time the office has had to develop. Sharing experiences and ideas for the first time was a critical part of the success of the weeklong event.

LSP will continue its engagement with the CoR's Provincial Offices in an effort to promote increased Parliamentarian outreach to Iraqis while assisting citizens to access their government from their own communities.



## SUCCESS STORY

### LSP Shapes Iraq's Emerging Media Culture

LSP uses a workshop for journalists to demonstrate the proper role of the press in a democratic system



*Halla Nasser of the Al-Sabah newspaper learns about the distinction between reporting and advocacy*



*Zakia Esmail Haky, a member of the Human Rights Committee, agreed to an on-the-record interview to help develop the skills of Iraqi journalists covering the COR*

Increasingly, the Iraqi people are able to hold their government accountable through the democratic process. The Iraqi media has a critical role to play; the people cannot judge their government if they are not aware of its actions. But in Iraq, where there were no press freedoms before 2003, the media has yet to settle into its proper position within the democratic process.

Recognizing that an effective media establishment can compel Iraq's Council of Representatives (COR) to become more responsive to the public, USAID's Iraq Legislative Strengthening Program (LSP) is working to assist journalists who routinely cover parliament. A three-day workshop held in June 2009 for reporters covering the COR raised awareness about the importance of independence and objectivity when reporting on the affairs of parliament.

The immediate aim of the workshop was to improve the effectiveness of journalists as they interview members of parliament. But the indirect consequence of the workshop was far more important. By including journalists from outlets of all different ethnic and sectarian backgrounds with perspectives that varied from religiously conservative to secular, the workshop encouraged the participants to identify as *journalists*, rather than as mouthpieces for a particular perspective. The specific practice of interviewing members of parliament was used to increase the journalists' understanding of the critical role of media in a democratic society. While the media is expected to hold decision makers accountable, it must do so indirectly, by reporting the facts and allowing the public to respond; it is not the role of a journalist to aggressively confront politicians.

Over the course of the workshop, the journalists came to understand the distinction. Reporter Hiba Mohammed Malik of Iraq Republican Radio explains, "I have always struggled to interview parliamentarians. I oscillated between being too deferential and being too combative. This workshop showed me how to interview MPs rigorously but respectfully. I recognize that the public will be best able to hold politicians accountable if I encourage the MP to respond clearly to his critics, whose views I must also report." By cultivating a culture of balanced, objective journalism, LSP will help the Iraqi people hold their representatives responsible for their performance. This will in turn encourage the COR to increase its effectiveness.

## Objective 6: Improved Donor Coordination and COR Development Planning

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### BACKGROUND

By 2008, COR leadership had developed distinct sensitivities regarding development assistance and the role of international donors in the parliament. Cynicism regarding the ability of donors to deliver on promises of assistance was particularly high. Moreover, several parliamentary development programs had, at one point or another, managed to alienate the COR leadership – either by overstepping their mandate, overlapping with other donor programs or by interfering with COR function.

COR leadership was no longer comfortable in its former role as the willing recipient of donor largesse. Donors were not consulting the COR regarding program design, and the COR found this lack of oversight understandably objectionable. Although many donors soon become more sophisticated in delivering assistance, there remained a tendency to promote a model of parliamentary function that was predictably similar to that practiced in the parliament of the donor nation in question. It would soon become clear to program implementers that the COR leadership would no longer tolerate having donor ideology foisted upon it and that sensitivities regarding sovereignty would now have to be respected.

While the COR still needed donor coordination, efforts to develop or enforce strict boundaries of endeavor among donors was not encouraged. Instead, the COR was now insisting on an increased role in programmatic oversight of donor activities. The MAPDC had a mandate to oversee parliamentary development and it began exercising a degree of political will to be seen as improving the lot of MPs as well as the institution's function.

It was clear to LSP that MAPDC buy-in was going to be essential for donor coordination and other program activities to succeed. The committee needed access to more information about donor activities, and it wanted greater oversight in the development of a medium-term institutional development plan. While promoting greater donor coordination might be limited in its potential to actually shape the future development of the COR, a focus on giving the MAPDC a sense of ownership of LSP activities in general, and donor coordination in particular, would be a necessary prerequisite for program implementation. LSP success would require expressed deference to the MAPDC and a focus on the establishment of a relationship of trust and confidence between LSP and the MAPDC.

It was thought that COR engagement in medium-term planning might also be useful in helping the COR to assert a more active and constructive role in donor coordination issues. While the COR knew it needed to have more control over development programming, it showed a distinct lack of understanding about how donor assistance programs and donors worked with parliamentary partners. While a number of committees had been assessed by donors and participated in donor-funded programs, parliament had not yet played an active role in the coordination of donor assistance to the institution.

In the absence of a COR-owned mechanism for managing and monitoring parliamentary assistance, there was a risk that COR concerns about the delivery of external assistance to parliament would grow. While the COR continued to evolve, this tended to happen by fiat announced by leadership, rather than as a

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result of a deliberative and inclusive medium- to long-term planning process. By encouraging COR ownership over the medium- to long-term development of the institution, it was conceivable that parliamentary development issues could bridge partisan and sectarian divides.

While building the capacity of the MAPDC to play a larger role in coordinating COR assistance would be important, it was equally important that LSP not be perceived as appointing itself to coordinate other donors. Working cooperatively with a broad spectrum of donors would be critical.

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RESULTS ACHIEVED**

From the program's inception, LSP assisted the COR to coordinate donor activities so as to reduce the potential for program duplication and donor inefficiency. LSP helped the COR establish and maintain a donor database, prepared a donor guide and established a donor liaison office in the COR. LSP also assisted the MAPDC to organize and hold donor coordination meetings, enabling the COR to identify its assistance needs.

LSP also produced an online guide for the COR's website called 'Links for Parliamentary Resources' which enabled parliamentarians to access information about donor funding and alternative program designs in parliamentary support.

In January 2009, the MAPDC held its first donor coordination meeting. This was a significant step toward identifying and setting its development goals, and coordinating donor efforts to meet these goals. At the time, the committee announced its intention to hold such meetings regularly and expressed its desire to deepen relations with the donor community through a series of briefings to be held between the chair and individual donors.

The following month, the MAPDC did hold another donors meeting, which was attended by representatives of various embassies and donor organizations. Committee Chair Hussam al Azawi affirmed the committee's goal of coordinating donor activities based on the COR's long-term development needs. He urged donors to actively participate in determining these needs so that donor funds would not be wasted in program duplication. Iraqi local media covered the event.

At the start of the second quarter of 2009, in anticipation of the upcoming parliamentary elections (then scheduled for late 2009) LSP began to solidify a transition plan with COR leadership. The plan included an orientation program for newly elected MPs, which would later become the foundation of the LSP MPDP.

LSP continued its outreach efforts with international donors in an attempt to organize support for the transitioning parliament during the pre and post election period. However, in May 2009, it was announced that the parliamentary elections would be postponed until January 2010.

Signaling an apparent commitment to donor coordination, in July 2009, COR Speaker Iyad Samarraï appointed a donor coordinator – Dr. Ali Ahmed Al Alwani – who met with international donors and, like those before him, emphasized the importance of developing a strategic plan that would define

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the COR's development needs and coordinate donor activities. Unfortunately these plans did not materialize.

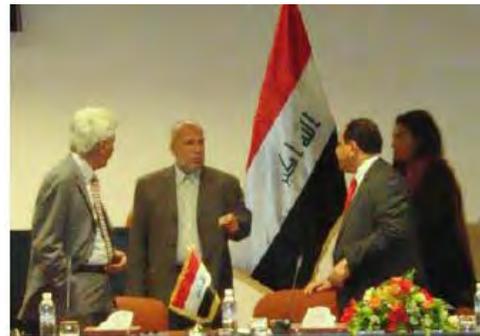
Parliamentary elections were not, in fact, held until March 7, 2010. Unfortunately, the formation of a new government would take an additional nine months, during which time donors were, for the most part, inactive. LSP used this time to provide capacity building workshops for COR staff. During this period USAID/Iraq's Democracy and Governance Office set up a meeting with the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor to coordinate efforts in the area of Legislative Strengthening. Representatives from LSP, the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI) were present.

LSP also met with representatives from the United States Treasury Office of Technical Assistance to discuss its plans to provide assistance to the COR's Finance Committee in cooperation with Britain's Department of International Development.

By September 2010, donors were eager to provide support to the COR, but a government had yet to be formed. Without a focal point for donor coordination within the COR, and in the face of obvious reticence on the part of the SG to actively pursue donor coordination, any momentum left over from the previous parliament's outreach activities had dissipated.

