Helpdesk Research Report: Lessons Learned on Parliamentary Strengthening
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Query: Please collect and summarise any available evaluations and lessons learned from parliamentary strengthening programmes.

Enquirer: AusAID

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1. Overview

Several agencies have recently conducted stocktakes, retrospectives or reviews of their parliamentary strengthening programmes at agency-level (including UNDP, DFID and WBI). Most of these reviews present cumulative lessons learned from programme-level evaluations, include case studies (both successful and unsuccessful), and make recommendations to donors. They invariably recognise the intrinsic challenges of parliamentary strengthening work as distinct from other areas of aid; notably that parliament is a political domain of contestation, subject to cyclical change, and power struggles both with the executive and between parties. Perhaps unsurprisingly then, by far the most common lesson/recommendation in reviews of support to parliamentary strengthening relates to the necessity of understanding and adapting to the political context within which parliament is situated (including the wider political system), and undertaking good political analysis in the planning phase. Without this political contextualisation, programmes have historically failed (e.g. this is noted in the review of SIDA programmes).

Several other recommendations are common across the 'lessons learned' literature:

- *The need for long-term interventions*: For example, UNDP's review of its global programme found that longer-term intervention is clearly correlated with project effectiveness. Donors often perceive a tension between long-term programming and flexibility to respond to new opportunities, but others argue donor co-ordination can bring added flexibility.

- *Interventions should be based on local demand and to encourage broad-based local ownership:* Parliamentary strengthening will only succeed if it is supported by MPs, political parties and other local actors. Initiatives must build on local efforts to strengthen parliaments. Externally driven approaches, or approaches based on conditionality, tend not to be sustainable. The issue of where the demand for parliamentary strengthening comes from is important. Broad-based political support is a prerequisite for effective programmes.

- *Parliamentary strengthening has been seen as a political intrusion, or viewed as politically motivated*: It necessarily involves dealing with politically sensitive issues. One study noted that UNDP is seen as an honest broker and therefore an acceptable player. UNDP's own experience suggests their assistance is most valued when it is neutral. If parliamentary strengthening is viewed as a mechanism for advancing the foreign policy interests of the donor, the assistance is unlikely to have the intended impacts.

- *Issue-based approaches are particularly successful:* Training programmes that focus on specific issues (e.g. gender budgeting), rather than procedures, have been well received. UNDP's experience suggests that narrowing the scope of technical support to tackle systemic problems through smaller interventions may lead to more successful capacity development and consensus-building.

- *Legislative assistance cannot be viewed in isolation from other areas of support:* This is particularly with regard to support to political parties. Attention needs to be given to the competencies of political groups and their ability to perform their responsibilities. Technical cooperation cannot be divorced from inter-party or political relationships.

Many reports also acknowledge the need to build South-South cooperation, the importance of the individuals who work on programme implementation being seen as politically savvy but politically neutral, the need for better donor coordination mechanisms, and the need for more evaluations at programme level. Others stress the importance of not imposing outside models and of using local and regional experts. Similarly, one report notes that members of parliament are generally conscious of their status as political leaders and are therefore often more willing to accept technical assistance or advice when it comes from a peer (see Hubli and Schmidt 2005). UNDP also advocates the establishment of a multi-partisan reform committee within Parliament to steer or manage the programme.

There are no internationally agreed standards for democratic parliaments, and no agreed guidelines for approaching parliamentary strengthening. A multi-donor consultation in 2007 concluded that there is a need to develop internationally recognised standards for democratic parliaments (a view widely supported in the literature), and this work is ongoing, although some caution that these should be truly internationally recognised standards. A selection of existing donor guidelines and standards is included in section 4 of this report.

2. Lessons Learned

Multi-donor reviews

DFID, 2007, 'Donor Consultation on Parliamentary Development and Financial Accountability', DFID, UNDP and World Bank Institute
http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/PO56.pdf

This report presents the conclusions of a two-day donor consultation on parliamentary strengthening. It finds that whilst donor evaluations of parliamentary strengthening are few and far between, some donors are beginning to evaluate or assess this area of work more systematically (e.g. UNDP, DFID). There remains a need to develop good practice principles for donor support to parliamentary strengthening - the approach so far has been relativistic. The Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) are developing a widely agreed set of norms and standards for effective democratic parliaments. Donors should support this standards-based approach.

