



**Rwanda Parliament Support Project**



**PROJET D'APPUI AU PARLEMENT DU RWANDA**

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**INTERNET SKILLS TRAINING FOR RWANDA**

**MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT**

Contract No. AEP-I-00-99-00041-00

Task Order No. AEP-I-818-99-00041-00

*Submitted to USAID, Kigali, Rwanda*

**Deliverable 014**

June 15, 2004

## INTERNET SKILLS TRAINING FOR RWANDA MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

### Introduction

An internet training program activity was conducted for Members of the Rwandan Parliament (MPs) from May 31-June 11, 2004. A total of 45 MPs (37 Deputies and 8 Senators) participated. This report describes (1) planning leading up to the training, (2) the training itself, and (3) evaluation results. Key documents from throughout this process are included as attachments.

### Background

Responding to a request from the Rwanda Transitional National Assembly (TNA) for assistance, USAID/Rwanda commissioned SUNY to conduct a legislative needs assessment in 1999. Following the recommendations of this report, USAID contracted with SUNY and ARD to provide long-term technical assistance to support the institutional development of the TNA. All told, this assistance, continued for nearly three years, laying an important foundation for continued support to the newly elected Parliament.

The initial USAID Task Order, authorizing the former Rwanda National Assembly Support Project, was issued to SUNY under the Deliberative Bodies IQC, and covered the period from November 2000 until September 2003. Responsibility for implementing the project was shared between SUNY and ARD. The present ARD project, authorized under the Global DG Analytical Services IQC, was contracted in response to the Rwanda legislature's request for continued assistance.

This has been a dynamic time for Rwanda as the post-genocidal transitional government has been succeeded by a government presiding over newly crafted institutional arrangements. A new Constitution was adopted by national referendum on May 26, 2003, and Presidential and legislative elections were held in August and September/October, respectively. On October 10, 2003, the new Members of Parliament (MPs), 80 Deputies and 20 Senators, were sworn in and the leadership of both chambers elected. The top leadership of the Senate is the same as the former Transitional National Assembly (TNA), but the Chamber of Deputies leadership is entirely new.

The new post-transition Parliament is facing numerous changes, including the shift from appointed to elected legislators; an influx of many new Members of Parliament (MPs), many of whom have no legislative experience; a large increase in the number of women legislators; new leadership in the Chamber of Deputies; and the many institutional changes resulting from the new Constitution, including legislative autonomy and the shift to a bicameral Parliament.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> With the June 4, 2003 promulgation of the new Rwanda Constitution, both the structure and terminology of Rwanda's legislature has changed. The unicameral "Transitional National Assembly" has ceased to

## Needs Assessment and Training Implementation

This current training follows on the successful 2003 training conducted for 96 TNA MPs and staff during former ARD/SUNY project. With the recent elections, there are many new MPs who requested similar training, and this new activity was the result.

Increasing MP Technical Skills is a priority activity area in the project Work Plan. As detailed in the project work plan, ARD responds to targeted opportunities, including computer training and IT assistance. Given the need expressed by MPs, project staff sent a letter to the Chamber Speaker in March (attachment 01), requesting distribution of a needs assessment instrument (attachment 02).

Forty-five Deputies completed the needs assessment form (attachment 3), and results were analyzed with the goal of designing specific training to meet MP needs (attachment 4). A training RFP was developed (attachment 5) and submitted to 23 IT vendors. Four bids were received and analyzed, and, as a result of this process, Computer Point (GNOSYS S.A.R.L.) was selected to implement the internet training. ARD staff negotiated the final details, and the program was set up in five modules of two hours each. Thus, MPs had flexibility as to when they preferred to attend.

A letter was sent to the Speaker on May 20 (attachment 6) announcing the finalized program details. The Speaker, as well as the 45 Deputies who had previously expressed interest, were given a packet that included instructions (attachment 7), the course description (attachment 8) and program schedule (attachment 9). MPs with a more intermediate/advanced level were informed that they could skip any of the early modules to concentrate on those that they thought would be most useful. MPs were also told they could repeat any of the modules if they wanted additional assistance.

Early on in the planning, the project had been informed that this training was not of interest to the Senate, since many had IT skills, but as the program dates neared, several Senators requested that they be allowed to attend. Packets, as described above, were thus given to interested Senators, and eight participated.

The training began May 31 and ended June 11. Participation was very strong with a total of 45 (37 Deputies and 8 Senators) participating. A complete list of participants is attached (attachment 10). One of the ARD interns, either Pasteur Kalisa or Alain Thierry, was present during most of the training to offer assistance to participants having difficulties following the presentations.

## Evaluation

Participants were very positive about the program. Several made comments such as, “I am now comfortable knowing how to navigate the web,” “I no longer need my secretary to receive and answer email,” “I now know how to do internet research,” and “I understand why my children do not want to go to sleep and spend so much time on the computer.” The general impression was that their “eyes had been opened” to the possibilities offered by the World Wide Web.

A written evaluation was distributed and completed by 18 participants. On the question of “Practical Usefulness,” 12 (67%) gave it the highest possible rating of 5, while 3 (17%) gave it the second highest rating, and the remaining 3 (17%) gave it three out of five. On the question of “Lecturer Presentation,” 5 (28%) gave the highest rating, while 12 (67%) gave the second highest, and 3 (17%) the middle rating of five. Written comments on the evaluations included these observations:

- “We thank the organizers of the training.”
- “The teachers are very serious.”
- “Certain modules (four and five) need to be expanded.”
- “The training of computer is very necessary for new MPs”
- “We need more practice.”
- “We need to repeat this training.”
- “The teachers were smiling and knew their material which helped make it easier to learn.”

## Attachments

Attachment 1: Letter to Secretary General; March 3, 2004

Attachment 2: Needs assessment questionnaire

Attachment 3: List of MPs requesting training

Attachment 4: Summary of questionnaire results

Attachment 5: Request for Proposals

Attachment 6: Letter to Speaker announcing training dates; May 20, 2004

Attachment 7: Letter to MP participants (English and French)

Attachment 8: Course description (French)

Attachment 9: Program Schedule

Attachment 10: Participant List