Upon the formation of a new government in November 2010, LSP met with Dr. Hannan Al Fatlawi, the Chair of the MAPDC, to discuss donor coordination. It was agreed that the COR would host a donor event upon completion of an internal review of donor activities it was conducting. But as the new Parliament matured, it began to exhibit a reticence to accept donor funds. This did not, however, obviate the need for donor coordination, and LSP continued to host coordination meetings to share information on COR development activities.

LSP persisted to hold meetings with several directorates and COR committees to highlight the importance of organizing donor activities and formulating an overall parliamentary development strategy. LSP even developed a donors' coordination webpage to be included on the COR's website and proposed it to the Media Directorates' DG. Several meetings were also held with the MAPDC to attempt to reestablish it as the focal point of donors' coordination.



*International donors discuss coordination with the COR leadership.*

By 2011, it became clear that the COR would oppose any outside attempts at formal donor coordination. However, at USAID's request, LSP met with NDI representatives in an attempt to address issues pertaining to programmatic overlap, in which both organizations found themselves offering the same workshops to the same COR committees at approximately the same time. USAID representatives and those of the State Department's Office of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor – which funds NDI's activities in the COR – attended the meeting at which representatives of the two programs agreed to exchange work plans in an attempt to avoid any further duplication of efforts. By September it was

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obvious that the COR was in fact promoting the competition. Further attempts to coordinate schedules, such as a significant Open House event for MPs and CSOs were obviated by the cancellation of LSP's MOU with the COR soon thereafter.

Select LSP Deliverable in support of improved donor coordination	Description	Delivery Date
Webpage on COR website on international donor coordination	LSP worked closely with the DG of the Media Directorate to develop a website which would outline the activities of the international donor community and assist in coordinating activities in support of the COR, including a calendar of events and a list of useful resources. The design received the approval of the DG.	03/11

### LESSONS LEARNED

Throughout the project donor coordination, led by the COR but facilitated by LSP, remained an on-going challenge. A sense of development competitiveness within the donor community was not conducive to building a culture of cooperation and openness among donors. Part of this stemmed from the high expectations placed by funders on implementing partners to deliver tangible results within the parliament. This was exacerbated by a parliamentary leadership which, given the political dynamics within the institution and the constant maneuvering to expand or secure power bases, failed to commit seriously to a program of coordination and long term, planned institutional development. The COR leadership never clearly identified an effective focal point for coordination within the institution, while the donor community further complicated this situation by using various and inconsistent entry points for their own programming. LSP was able to build a coalition among select donors to assist in the initial implementation of the Members Professional Development Program, and remained optimistic that coordinated activities could be undertaken in the future. At the time of the cancelation of the MOU, LSP was working closely with NDI on a planned Civil Society Open House Event.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

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The Iraq Legislative Strengthening Program raises a number of issues with respect to future programming in the area of legislative strengthening, with specific implications for post-conflict parliaments. In the case of the COR, the question of receptivity emerges, tempered by the institutions ability to absorb and sustain reform. Ultimately, the institutions internal politics remained the greatest mitigating factor to ensuring legitimate, long-term institutional development. There are several issues to highlight:

### SCOPE OF PROGRAM

LSP represented an ambitious effort to strengthen Iraq's parliament by supporting increased transparency and accountability in the legislative process, staff development and widespread institutional reform. It remains uncertain whether the political environment existing in the COR was predisposed to the scope and breadth of the program's objectives. Iraq is in a relatively recent post-conflict period, and tension and distrust remains strong across political and sectarian lines. This reality translated into a deep politicization of the institution itself, and in many ways was the single largest impediment to program implementation. Sectarian balance and political affiliation were the constant filters which influenced LSP programming. This is not a political reality unique to Iraq, but its consequences for legislative strengthening in similar environments must be considered.

*Recommendation:* Targeted, clearly defined and incrementally administered legislative strengthening programs will allow for a rapid change in focus resulting from the complex political dynamics inherent in a post-conflict environment. This approach also enables the program to build a solid base of knowledge which can be measured and augmented through follow on programming. Annex C outlines potential revisions to LSP, developed in response to the COR's increasing lack of collaboration by mid-2011.

### FOCAL POINTS

In its first year, LSP worked almost exclusively with the Members Affairs and Parliamentary Development Committee, but in doing so, found it risked becoming captive to the political agenda of the Committee's Chair and advisors. In working with the MAPDC, LSP risked alienating the COR Secretariat, and when the program sought to broaden its focal points, by establishing a working relationship with the Secretary General and Directors General, certain political actors, including the Presidency Council, felt less than fully engaged in LSP programming. LSP was able to advance its programming and implement reforms due to the support of a committed and change-oriented Secretary General. However, given the institutions internal politics, and the designation of many positions based on sectarianism and political affiliation, the SG was subsequently replaced by an individual less inclined to support his predecessor's vision for the parliament's development. In losing its primary advocate and proponent, LSPs programming influence diminished.

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*Recommendation:* Develop a range of focal points in order to draw a broad constituency of support while reducing dependence on a single point of contact, which could compromise the program's future activities.

### **INSTITUTIONAL RECEPTIVITY TO CHANGE**

It was noted during program implementation that not all Director Generals embraced reform and institutional development. Some viewed it as a threat to their positions, while others saw a potential for a reduced power base. As a relatively new institution with an ever changing power base, reform was often seen through a lens of distrust or lack of understanding. Consensus-building is not easily achieved in the context of the COR, and commitment to change, modernization or reform is uneven.

*Recommendation:* Identify and work with consistent, credible agents of change in order to demonstrate the value of institutional reform. Ideally a program will work toward the establishment of a “multiplier effect” whereby the positive outcomes to reform outweigh hesitancy and encourage greater participation in the development process.

### **INVESTMENTS IN IT**

There is an inherent risk in making substantial investments in IT projects designed to support parliamentary process. In the case of the COR, there was strong interest in state of the art technology; however, neither the building's infrastructure nor the COR's IT experts were able to offer the requisite support to ensure that systems would function to their full capacity. This was further hampered the unwillingness on the part of the IT Directorate to assume full responsibility for IT products or systems for fear that they would be held responsible for any malfunction or failures. An electronic voting system, installed several years ago by a donor remains unused. LSP worked closely with the DGs of the Parliamentary Affairs Directorate and the IT Directorate on the development of a legislative tracking system which would explicitly meet the needs identified by the COR. The program remains hopeful that this collaboration has provided the COR with a sense of ownership, and that the system will be utilized in the future.

*Recommendation:* Recognize that investments in large-scale IT projects in emerging parliaments may be premature. Smaller investments may mitigate risk and add greater value – such as networking – as opposed to state-of-the-art systems which are beyond the legislature's current development capacity. Full consideration must be given to the political context of the system. As an example, many MPs in the COR opposed an electronic voting system because they did not want people to know how they voted on a particularly contentious issue. Non-use of a system can also be easily translated as a programmatic failure by the recipient parliament, which can cast a negative conclusion on a program's entire range of technical supports.

### **STUDY MISSIONS**

The issue of LSP-sponsored study missions remained contentious throughout the duration of the program. USAID/Iraq, as policy, did not support provisions to have MPs or parliamentary staff travel outside of the country for training and workshops. The Presidency Council, equally, had

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expressed concerns with having MPs outside of the country while parliament was in session. LSP received continual requests from Members and staff for visits to foreign parliaments, exchanges or workshops held abroad, with emphasis on observing best practices. LSP was unable to honor these requests, and this placed the program at a competitive disadvantage with other donors, who were able to offer study tours. Unfortunately, within the COR, “effective” training was often viewed as “training held abroad” and this worked to LSP’s disadvantage. The program was constantly reminded by MPs and COR officials that a study mission would engender tremendous good will on the part of participants.

*Recommendation:* A well-structured study mission, with identified objectives and goals can be an important component of a legislative strengthening program. It provides an opportunity for participants to gain first-hand knowledge of international best practices, enables participants to build relationships with colleagues (of particular significance within the COR given sectarian and political divisions), deepens relationships with the implementing partner and provides a focused and uninterrupted environment for learning.