Session II of the consultation reviewed recent evaluations and reviews of donor programmes (see p.8). Some of the main conclusions drawn in the discussion of these evaluations are:

- There is a perceived tension between long term programming and flexibility to respond to new opportunities. There is a need for more flexible funding mechanisms, although donor coordination makes it easier to respond to opportunities as they emerge.

- There is no 'best' time for undertaking parliamentary strengthening work; what is most important is long term commitment. It is also important to have the right people on the ground and to build relationships, trust and confidence.

- In undertaking parliamentary strengthening projects related to parliaments' role in the budget process, donors should take a comprehensive approach, looking at the entire budget cycle. Donors should encourage partnerships between parliament and CSOs that monitor expenditure and provide independent analysis. Independent parliamentary budget offices are also effective, if there is demand from within parliament.

- Donors should also recognise the importance of working with, or at least understanding the role of, political parties as they influence how parliamentarians act in parliament.

- Overall, donors and others who undertake parliamentary strengthening work need to carry out more comprehensive evaluations and reviews.

- Donors have sometimes played an unhelpful role counterpoising civil society development and parliamentary development. Instead, donors should help them work together in a synergistic relationship.

Hubli, K., 2007, 'Parliamentary Strengthening: Strategies and Successes', Paper presented at the Overseas Development Institute, London
http://www.odi.org.uk/events/parliaments_07/1_May/Scott%20Hubli's%20speech.pdf

This paper discusses which strategies work in parliamentary strengthening, and argues there is a growing consensus on what works, what doesn't and why. It elaborates on the recommendations made by Hudson and Wren (ODI 2007 - summarised separately below):

- Political contextualisation: "Parliaments are political organisations, and the starting point must always be an understanding of the political system in which they operate." (p.5) It is important to consider incentives, and to recruit talented national staff members who are politically savvy but also impartial and respected.

- Treat the causes, not the symptoms: Parliamentary development projects often treat the symptoms of weakness, rather than their causes. For example, it is important to address questions of why parliament does not assert itself in budget discussions, and consider parliamentarians' incentives to do so, which might mean focusing on parliamentary salaries.

- Local demand for assistance: Externally driven approaches, or approaches based on conditionality, tend not to be sustainable.

- Ability to base programme design on the political context: Issues of political context and local demand for reform need to be incorporated into programme design. The Global Programme for Parliamentary Strengthening's regional program in the Arab States demonstrates good practice in this regard (for instance, most of the inputs came from scholars from the region).

- Using issue-based approaches to parliamentary development: "A parliamentary development programme is more likely to be successful if – rather than holding an abstract or generic seminar on the MDGs – the program instead tries to combine process strengthening with work with relevant committees that are working specific aspects of a national poverty reduction strategy or MDG plan." (p.7)

- A relationship of trust and confidence between the development partner and the Parliament: Parliamentary development involves dealing with politically sensitive issues. If it is viewed as a mechanism for advancing the foreign policy interests of the donor, the assistance is unlikely to have the intended impacts. The comparative advantage of the UN system is that it is seen as an honest broker.

- Individuals matter: An additional element of programme success is the individuals who work on programme implementation and their counterparts in the parliament: their ability to have political ear, without having a political agenda; to listen to their parliamentary counterparts; and to work well in the political culture.

- Timing and sequencing: Many parliamentary development programmes are not well-timed or sequenced – either in terms of a political transition or in terms of the electoral cycle. The UNDP SEAL programme was relatively successful because it was multilateral in approach, it had sufficient advance preparation and lead time, and it was viewed as impartial.

- Long-term support: Short-term interventions (e.g. study tours) often have no measurable impact, particularly when activities are not integrated into a larger, longer-term comprehensive programme.

- Benchmarks and performance measures: These must not only make sense technically, but must also be based in a framework that the country has committed to – either at the national, regional or international level. It is essential that any standards-based approach comes from a true international consensus, rather than a donor-developed set of standards.

DFID

Hudson, A. and Wren, C., 2007, 'Parliamentary Strengthening in Developing Countries', Report prepared for the Department for International Development (DFID), Overseas Development Institute, London
http://www.odi.org.uk/pppg/politics_and_governance/publications/ah_Parliamentary_strengthening.pdf

This report reviews DFID's approach to and experience with parliamentary strengthening. It concludes that "projects which are demand-led, take full account of local context, involve harmonisation and coordination between donors, and are sustained, are the most likely to succeed." (p.43) Parliamentary strengthening should address the causes of poor performance, be context-aware, involve recipients and include systematic evaluation. Donors should apply the Paris Declaration principles (e.g. ownership, alignment and harmonisation) to their parliamentary strengthening work.