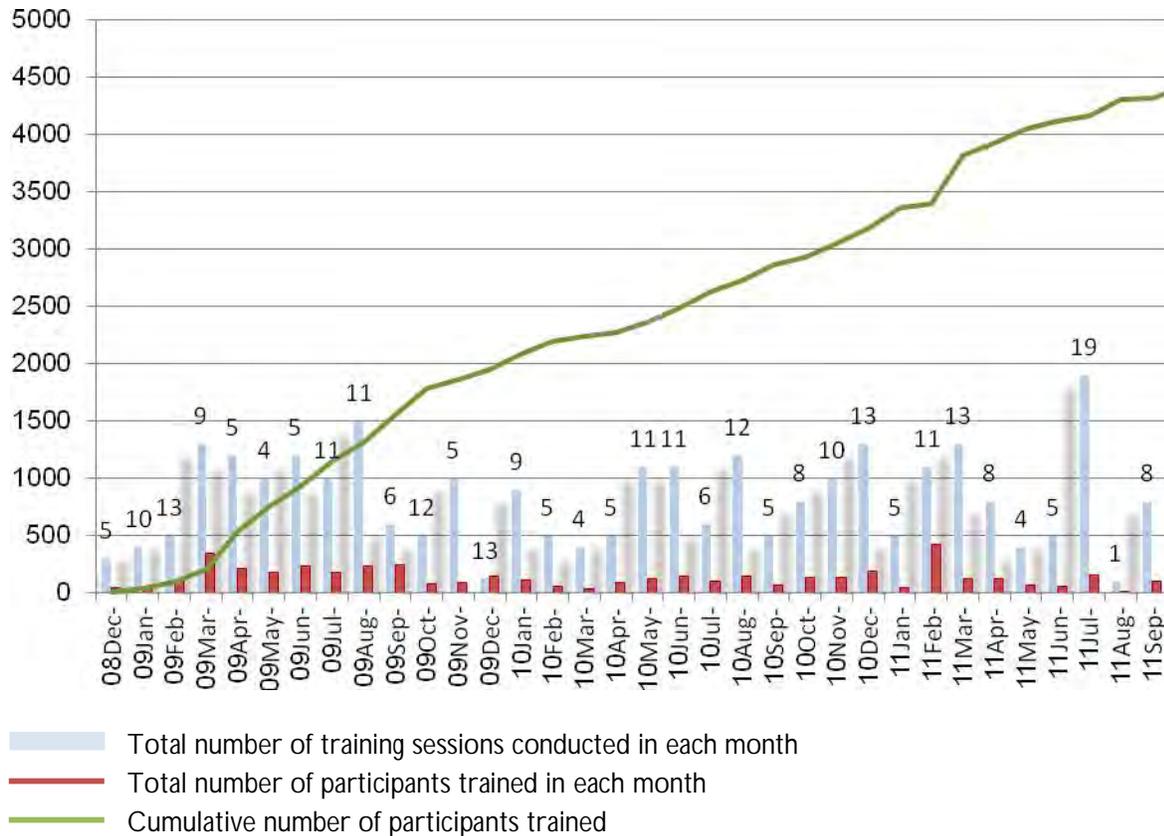
**BRANDING**

The political environment in Iraq, particularly in the lead up to and following the country’s second parliamentary elections was characterized by a growing anti-American sentiment. This was particularly true as discussion between the US and Iraq focused on the country’s movement toward increased sovereignty. Against this backdrop, an anti-US attitude gained force within the COR, and hardened with the election of 40 Sadrist MPs who held the balance of power within the governing coalition as well as the powerful position of 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Speaker within the parliament. LSP expressed concern that USAID-branding was impeding program implementation due to the political sentiments which escalated within the COR. USAID was cognizant that branding had become problematic; however, LSP did not exercise a request for a branding and marking waiver, which may well have mitigated what had emerged as an impediment to program implementation.

*Recommendation:* In specific political contexts, such as Iraq, USAID branding must be subject to flexible and at times discreet usage. Some circumstances may require branding to be limited strictly to a program name. LSP was frequently informed by a range of individuals including MPs, COR staff and the program’s own national employees that the program was being adversely affected by USAID branding. In such circumstances, an implementer should exercise a request for a branding waiver as a means of ensuring the continuation of programmatic activities.

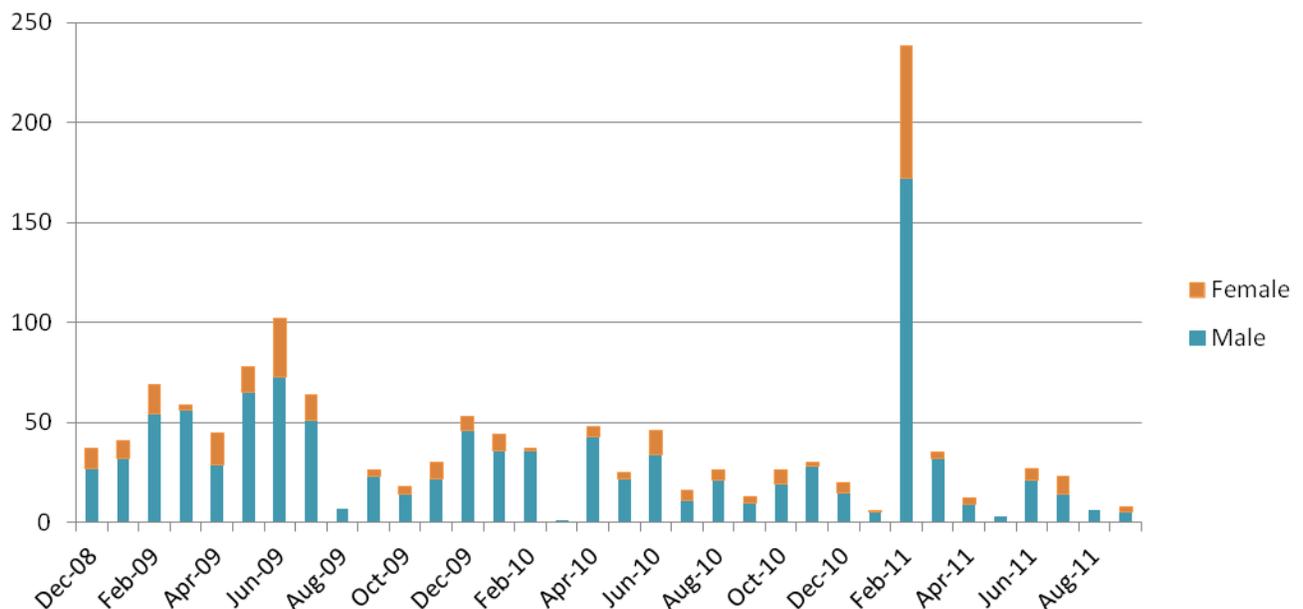
## Annex A: Training Statistics

### LSP TRAINING STATISTICS FOR YEARS 1-3



### MALE/FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN TRAINING EVENTS

Number of 'unique' trainees disaggregated by gender



## Annex B: Training Courses Provided

### Training Courses Provided by LSP in Years 1 - 3

Budgeting, Budget Oversight, Finance and Accounting	ICT and Office Automation
<p><i>Analyzing and Preparing the Budget</i></p> <p><i>Analyzing Board of Supreme Audit Reports</i></p> <p><i>Analyzing the Investment Budget from an Economic Perspective</i></p> <p><i>Budget Best Practices</i></p> <p><i>Budget Preparation and Execution</i></p> <p><i>Budget Preparation in Iraq, USA and Elsewhere</i></p> <p><i>Congressional Budget Office Tasks and Reports</i></p> <p><i>Evaluating the Cost of Legislation</i></p> <p><i>The National Federal Budget</i></p> <p><i>Financial Analysis in Budget Execution</i></p> <p><i>Government of Iraq Budget Violations</i></p> <p><i>Government Accounting</i></p> <p><i>Government Budgeting</i></p> <p><i>Implementing the Capital Budget</i></p> <p><i>Insight to Budget Oversight</i></p> <p><i>Roundtable: Getting to Know about Budgets and Oversight</i></p> <p><i>Measuring the Efficiency of Budget Performance</i></p> <p><i>Measuring the Efficiency of Federal Budget Execution</i></p> <p><i>Mid-Year Ministry of Interior Budget Review</i></p> <p><i>Operational Budget: Regarding the Government Expenses</i></p> <p><i>Presenting Financial Information in Executive Reports</i></p> <p><i>Principles of the Government Accounting Cycle</i></p> <p><i>Review of Ministry of Education's Budget Training</i></p> <p><i>Seminar on International Accounting Standards</i></p> <p><i>Supreme Audit Institutions: What and Why?</i></p> <p><i>The Impact of Important Changes on Budget Preparation</i></p> <p><i>National Budget Process</i></p>	<p><i>Basics of IT Networking</i></p> <p><i>Excel 2007 Basic and Intermediate Skills</i></p> <p><i>Internet for Beginners</i></p> <p><i>Power Point (Basic)</i></p> <p><i>Special Training on Microsoft Office System</i></p> <p><i>Visual Basic 6.0 (Basic)</i></p> <p><i>Windows XP (Basic)</i></p> <p><i>Word 2007 Basic and Intermediate Skills</i></p> <p><i>Use of MS Word in Writing Reports</i></p>
	<p><b>Press and Media Relations</b></p> <p><i>Journalism (Press) Training</i></p> <p><i>How to Cover a Public Hearing</i></p> <p><i>Media Relations</i></p> <p><i>How to Conduct Press Conferences</i></p> <p><i>TV Production Training</i></p> <p><i>Voter-Oriented Election Coverage</i></p>



## Training Courses Provided by LSP in Years 1 - 3

Parliamentary Topics	General Topics
<i>The Role of Banks in Funding Small and Medium Enterprises</i>	<i>The Art of Negotiation</i>
<i>Best Practices of Parliamentary Process</i>	<i>Communication and Leadership Skills</i>
<i>Capacity Building for Provincial Office Staff</i>	<i>Communication Skills</i>
<i>Code of Conduct for COR Staff</i>	<i>Conflict Management</i>
<i>Code of Conduct for Parliamentary Staff in Provincial Offices</i>	<i>Crisis Management</i>
<i>Committee Operations</i>	<i>Developing Relationship between COR/Government and Private Banks Sector</i>
<i>Consultative Training Roundtable on the Legislative Drafting Process</i>	<i>Employee Rights and Duties</i>
<i>Council of Representatives Outreach</i>	<i>Ethics and Transparency</i>
<i>Establishing a Vision</i>	<i>Event Planning Process</i>
<i>Financial Management Law (FML)</i>	<i>Training Needs Analysis Focus Group Workshop</i>
<i>Comparison between the Financial Management Law and Principles of the 1940 Accounting Law</i>	<i>Gross Domestic Product</i>
<i>Fiscal and Monetary Policy</i>	<i>Human Resources Management</i>
<i>Government Financial Statistics System</i>	<i>Human Rights</i>
<i>How to Conduct a Public Hearing</i>	<i>Internal Communication</i>
<i>How to Host a Public Hearing</i>	<i>Investment Project Planning</i>
<i>Comparative Parliamentary Systems</i>	<i>Leadership Skills</i>
<i>Introduction to Dealing with Constituents</i>	<i>Measuring Success versus Failure</i>
<i>Legislation Drafting Process (Current Practices)</i>	<i>Writing Minutes</i>
<i>Making Legislation Practical and Effective</i>	<i>Modern Management</i>
<i>Parliamentary Oversight Training</i>	<i>Preparation of Legislative Financial Newsletters: the 'News You Can Use' Newsletter</i>
<i>Parliamentary Process</i>	<i>Organizational Development</i>
<i>Program Management with Ministry of Interior</i>	<i>Office Management</i>
<i>Fiscal Federalism Training</i>	<i>Office Protocol</i>
<i>Public Hearing Sessions and Legislative Reports</i>	<i>Performance-based Auditing</i>
<i>Rules of Procedure</i>	<i>Report Writing</i>
<i>Political Economy</i>	<i>Reporting to Decision Makers</i>
<i>Public Hearing and Consultation</i>	<i>Results of the Annual Financial Activity</i>
<i>Constituency Outreach</i>	<i>Rules for Implementing Ministry of Interior Contracts</i>
<i>Parliamentary Oversight/ Concept and Performance</i>	<i>State Employees Discipline Law</i>
<i>Interview Skills for Print and Broadcast Media</i>	<i>Strategic Planning</i>
<i>Fiscal Analysis</i>	<i>Strategic Planning Retreat</i>
<i>Human Rights Conventions and Agreements</i>	<i>The Art and Craft of Interviews</i>
<i>Parliamentary Oversight Development</i>	<i>Time Management</i>
	<i>Training on Various Types of Contracts</i>
	<i>Job Analysis and Performance Evaluation</i>

## **Annex C: Recommendations for LSP Program Refinement – October 2011**

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It is anticipated that a recently completed evaluation of the Iraq Legislative Program (LSP) will make a number of significant recommendations with respect to the program's methodology and implementation strategy. The program was originally designed in 2008 – and since this time the Iraqi Council of Representatives (COR) has experienced a substantial turnover of Members of Parliament (MP) following the 2010 elections, has had three Speakers and two new members of the three member Presidency Council, has seen an experienced, reform-minded Secretary General (SG) replaced for largely political reasons, and importantly, has witnessed a growing sentiment of non-cooperation with USAID. This has been entrenched by a Sadrist bloc who, following the 2010 election holds the balance of power in the current governing coalition and maintains the position of 1<sup>st</sup> Deputy Speaker within the COR.

Despite these challenges, LSP maintains a strong constituency of support within the COR. The Parliament's committees have emerged as strong advocates of LSP programming, with demand-driven requests for technical assistance covering a range of activities. In addition, specific parliamentary directorates, led by reform-minded Director Generals (DG), continue to seek out LSP assistance. LSP has also focused on establishing and maintaining strong working relationships with the Office of the Speaker, whose advisors have been receptive to LSP's technical support.

This paper has been prepared at the request of USAID Iraq. It outlines a suggested redirection of current LSP programming in order to enhance effectiveness and impact. It recognizes the success of current initiatives and outlines a strategy to deepen these programmatic activities. Importantly, it recommends a refocusing of LSP on targeted, demand-driven technical support, directed at those structures within the parliament receptive to technical support and which demonstrate a commitment to change. LSP's primary objective remains unchanged: to support the COR's institutional development and its capacity to meet the primary functions of a legislature in conducting oversight, promoting transparency and passing legislation subject to informed scrutiny.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

*Limiting Activities with the COR Secretariat.* Despite a sustained LSP development strategy, the Institutional Development Management Initiative (IDMI) which has provided focused, intense support to the COR's directorates since the program's inception, the lack of political will to embrace change and institutionalize human resource, management and organizational improvements has resulted in limited application of new techniques and practices. DGs have demonstrated uneven commitment to embrace change and in some cases are clearly opposed to any initiatives which may be interpreted as usurping their authorities. The program's champion – the former COR Secretary General was recently replaced, and the current SG has not demonstrated a solid commitment to institutional reform. The European Union (EU) will soon begin implementing its own program of technical support targeting DGs. LSP recognizes this as an opportunity to refocus and limit interventions to those which are demand-driven by DGs. It is recommended, however, that LSP remain deeply engaged with the Parliamentary Affairs Directorate, as this will support programming directed at improvements in the COR's legislative process.

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*Shift the balance of technical support to the COR's parliamentary committees.* The COR's parliamentary committees have emerged as important focal points for LSP activities with demand-driven requests for technical assistance. It is recommended that LSP programming focus almost exclusively on committee development. Committees provide the program with a bridge between professional staff (i.e., committee advisors) and Members of Parliament. They enable LSP to work across political blocs and provide opportunity for the program to develop MPs' skills as legislators, applicable beyond their committee work. By continuing to work directly with the DG of the Parliamentary Affairs Directorate, LSP can continue a range of programming to support MP and staff development under the auspices of their committee membership, including technical support to the Rules of Procedure, Legislative Drafting and policy analysis.

*Reconfigure LSP staffing to deliver enhanced support to Committees.* It would be necessary to increase the complement of LSP's existing team in order to expand our support among the COR's 26 parliamentary committees. A mechanism to prioritize support will be developed in collaboration with the DG of Parliamentary Affairs and the Members Affairs and Parliamentary Development Committee. This may include former legislators or political staff. It is recognized that some committees, chaired by Sadrists, will not work with LSP. In our experience, however, this does not preclude individual committee members from seeking out and participating in our programming.

Maintain and strengthen political capital with the Office of the Speaker and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Deputy Speaker. Design and implement tailored capacity building programs responding to their identified needs.

*Mitigate DG blockage of LSP activities by focusing activities on the COR Parliamentary Affairs Directorate.* DGs hold their positions within the COR due to political allegiances, and in some instances, they have aligned to undermine LSP programming. This on-going challenge will be reduced by limiting LSP to one prime focal point within the COR Secretariat. Focusing on the Parliamentary Affairs Directorate would further support LSP's primary objective of strengthening the legislative process and would enable LSP to continue work with provincial offices, which fall within this directorate's mandate.

*Mitigate politically-motivated blockage of LSP activities through capacity support to Members of Parliament.* Activities designed to build MP capacity will be developed and implemented in close collaboration with the MAPDC, providing a counterbalance to attempts to limit or reduce LSP's interventions.