Chapters 4 and 5 provide an overview of the types of organisations involved in parliamentary strengthening inside and outside the UK, and the different approaches they have taken. A large number of organisations are involved in parliamentary strengthening, including bilateral and multilateral donors, parliamentary networks, political party foundations, research and capacity-building organisations, think tanks, not-for-profits and private sector organisations. Approaches

taken vary from a focus on parliamentarians themselves, to a focus on parliament as an institution, to dealing with aspects of the wider political system within which parliaments operate (e.g. International IDEA). The report notes that the UK should recognise and capitalise on its comparative advantages, which include: that its parliament has strong historical relationships with parliaments in many developing countries; DFID is the acknowledged leader – along with SIDA – on governance; and that through country offices, the FCO and DFID have much experience and knowledge of how political systems operate, particularly in developing countries.

Several of DFID's programmes are presented as case studies. In Tanzania it is noted that UNDP was seen as a less political actor than USAID. Bangladesh is cited as a case of successful donor harmonisation, because a great deal of consideration was given there to donor harmonisation, the local political context and the long term sustainability of this programme in the planning phase. Experience in Malawi – as in Tanzania and Uganda – shows that although parliamentary strengthening may not initially succeed, if lessons are learnt, then progress can be made. In Malawi, an initial focus on engagement with civil society was unsuccessful because Parliament was under-resourced, lacked suitable staff, and did not have control over its own budget, agenda and timetable. "It was essential that Parliament was able to determine its own priorities. Once this was achieved, the prospects for further parliament-led progress on modernization and reforms were considerably better […] This demonstrates the importance of considering the changing domestic political environment" (p.43)

The paper argues that the issue of where the demand for parliamentary strengthening comes from is very important. "If projects are developed in response to the enthusiasm of donors, or implementing agencies, they run the risk of failing to meet the needs of parliaments in developing countries, of failing to understand the local political context, and of failing to engender local ownership." (p.43)

The following recommendations for effective parliamentary strengthening are put forward:

- "Respond to demand: Parliamentary strengthening should be demand-led, and responsive to local needs, rather than externally-driven.

- Address causes: Parliamentary strengthening should seek to address the causes of poor parliamentary performance, rather than addressing solely the symptoms.

- Take account of context: Parliamentary strengthening must take full account of the local context – including the political context – within which parliaments function.

- Involve recipients: Parliamentary strengthening should involve a range of local organizations, and interest groups, including opposition MPs and parties as well as members of the government.

- Focus on issues: Parliamentary strengthening should use particular issues such as budget oversight, anti-corruption, HIV/AIDS and poverty reduction as vehicles to improve parliamentary performance, rather than focusing solely on parliamentary procedures.

- Coordinate and deliver appropriate activities: Agencies involved in parliamentary strengthening must do more to coordinate their work, and to ensure that their activities are appropriate to the objectives of parliamentary strengthening. Think twice before setting up or supporting study visits and seminars.

- Provide long-term sustainable support." (p. 6)

Wehner, J., 2007, Strengthening Legislative Financial Scrutiny in Developing Countries, Report prepared for UK Department for International Development, London School of Economics, London
http://sdnhq.undp.org/governance/parls/docs/DFID%20financial%20scrutiny%20report_final_16%20may%202007.pdf

This study presents a stock-take of development organisations' global activities aimed at strengthening parliaments' capability to scrutinise public spending. It finds that DFID's projects involving legislative financial scrutiny are vulnerable to political risks. Nonetheless, where the approach is comprehensive, long-term and builds on local, broad-based support, parliamentary strengthening can deliver substantial and cost-effective improvements. DFID and other donors should avoid simplistic institutional replication of the Westminster model (which may not be suitable in other contexts); build on indigenous demand and broad-based support for greater parliamentary oversight of the budget; and support legislative scrutiny throughout the budget process.