*Monthly Workshops held in Erbil will be a regular fixture of the program.* LSP has had significant success in holding workshops in Erbil. They provide participants with an uninterrupted learning environment, and respond to criticisms that LSP does not provide travel opportunities. We recognize that often "effective training" is perceived as training held outside of Baghdad. We recognize Erbil as providing a suitable balance to this challenge, and recommend regular monthly session in Erbil.

*Synchronize budget oversight training with full committee capacity development program.* It is recommended that budget oversight form a pillar of committee development, and that budget review and

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scrutiny oversight of ministries be provided to all committees targeted by LSP. Our budget oversight activities will continue to be a lead component of our programming.

*Reprogram IT investments to support capacity building training and workshops.* It is recommended that LSP withdraw from IT procurements, beyond its current investment in the Legislative Tracking System. The COR's commitment to IT investment remains negligible, and resistance continues with respect to supporting these systems. In addition, LSP questions the ability of the Convention Center's IT infrastructure to support these initiatives. We recommend that funding currently allocated to IT procurements, such as a proposed Hansard system, be re-profiled to support direct training, workshops and seminars.

*Rebrand the Members Professional Development Program (MPDP) as "Parliamentary Development".* Originally designed as a three-part training program for newly elected MPs, the MPDP identifier lost its intended relevance as LSP programming became subject to delays due to internal politics within the COR. There is a need now to move beyond the transactional nature of MPDP, and to instead provide a range of relevant programming, reflecting the COR's specific, expressed needs. The curriculum associated with the MPDP remains pertinent to the COR; however, it should be rebranded under the title "Parliamentary Development" which better reflects LSP's overall objective,

*Focus on building "parliamentary skills" rather than providing "training".* Training has emerged as a loaded word among parliamentarians. We need to utilize a common lexicon that responds to the member's perceptions that "training" has a negative connotation as to their current skill level and abilities. "Training" should be replaced by terminology denoting workshops, skills development, best practices, legislative knowledge and tactics for parliamentarians.

*Recognize that participants have varying skill levels and needs.* Technical support must be tailored to participants, recognizing that MPs have a range of academic and professional backgrounds requiring varying approaches to skills development. LSP must move beyond "one size fits all" training.

*Modify LSP's Apprenticeship Program and rebrand as the "Emerging Iraqi Parliamentary Professionals Initiative".* Shift the focus of recruitment from new graduates to unemployed young professionals. This responds to the COR's concerns related to the recruitment of individuals who bring limited skills and experience to the parliament.

*Modify LSP's Fellowship Program and rebrand as the "Associates Program".* This program has been strongly received by parliamentary committees, is demand-driven and has provided consistently high value to committees. It is recommended that this program be expanded, additional resources made available and a revised management structure developed, including co-chairs, to speed the programs administration. A change of name will respond to confusion as to what "fellow" means.

*Review the mandate of the Iraqi Center for Parliamentary Development.* This would be part of a larger discussion with USAID/COR leadership.

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*Modify LSP's media and outreach activities to focus on MPs.* MPs have indicated that their need for media training has not been met. There are specific demands for media instruction and interview skills for print and broadcast media. There is also interest (expressed by an advisor to the Speaker) for specialized media workshops directed at building the skills of female MPs. Gender-specific media and communications training will bring LSP to the forefront in an area that has been so far ignored.

*Explore options for study missions/observation tours.* This will need to be addressed in consultation with USAID.

## **Annex D: Outstanding Council of Representatives Requests for Technical Assistance from LSP (October 23, 2011)**

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### **COR LEGAL ADVISORS**

Continued support with future trainings (at least 1 if not 2 planned – political blocs staff and Committee Chairs have requested for Committee staff) on employment legal rights and responsibilities. We have already printed their booklet but would have to print more for future trainings and provide bags/stationary/coffee breaks. The trainings are 3 days long given by 3 legal advisors (one from Human Rights Committee and 2 from Religious Affairs) planned for November and December

Rules of Procedure discussion workshop with John Phelps (expert from Florida State Legislature) – tentatively for November

Legislative Drafting training – scheduled with Mohammed Mattar (expert from SAIS) in January 2012

### **LEGAL/ECONOMICS ADVISOR TO THE SPEAKER (MR. ADNAN)**

Completion of booklet for MPs on budget and legislative analysis – he wanted an executive summary and some additional budget material after looking at our submitted draft – finishing material for 2<sup>nd</sup> submission.

### **POLITICAL ADVISOR TO THE SPEAKER (SALAM MOHAMMED)**

Material and assistance to provide trainings for selected civil society members throughout Iraqi provinces to establish a human rights observers program similar to other countries, how to write shadow reports for the UN for various human rights reports and create a trainers program for human rights observers in the field as time progresses – meeting next week.

### **ECONOMICS ADVISOR TO THE SPEAKER (MRS. RUQAIA AHMED)**

Further material on small business loans for women in Iraq and microfinance contacts on larger financial programs for Iraq -numerous materials have already given but she wanted more material on US and Bosnia-based programs and those that offered larger loans and grant projects as well as contacts in US and Bosnia – meeting delayed as she is out of the country.

### **DR. A'LA MAKKI, CHAIR- SPECIAL MULTI-PARTY SUB-COMMITTEE ON ETHICS**

Draft Code of Conduct manual provided, review with Chair outstanding. Wide range of research and comparative materials requested by the Chair.

### **HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE**

Mutual promise to assist them with logistics and support for a public hearing on human trafficking (they have received substantial briefing information from us already on this they are using with the Committee) - hearing tentatively scheduled for December 2011.

Feedback on public hearing briefing books for MPs – material given and awaiting feedback.

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Material on disability rights in relation to the Convention on the Rights of the Disabled (some material given already).

Bosnia law on religious minorities - sent law; need follow-up with legal advisor pending.

### **WOMEN'S COMMITTEE**

Assistance with a public hearing on the Ministry of Women – we have materials copied and ready to go for them on models for Ministry of Women in other countries; we would assist with experts – Scheduled for December.

Comparative law models on crafting a single legislative proposal to encompass social insurance for women, widows, children and orphans – outstanding due to recent issues.

Budget Oversight training requested.

### **FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Outstanding request for technical assistance to conduct oversight of Foreign Affairs Ministry. Enhanced strategic planning capabilities.

### **LEGAL COMMITTEE**

Delivery of promised legal code books and Gazette library – boxed and ready to be delivered to the COR.

Assistance with written materials on federalism – some materials provided last week along with names of international experts for assistance.

Provided comprehensive list of experts on political parties. Follow up activities expected.

### **REGIONS AND GOVERNORATES**

On-going assistance with a public hearing on Law 21 – Scheduled for December, 2011.

Written material on federalism – we have material ready to send to COR; they requested names of experts for contact. Acting COP was to provide briefing on Canadian federalism to Committee Chair.

Training on human rights and citizen's rights – outstanding.

### **RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Assistance with a public hearing on religious endowments - Scheduled December, 2011

### **HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

Workshop trainings on: budget, finance and the Supreme Audit; writing a public hearing report; how to do legislative research – was scheduled for October – delayed due to recent events.

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## **CIVIL SOCIETY COMMITTEE**

The Committee for Civil Society Institutions is relying on us to organize a two-day event December 7 and 8, which will include a full day's workshop on issues pertaining to CSO interaction with the COR, and an Open House for CSO representatives and MPs. This is a first-ever event, organized in cooperation with NDI, but led by LSP. It will feature representatives from 75 civil society organizations from across the country.

## **MEMBERS AFFAIRS AND PARLIAMENTARY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (MAPDC)**

Manual for new MPs – draft provided to Committee for review and comment – awaiting final feedback.

Training on Constituency Outreach – materials ready awaiting date from Committee.

Survey prepared to determine MPs views on the effectiveness of the COR's Provincial Offices

Strategic planning workshop with COR Provincial Offices stakeholders to help guide their restructuring process.

## **ECONOMICS, INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT**

High level workshop trainings on anti-corruption (as did MAPDC)

Budget Oversight training pending.

Research assistance on development of a flexible investment law – briefings on economic policy development.

## **MEDIA WORKSHOPS**

We have been told by the Chair of the Culture and Media Committee that despite whatever letters he may receive instructing him not to deal with LSP, he fully intends to bring his MPs to Erbil for the Media Relations workshops he has requested for November 24 - 27.

## **SPEAKER'S OFFICE**

The speaker's press secretary has requested extensive guidance on diplomatic protocol as well as media training.

## **GENDER-FOCUSED MEDIA TRAINING**

A group of women MPs, lead by Ruqaiya Ahmed, the Economic Advisor to the Speaker, has requested a female-only media training as soon as possible.

## **MEDIA SKILLS DEVELOPMENT**

Other committees requesting Media Relations workshops include the CSO Committee, the Women and Children's Committee, the Education Committee and the Martyrs and Victims Committee.

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### **FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM**

LSP continues to receive solicitations from committees for research fellows to conduct selected research. Chair of Culture and Communications Committee awaiting placement.

### **APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM**

Outstanding requests from the Media Advisor of the Speaker's Office and the Office Manager of the DG for Protocol for apprentice placements.

### **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

Final training on Legistar Legislative Tracking System and official sign over to the COR remains outstanding. This represents an \$866,000 investment on the part of LSP.

## Annex E: LSP Deliverables

### DELIVERABLES STATUS

(October 2008 - March 2011)

Deliverables	Description	Planned Delivery Date	Actual Delivery Date	Next Steps	Languages
1. Initial or Basic Curriculum Plan	Contractor shall provide an initial curriculum plan for basic training to be offered to COR members and staff for USAID approval.	12/08	01/09	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
2. Intermediate Level Curriculum Plan	Contractor shall provide an intermediate level curriculum plan for the second round of training to be offered to COR members and staff for USAID approval.	6/09	06/09	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
3. Fellows/Apprentice Handbook	Contractor shall provide a handbook in Arabic, Kurdish and English describing the purpose, operations, and management and evaluation procedures for this program.	3/09	03/09	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
4. Committee Operations Manual	Contractor shall provide a handbook in Arabic, Kurdish and English documenting committee operations, rules and procedures.	9/09	09/09	COMPLETED	English and Arabic

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Deliverables	Description	Planned Delivery Date	Actual Delivery Date	Next Steps	Languages
5. Oversight Manual	Contractor shall provide a handbook in Arabic, Kurdish and English documenting oversight methods, tools and techniques based on best practices as applied to the Iraqi legal and political situation.	10/09	02/11	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
6. Concept Paper on ICPD Mission (D)	Contractor shall provide the concept paper, outlining options for the ICPD mission in Arabic, Kurdish and English.	11/09	06/10	COMPLETED	English, Arabic and Kurdish
7. Report on Physical Site Assessment of Newly Identified Location (D)	Contractor shall provide an assessment of the identified site in English and Arabic.	12/09	10/10	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
8. Case Study of ICPD Establishment (D)	Contractor shall provide a Case Study, outlining the challenges of establishing the ICPD, in English.	02/11	03/11	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
9. Human Resources Strategy	Contractor shall provide the Strategy in English. The strategy will reflect elements of the Training Needs Assessment and Training and Development Plans.	03/10	11/10	COMPLETED	English and Arabic

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Deliverables	Description	Planned Delivery Date	Actual Delivery Date	Next Steps	Languages
10. Case Study of Fellows, Apprentices, and Interns in utility and factor in change management	The contractor shall provide the Case Study in English. The document will provide an overview of the challenges which emerged in developing the program and outline the impact of the program on the COR.	01/11	03/11	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
11. HR Manual	The contractor shall provide the manual in English. The manual will be used by the COR as an information document provided to all COR employees.	03/11	03/11	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
12. Final Rules of Procedure Document	The Contractor shall provide the final document in English, Arabic and Kurdish. The document will serve as a guide for MPs and COR staff on revised Rules of Procedure.	02/10	03/11	COMPLETED <sup>1</sup>	Note to Follow
13. MP Orientation Manual	The contractor shall provide final document in English, Arabic and Kurdish. The documentation will provide essential information to newly elected MPs following the general elections of January, 2010.	02/10	03/11	COMPLETED	English and Arabic

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Deliverables	Description	Planned Delivery Date	Actual Delivery Date	Next Steps	Languages
14. Legislative Drafting & Analysis Manual	The contractor shall provide final document in English, Arabic and Kurdish. The document will assist MPs and COR in understanding the legislative development and analysis.	09/10	03/11	COMPLETED <sup>2</sup>	Note to follow
15. Committee Clerk Training Manual	The contractor shall provide final document in English, Arabic and Kurdish. The document will provide Committee Clerks with clarification and guidance in their role in Parliamentary Committees.	01/11	03/11	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
16. Comparative Guide to Budget Offices	The contractor shall provide final document in English. The study will outline the role of Budget Offices in other legislative systems.	01/10	10/10	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
17. Training Manual for Budget Office Analysts	The contractor shall provide final document in English, Arabic and Kurdish. The guide will assist Budget Office Analysts in understanding their role within the budget development process and in relation to the Parliament and MPs.	01/11	03/11	COMPLETED	English and Arabic

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Deliverables	Description	Planned Delivery Date	Actual Delivery Date	Next Steps	Languages
18. Design and Specifications of a Model Provincial Office	The contractor shall provide final document in English. The design will address the fundamental requirements of a fully functional provincial office.	12/09	03/11	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
19. COR Communications Plan	The contractor shall provide final document in English. The plan will address COR external and internal communications.	12/09	08/10	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
20. Staff Handbook for Provincial Offices	The contractor shall provide the handbook in English, Arabic and Kurdish. The guide will assist employees in discharging their responsibilities and assist them in their interaction with both MPs and citizens.	01/10	03/11	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
21. Journalism Training Curriculum	Provide curriculum in English. The curriculum will assist journalists who report on parliament in developing their skills.	01/10	02/10	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
22. Computerized Constituency Service Casework Management System	The contractor shall develop and assist the COR in implementing a computerized casework management system.	09/10	03/11	COMPLETED	English and Arabic

Deliverables	Description	Planned Delivery Date	Actual Delivery Date	Next Steps	Languages
23. Comparative analysis of parliamentary press galleries	The contractor shall provide the research paper in English. The paper will outline the role and function of a parliamentary press gallery in various legislatures.	11/09	02/10	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
24. Webpage on COR Website on donor coordination	The contractor shall provide assistance in developing a webpage outlining the activities of the international donor community in order to facilitate greater coordination of activities.	06/10	03/11	COMPLETED	English

<sup>1</sup>The Research Directorate has indicated to LSP that it will write the Rules of Procedure (ROP) itself. It did not want LSP to write it for them. Instead the Research Directorate asked LSP to provide additional comments to its existing ROP document. LSP responded quickly to the demand of the COR and submitted a complete and thorough review of the current Rules of Procedure to the Research Directorate in Arabic and English. The comments were used by the Committee formed by the COR to Amend the current ROP (Email of 29 Mar 2011 to COTR refers) In addition, the COR is still debating the current Rules of Procedure, and could not reach at an agreement because of differences about the Powers of the Speaker. Therefore, there is no final and approved version of the COR's Rules of Procedure that can be used by LSP to develop a Guide on it.

<sup>2</sup>Similarly, the Research Directorate has indicated to LSP that it wishes to write the Legislative Drafting and Analysis Manual itself. LSP continues to support the Research Directorate in this activity, but progress has been very slow on its part. The Research Department asked LSP to provide various examples of Tables of Contents of Legislative Drafting Manuals. LSP provided examples from USA, Australia, Sudan, and Palestine. However, given that the Research Directorate will be undertaking this activity on its own, LSP will not be providing this deliverable as previously planned. However it will continue to support any requests or assistance. In view of the Research Directorate's approach, we submitted a memo which explained that the COR Research Department will lead on this activity themselves, although LSP will offer advice when appropriate (Email of 29 Mar 2011 to COTR refers).

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To this end, the Research Department is still planning to conduct a two-day seminar to discuss the various major themes contained in the sample Legislative Drafting Manuals we provided. The seminar will include stakeholders such as the Council of Ministers, Shura Council, Academia, and Civil Society Organizations. An official letter has been submitted by the Research Department to the First Deputy Speaker in order to approve the seminar so that it can proceed. LSP will attend and provide input and advice during the two-day seminar. In addition, the Research Department asked LSP for training in Advance Level Legislative Drafting for its legislative drafter, as well as for the Legal Advisor of the Committee (approval is still being sought from the First Deputy Speaker's Office). This training workshop will provide the Research Department with advance level technical skills in legislative drafting, and will enable it to develop a legislative drafting manual in accordance with internationally accepted standards (Email of 29 Mar 2011 to COTR refers).