Africa All Party Parliamentary Group, 2008, Strengthening Parliaments in Africa: Improving Support, London
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/PSGLP/Resources/StrengtheningParliamentsinAfrica.pdf

This report sets out the findings of an inquiry by the UK Africa All Party Parliamentary Group into parliamentary strengthening supported by the UK, exploring the factors that hold African parliaments back and how the UK and others can contribute to addressing these challenges. It concludes that development partners seeking instant results will be disappointed, and makes several overarching recommendations for parliamentary strengthening programmes, including:

- Understand parliaments in their political context: Parliamentary strengthening is a political domain. Development partners must invest more time and resources in analysing the political terrain and the interests, agendas and individuals that can make or break reform efforts. More time needs to be invested in building relationships on the ground. Parliamentary assistance must be based on knowledge of the position of parliament in relation to the broader political system and culture.

- Engage local demand and encourage broad-based local ownership: Parliamentary strengthening will only succeed if it is supported by MPs, political parties and other local actors. Initiatives must build on, build with, and build up, local efforts and channels to strengthen parliaments.

- Coordinate: Donor approaches need not necessarily be uniform but they should be coordinated. This means sharing information and insights, reducing duplication and dividing labour according to comparative advantage. Donors should also do more to form common, streamlined arrangements.

- Learn lessons and apply them: Development partners must ensure that parliamentary strengthening work is based on evidence and results and that information is gathered, shared and used to improve collective practice. This means evaluating the impact of parliamentary strengthening work and improving the means of assessing parliamentary performance.

Development partners must also have sufficient numbers of staff in post with the right skills, professional background and inter-personal qualities to operate effectively, draw more on the expertise of those (in Africa and internationally) with experience of working in parliaments as MPs or staff. They must support Parliaments' institutional development (building human resources and institutional capacity) to create institutional strengths. They should also initiate studies of the distinct challenges and opportunities for strengthening parliaments in fragile states.

SIDA

Hubli. K., and Schmidt, M., 2005,' Approaches to Parliamentary Strengthening: A Review of SIDA's Support to Parliaments, Department for Democracy and Social Development, SIDA
http://www.SIDA.org/SIDA/jsp/SIDA.jsp?d=118&a=16313&language=en_US

This report reviews SIDA's support to parliaments and parliamentarians. It notes that parliamentary strengthening programmes have often fallen short of their goals because they have not been sufficiently "politically contextualized," i.e., not designed and implemented in a manner that recognizes the political incentive structures that govern parliamentary behaviour. SIDA should move away from short-term interventions (parliamentary exchanges, conferences and seminars), and increase support to local or regional organisations involved in parliamentary strengthening (e.g. ECOWAS, SADC). Other recommendations made are that inter-parliamentary organisations may have an advantage; using donor country MPs as trainers may increase the risk of exporting inappropriate models; and that donors should look more closely at South-South cooperation.

Other recommendations for SIDA include (see p.5):

- Better diversify and target the use of parliamentarians in programming. Members of parliament are generally conscious of their status as political leaders and are often more willing to accept technical assistance or advice when it comes from a peer. Identify opportunities for greater use of long-term consultants or advisers, particularly consultants who are able to relate as peers to parliamentary partners.

- Increasingly orient support towards joint funding programmes with a comprehensive and long term approach to parliamentary reform.

- Improve coordination and integration of parliamentary and political party programming.

UNDP

UNDP, 2002, UNDP Lessons Learned in Parliamentary Development, UNDP
http://www.undp.org/governance/eventsites/policy_dialogue/30_UNDP_Lessons_Learned.doc

This report synthesises lessons learned from evaluations of UNDP's parliamentary strengthening programmes undertaken in 2002. Good practice is set out in relation to parliamentary development strategies; how to involve political leadership most effectively and other entry points for working with parliamentary institutions; and lessons regarding capacity building methodologies such as needs assessments, monitoring indicators, study tours and other practical assistance tools.

Lessons are presented in relation to the following legislative assistance strategies:

- Support for the institutional framework of Parliament: Technical assistance to influence the institutional set-up of parliaments, such as through support for constitutional reform or the drafting of rules of procedure, can nurture democratic values, principles and practices. It is critical to: encourage diverse political representation within multi-partisan committee structures, create more predictable and transparent opportunities for public inputs to the legislative and oversight functions of a parliament, ensure non-partisan administrative services, and formulate processes and mechanisms to enhance the independence of the parliament from the executive. UNDP's experience suggests such assistance is most valued when it is neutral – providing advice on options, or assisting in the conduct of fair constituent assembly or transitional processes.

- Parliament's law making function: Technical cooperation needs to look at the legislative process comprehensively, incorporating its procedures, committee structures and processes, the state of executive-legislative relations, and the maturity and competency of the political actors. Transitional parliaments can benefit from more comprehensive use of the committee system to ensure public interests and needs are adequately considered and addressed. Political constraints on the impact of technical cooperation include weak legislative leadership, political party conflicts and the partisanship of the executive.

- Parliament's oversight function: Technical cooperation strategies to improve oversight need to consider the political factors influencing legislative-executive relations, the structure and dynamics of political parties within a parliament, and the level of development of committee systems. There is value in working within budget committees to tackle key institutional and political obstacles.

- Parliament's representation function: Experience suggests that legal and socio-political constraints to increased representation in newly-democratising countries can be overcome through carefully managed technical cooperation strategies, such as public consultation processes or public hearings, designed in collaboration with political party representatives.

- Issues-based approaches: A greater process-orientation to parliamentary development can be advanced through issues-based interventions (e.g. gender budgeting or PRSPs). UNDP's experiences suggest that narrowing the scope of technical support to tackle systemic problems through smaller interventions may lead to more successful capacity development and consensus-building.

- Targeted short term interventions: Strategic, short-term interventions, versus long-term programmes, can have a significant impact beyond their scale. Long-term, comprehensive legislative assistance programmes are not always feasible due to budgetary constraints or political realities. The visible results of targeted assistance can also serve as the basis for mobilising additional resources to support longer term or more comprehensive assistance programmes.

- Holistic approach to governance assistance: Legislative assistance, whether long or short-term, cannot be viewed in isolation from other thematic areas of support for democratic governance. In particular, they should be considered when designing electoral programmes.

Broad-based political support is a prerequisite for effective legislative assistance programmes. Technical cooperation to strengthen parliaments cannot be divorced from inter-party or political relationships. Attention needs to be given to the competencies of political groups and their ability to perform their responsibilities. Legislative assistance is sensitive to changes in political leadership, but one way to help ensure continuity is by helping to establish – or working with an existing – multipartisan modernisation or reform committee to steer or manage the programme. Technical cooperation strategies aimed at improving committee processes are an important mechanism to move parliamentary control out of strict party structures and into more multi-party settings. Committee structures and functions also offer an entry point for building the capacity of parliamentarians and staff alike.

In terms of capacity building, needs assessments should go beyond the identification of institutional constraints and analyse the political context of parliamentary development and constraints to governance. Regional seminars have been cost-effective mechanisms to bring large numbers of parliamentarians and non-parliamentary actors together, while providing neutral forums to facilitate discussion around controversial issues or obstacles to greater parliamentary development. When applied to legislative development assistance, study tours and parliament to

parliament exchange can be useful exercises in fostering relationships and breaking down barriers among political groups and between parliamentarians and staff.

For a more detailed discussion of UNDP's experience in reference to specific case studies, see:
- **UNDP, 2001, 'Legislative Assistance Retrospective', UNDP**
  http://www.undp.org/governance/eventsites/LegislatureTechinques2001/legisassist.doc

IPU/UNDP, 2003, Ten Years of Strengthening Parliaments in Africa, 1991-2000: Lessons Learnt and the Way Forward Inter Parliamentary Union and UNDP, Geneva
http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/africa2000_en.pdf

This report reviews assistance to African parliaments in the 1990s. Certain characteristics distinguish support to parliaments from other kinds of aid; notably, that parliament is a political arena of constant confrontation between the executive and the legislature and between leading and opposition parties. Assistance can appear as an intrusion and is usually seen as political - a stumbling block for many programmes. Progress towards realising a country's constitution and good governance depends on whether or not parliament truly exercises the prerogatives and powers conferred on it. Reform-minded parliaments are associated with greater project success; as are cases where donors have targeted all the components of a parliament, including opposition, and where interventions have addressed a specific problem or issue.

Weaknesses in parliamentary strengthening arise where there is inadequate consideration of the special political situation of the parliament. Donor support can also lead to over-dependence as well as danger of national authorities not allocating sufficient resources to the parliament for its functioning, in the hope that donors will fill the gaps. Language often constitutes a major barrier in the delivery of project activities, especially training. The choice of the venue of training abroad does not always take into account the recipient's level of development. Where there are several donors providing equipment, lack of coordination often leads to incompatibility of such equipment and maintenance may become problematic. Specific recommendations for overcoming these weaknesses are made on p.33 of the report. These include establishing a special body, composed of both majority and opposition MPs as well as parliamentary staff, to consider, in depth, desirable changes in parliamentary structures and processes; adequate coordination mechanisms for multi-donor support; and developing South-South co-operation in training programmes.