**DELIVERABLES SCHEDULE**

(1 April 2011 – 31 March 2012)

Deliverables	Description	Planned Delivery Date	Actual Delivery Date	Notes
<b>1.1 Strengthen staff capacity through a self sustaining Parliamentary Institute</b>				
1. Training Plan and Timetable	The contractor shall develop a training plan and timetable involving Iraqi higher education institutes in MP training	6/11	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
2. Manual on Conference Organization	The contractor shall provide a manual on “Organizing Conferences and Events”	2/12	Project stopped in compliance with USAID notification (11/7/2011)	
3. Curriculum Plan	The Contractor shall provide a curriculum plan for COR members and staff responsive to emerging needs in English	6/11	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
<b>1.2 Training and Professional Development</b>				
1. Training Manuals on Core Skills	The contractor shall provide a series of ten training manuals, each corresponding to a core skills training topic (English, Arabic and Kurdish)	4/11 – 3/12	Project stopped in compliance with USAID notification (11/7/2011)	
2. COR Training Policy	The Contractor shall provide a training policy and guidelines for the COR’s training department and/or the ICPD in Arabic, Kurdish and English	12/11	Project stopped in compliance with USAID notification (11/7/2011)	
<b>1.4 Strengthen human resource capacity in the COR</b>				

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Deliverables	Description	Planned Delivery Date	Actual Delivery Date	Notes
1. Human Resources Procedural Documents	The contractor shall draft HR procedural documents in support of HR department (English, Arabic, Kurdish)	4/11 – 3/12	Project stopped in compliance with USAID notification (11/7/2011)	
2. Staff Handbook	The contractor shall draft a staff handbook on terms and conditions of Employment (English, Arabic, and Kurdish)	4/11 – 10/13	Project stopped in compliance with USAID notification (11/7/2011)	
<b>1.5 Strengthened COR capacity through automation of legislative management processes and improved ICT for increased transparency and accountability</b>				
1. Evaluation Report-Legislative Tracking System	The contractor shall provide an evaluation of the effective use of the legislative tracking system. This evaluation will include an analytical section outlining “lessons learned” in the implementation of the legislative tracking system	2/12	Project stopped in compliance with USAID notification (11/7/2011)	
2. Concept Paper	The contractor shall provide an analytical paper outlining the feasibility of establishing a development laboratory as part of the ICPD (English, Arabic, Kurdish)	3/12	Project stopped in compliance with USAID notification (11/7/2011)	
<b>1.6 Strengthened COR capacity to manage Fellowship and Apprenticeship Programs</b>				
1. Evaluation Report	The contractor shall provide a written evaluation of the effectiveness of the Fellowship Program, including “lessons learned”	9/11	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
<b>1.7 Improved capacity of the COR for donor coordination</b>				

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Deliverables	Description	Planned Delivery Date	Actual Delivery Date	Notes
1. Draft Development Plan	The contractor shall provide a development plan to better coordinate donor activities, including recommendations for long-term COR leadership of this activity	10/11	As requested, explanatory note submitted to COTR	
<b>2.1 Increased awareness of MPs of good practices and standards for a democratic parliament</b>				
1. Report on MP Survey (series)	The contractor shall develop and implement a series of MP surveys to determine their capacity building needs	10/11 – 9/13	Project stopped in compliance with USAID notification (11/7/2011)	
2. Manual on Code of Conduct	The contractor shall develop a “Code of Conduct Manual” (English, Arabic, Kurdish)	10/11	COMPLETED	English version submitted. Arabic translation incomplete further to USAID notification (11/7/2011)
<b>2.2 Streamline parliamentary processes and improved committee operations</b>				
1. Manual on Public Hearings	The contractor shall produce a short manual on “How to Conduct Public Hearings” for use by MPs, Parliamentary Staff, Journalists and CSOs (English, Arabic and Kurdish)	4/11	COMPLETED	English and Arabic

## Final Report

Deliverables	Description	Planned Delivery Date	Actual Delivery Date	Notes
2. Manual on Field Visits	The contractor shall provide a short manual on “How to Conduct Field Visits” for use by MPs and Parliamentary Staff (English, Arabic and Kurdish)	9/11	COMPLETED	English version submitted. Arabic translation incomplete further to USAID notification (11/7/2011)
3. Concept Paper on Executive – Legislative Branch Relationships	The contractor shall provide a concept paper on how to improve and strengthen relationships between the executive and legislative branches	10/11	COMPLETED	English version submitted. Arabic translation incomplete further to USAID notification (11/7/2011)
4. Concept Paper on Ministry and Parliamentary Committee Exchanges	The contractor shall provide a concept paper on “Organizing Exchanges Between Ministries and Parliamentary Committees”	9/11	COMPLETED	English and Arabic
5. Guide to the Legislative Process in the Iraqi COR	The Contractor shall provide a guide explaining the procedure for the consideration of legislation by the COR including written procedures for the receipt and review of legislation in Arabic, Kurdish and English	7/11	COMPLETED	English and Arabic

## Final Report

Deliverables	Description	Planned Delivery Date	Actual Delivery Date	Notes
6. Report on the Efficiency of the COR Legislative Drafting Process	The Contractor shall provide a report on the efficiency on the COR's legislative drafting process including a needs assessment of resources and legal materials in English	11/11	Project stopped in compliance with USAID notification (11/7/2011)	
<b>2.3 Strengthen fiscal oversight and budget review capacity</b>				
1. Guide on Fiscal Analysis	The contractor shall provide a guide, "A Modern Approach to Fiscal Analysis" (English, Arabic and Kurdish)	11/11	Project stopped in compliance with USAID notification (11/7/2011)	
2. Guide on Fiscal Oversight	The contractor shall provide a guide on "Fiscal Oversight for Committee Members" (English, Arabic and Kurdish)	11/11	Project stopped in compliance with USAID notification (11/7/2011)	
<b>2.4 Increased presence of the COR in the provinces</b>				
1. Report on MP Survey	The contractor shall implement a survey and provide a report on MPs knowledge and use of provincial offices	1/11 – 4/12	Project stopped in compliance with USAID notification (11/7/2011)	
2. Design and Specifications of a Model Provincial Office	The Contractor shall provide final document in English. The design will address the fundamental requirements of a fully functional provincial office.	12/11	COMPLETED	
<b>2.5 Strengthened COR outreach and improved access to constituents</b>				
1. Assessment Reports	The contractor shall provide a brief mid-point assessment of the implementation of the COR Communications Plan, 2010-2014	1/12	Project stopped in compliance with USAID notification (11/7/2011)	

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Deliverables	Description	Planned Delivery Date	Actual Delivery Date	Notes
2. Briefing Book on CSO Exhibitions at the “Parliamentary Open House”	The contractor shall provide handout materials to attendees of the Parliamentary Open House describing the CSOs which are exhibiting in Arabic, Kurdish, and English	10/11	See explanatory note below	
3. Evaluation Report	The contractor shall produce a paper outlining the challenges of creating a COR press gallery, including lessons learned	1/12	Project stopped in compliance with USAID notification (11/7/2011)	

The LSP Open House for MPs and Civil Society Representatives -- an activity for which the program would produce a briefing book for MPs listing CSO descriptions and contact information -- was originally scheduled for October 2011, but presented organizational difficulties when the Chair of Committee for Civil Society Institutions would not meet with LSP for political reasons. LSP sought various avenues to try to meet with the committee, eventually securing a meeting with a selection of members in late June 2011. The committee insisted that any CSO event could include only those representatives chosen by the committee itself. Moreover, the committee was not initially inclined to take part in an Open House. After consultation with LSP, the Committee only agreed to participate when it was appended to a full-day training event. Despite follow-up by the program, by late July the committee still had not provided LSP with a list of invitees. When the list was provided in early September, it did not include accurate contact information. LSP worked to locate the representatives -- who were scattered across the country's 19 provinces -- by liaising with other NGOs and INGOs. The CSO questionnaires, designed to obtain up to date information needed for the planned briefing book, proved difficult to compile, as they were put in PDF format and many organizations did not have the software needed to open the documents. All questionnaires were then resent as word documents. LSP conducted follow up with the CSOs over several weeks to ensure that the requested information was submitted to the program. Determining the subject matter for the CSO training took much negotiation with the committee. When LSP came close to setting up the event -- having found a secure location and reaching agreement with NDI on providing a share of financial support to the event - the COR was in recess for Ramadan. After Ramadan, LSP began encountering resistance to its programming across the COR. Getting buy-in from NDI to help deliver the chosen training topics also took prolonged negotiation. By early October, as the event began to galvanize, LSP learned that the COR would once again be taking leave for the Hajj and Eid al Adha. Despite continuing challenges

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receiving completed questionnaires from the CSOs, event planning continued and a date in early December was agreed upon by the committee. As LSP worked to finalize the event, the program received a stop work notice from USAID. Consequently, all planning related to the Open House was stopped.

## Annex F: LSP Parliamentary Bulletin



**USAID**  
 من الشعب الأمريكي

LEGISLATIVE STRENGTHENING PROGRAM

برنامج دعم وتطوير البرلمان - پروگرامي پشتگيري و بهره پيداني په رله مان



### Parliamentary Development Bulletin: February 2011 - April 2011

#### PUBLIC'S VOICES HEARD IN THE PARLIAMENT

Iraq's Council of Representatives (COR) continues taking steps to advance democracy by increasing public participation. On April 19, 2011 the COR's Higher Education and Scientific Research Committee (HESRC) hosted its first public hearing. Some 114 people attended the event, which was held inside the COR, to discuss the Iraqi Private Higher Education Law.



Representatives of universities, professional associations, and three ministries, raised and discussed with the HESRC a wide range of common challenges and concerns. USAID Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR), representatives from IREX and NDI, Iraqi media, an advisor to the Prime Minister, civil society organizations, Members of Parliament, and the COR's Directors General and Advisors attended this event.

USAID's Iraq Legislative Strengthening Program (LSP) worked with the HESRC for two weeks to help prepare for the event. The Committee's members and staff participated in LSP workshops on the importance of public hearings in a representative democracy and on how to organize and conduct these public hearings. LSP also supported the Committee on the day of the event. Its efforts in the lead-up to the public hearing included: preparing the announcement and printing invitations, banners, and posters. In addition, LSP worked with independent journalists to train them on how to appropriately cover public hearings.

There were approximately twelve speakers, with each allocated seven minutes to present his or her views. At the end of this process, the Committee discussed issues raised in the speeches with all the attendees, including: the quality of education in the private universities, standards of education in Iraq and steps towards standardization, international accreditation, strengthening the relationship between government universities and private universities in Iraq, the lack of academicians in the private universities, and acceptance of overseas college degrees by local employers over degrees from Iraq's private (as opposed to public) universities.

The Committee Chair, Dr. Abd Dhyab Alajeely, said the event was a success and that he was pleased with the technical assistance that included the training of Committee members and staff and direct logistical support. He declared, "We are proud to conduct this public hearing and our Committee will hold more public hearings in the near future, using this mechanism as a legislative and oversight tool."

#### NEWS BRIEFS

- ✦ USAID's Democracy and Governance Director, Paul Randolph, USAID's Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR), Eileen Derby, and LSP met with Secretary General (SG), Mr. Salah Aldin Zangana, to discuss ongoing LSP activities. Consistent with the Presidency Council's recent reiteration of its support for LSP's activities inside the COR, the SG, together with the Members' Affairs and Parliamentary Committee (MAPDC), have expressed a readiness to support LSP in delivering Phase Two of the Members' Parliamentary Development Program (MPDP). Notably, the SG stated that LSP should now liaise with the MAPDC on all MPDP's phased activities.
- ✦ Support provided by LSP staff continued for the Legistar System. This system will manage the entire clerical process of legislative workflow in the COR, including meetings and recording minutes. It can track an agenda item from its creation, through draft approvals, introduction, referrals, and recommendations.
- ✦ The LSP team visited the Parliamentary Affairs' Directorate's Archive Department several times to track current issues and report them through a newly implemented SharePoint tracking system. Support and continued training will continue until LSP receives authorization from the Presidency Council to deploy the system for the COR.
- ✦ During this period, LSP awarded certificates to the five participants of the "Media Relations" training course. They all expressed appreciation for the professional knowledge they acquired through the course.
- ✦ LSP worked on a comparative analysis of Iraq's core economic indicators and those of other selected countries. This work is part of a complex study for both the COR Finance Committee and COR the Economic Committee focusing on possible solutions to major fiscal policy challenges in Iraq.
- ✦ LSP finalized a feasibility study for a Networked Constituent Casework Management System (NCCMS). The feasibility study is based on numerous meetings and consultations with the COR Speaker's Office, the DG of Parliamentary Affairs Directorate, the staff of the former Complaints Committee, the Regions and Governorates Affairs Committee, and the administrative director of the provincial offices. The NCCMS aims to assist the provincial offices in managing constituent complaints and promoting greater transparency and accountability while fostering trust between Iraqi citizens and their elected officials.

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## TRAINING CONDUCTED BY LSP DURING FEBRUARY- APRIL 2011

During February - April 2011, LSP conducted 32 training courses for 650 participants, including **307** new 'unique' trainees\* - those individuals who had not previously attended any LSP training events. Training continues to focus on imparting practical skills that participants can apply in their daily work.

#	Name of Training or Workshop	Dates		Participants from Departments / Committees	Total # of Participants	Gender		MPs	Staff/ Others
		From	To			To			
1	Phase 1 of Members' Parliamentary Development Program	1/31/2011	2/2/2011	Members of Parliament	241	174	67	241	0
2	Basic Administrative Skills Training	2/2/2011	2/2/2011	Various Directorate Staff	27	21	6	0	27
3	Basic Report Writing Training	2/3/2011	2/3/2011	Various Directorate Staff	30	24	6	0	30
4	Supreme Audit Institutions Training	2/6/2011	2/10/2011	Various COR Staff	28	23	5	0	28
5	Organizing Meetings and Minutes Taking Training	2/7/2011	2/7/2011	Various Directorate Staff	27	22	5	0	27
6	Legistar Technical Training	2/7/2011	2/8/2011	IT Directorate Staff	4	4	0	0	4
7	Office Protocol Training	2/8/2011	2/8/2011	Various Directorate Staff	27	21	6	0	27
8	Management and Data Collection	2/17/2011	2/17/2011	Parliamentary Affairs Staff	4	3	1	0	4
9	Legistar Training	2/17/2011	3/1/2011	Various COR Staff	4	3	1	0	4
10	Effective Management Training	2/22/2011	2/22/2011	Various Directorate Staff	13	12	1	0	13
11	Team Building Training	2/23/2011	2/23/2011	Various COR Staff	11	10	1	0	11
12	Legistar-Verbatim Minutes Training	3/1/2011	3/6/2011	Parliamentary Affairs Directorate Staff	4	3	1	0	4
13	Decisions Making Skills Training	3/1/2011	3/1/2011	Various COR Staff	15	14	1	0	15
14	Cisco Certified Network Associate Training	3/2/2011	3/3/2011	IT Directorate Staff	5	5	0	0	5
15	Human Resources Management (Managers Level) Training	3/2/2011	3/2/2011	Various COR Staff	12	11	1	0	12
16	Conflict Management	3/3/2011	3/3/2011	Various COR Staff	12	11	1	0	12
17	English Course for Parliamentary Terminology Training	3/6/2011	3/8/2011	Various COR Staff	7	7	0	0	7
18	Legistar-Verbatim Minutes Training	3/9/2011	3/10/2011	Parliamentary Affairs Directorate Staff	7	6	1	0	7
19	Protocol and Etiquette Training	3/13/2011	3/14/2011	Foreign Affairs Directorate Staff	8	7	1	0	8
20	Legistar-Verbatim Minutes Training	3/13/2011	3/13/2011	Parliamentary Affairs Directorate Staff	6	5	1	0	6
21	Job Analysis Training	3/13/2011	3/14/2011	Administrative Directorate Staff	10	8	2	0	10
22	Legistar- Action Posting & Special Cases Training	3/15/2011	3/15/2011	Parliamentary Affairs Directorate Staff	2	1	1	0	2
23	Job Descriptions Training	3/22/2011	3/23/2011	Administrative Directorate Staff	7	5	2	0	7
24	How to Conduct Public Hearing Training	3/28/2011	3/29/2011	Members of Parliament & Education Committee Staff	20	17	3	13	7
25	Time Management Training	4/11/2011	4/12/2011	Various Directorate Staff	26	20	6	0	26
26	Communications Skills Training	4/13/2011	4/14/2011	Various Directorate Staff	26	20	6	0	26
27	Public Hearing Media Coverage Training	4/13/2011	4/13/2011	Independent journalists covering the COR	6	6	0	0	6
28	Code of Conduct Training	4/17/2011	4/18/2011	Various Directorate Staff	26	20	6	0	26
29	Legislative Drafting (Advanced Level)	4/20/2011	4/20/2011	Various Committee Staff	10	7	3	0	10
30	Master Class Session	4/25/2011	4/25/2011	Budget and Research Department (BRD)Staff	1	0	1	0	1
31	Master Class Session	4/26/2011	4/26/2011	Budget and Research Department Staff	2	1	1	0	2
32	How to Conduct Public Hearing Training	4/28/2011	4/28/2011	Various Committee Staff	22	17	5	11	11
					<b>650 *</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>385</b>