World Bank Institute

World Bank Institute, 2007, 'Strengthening Parliaments – Strengthening Accountability: The World Bank Institute's Parliamentary Strengthening Program Retrospective', WBI, Washington
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/PSGLP/Resources/RetrospectiveSTRENGTHENINGPARLIAMENTS.pdf

This retrospective seeks to share lessons learned from the World Bank Institute's Parliamentary Strengthening Program in the five years up to 2007, with a focus on 'success stories'. A case study of Ghana (pp. 24-25) demonstrates that strong domestic political support, integration of training activities into broader parliamentary capacity, flexible design of training activities to reflect an evolving parliamentary agenda, a reduction in partisanship, and the direct interface of parliamentary committees with international organisations, were all crucial factors in sustainable parliamentary strengthening. Annex 3 (p. 56) presents recommended benchmarks for democratic legislatures.

3. Programme Evaluations

Murphy, J., and Alkache, A., 2007, 'Global Programme for Parliamentary Strengthening II Mid-term Evaluation Report', UNDP
http://sdnhq.undp.org/governance/parls/docs/GPPS%20Mid-Term%20Evaluation%20Final.pdf

UNDP's Global Programme for Parliamentary Strengthening includes parliamentary development activities at the country, regional and global levels in partnership with others (e.g. Belgium, France, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the African IPU, the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF)). This evaluation finds that the programme has overall been largely positive, and notes that the keys to success are innovative ideas, dedicated staff, and the supportive collaboration of the major programme donors. The programme's 'thin', 'virtual' organisational structure allows flexibility, rapid response to emergent issues, and appropriate risk-taking. Longer-term intervention is clearly correlated with project effectiveness. Furthermore the programme's three levels (national, regional and global) have been effectively integrated in several project aspects.

Several case studies are presented with a view to drawing out success factors. For example, in Algeria, the project benefited from the support and commitment of the top leaders in both chambers of parliament, including both the political and the administrative leadership of both chambers. The report argues that this success in working with both chambers of parliament was an exceptional achievement, and should be used as a model for other projects.

Johnston, N., and Stanislaus, A., 2008, 'Mid-Term Evaluation of the UNDP Timor-Leste Parliamentary Project - Strengthening Parliamentary Democracy in Timor-Leste', NORAD
http://www.norad.no/items/12476/38/6620675824/Mid-
Term%20Evaluation%20of%20the%20UNDP%20Timor-Leste%20Parliamentary%20Project-
%20Strengthening%20Parliamentary%20Democracy%20in%20Timor-Leste.pdf

This evaluation of UNDP's legislative strengthening programme in UNDP finds the project has been impacted by Timor-Leste's political stability and demand-side difficulties. It was also affected by a general lack of ownership by the political and administrative leaderships in both mandates of the National Parliament. Significant results were seen in the area of oversight and legislative support, and the decision to bring on board National Economists and initiate an internship program are considered best practices that should be replicated. The programme also made improvements in relation to gender. External organisations expressed appreciation for the project's open and effective communications. But support to the Secretariat saw the least visible impact – various mitigating reasons for this included ownership, political will, and ambiguity over roles in the parliament. Some other findings in relation to the programme's mixed success are:

- Recruitment lags and language constraints negatively impacted on the project's outcomes.
- The Project Document's scope and expectations were too ambitious.
- Although the project is framed around the goals of building capacity, it was not a focus of project implementation.

Center for International Development State University of New York, 2005, 'Kenya Legislative Strengthening Project Final Technical Report', Report prepared for USAID, Kenya
http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDACF840.pdf

The report reviews the approach taken by the University of New York Center for International Development (SUNY/CID) in implementing the Kenya Legislative Strengthening Project for

USAID. The project involved training, strengthening committee systems, improving donor co-ordination, and better public relations for parliament. Lessons learned are in relation to :

- The need for a strong Committee system: The committee system can be a most important pillar both in terms of strengthening the parliament itself and also in terms of better connecting parliament and civil society.

- The Kenya parliament's readiness for reform

- The existence of a vibrant parliament-focused civil society: There now exists in a Kenya a vibrant Parliament-focused civil society and private sector community that has been providing policy analysis support and supplementing the legislative work of the Kenya Parliament.

- Parliament is as strong as its support staff

- Dialogue between the executive and legislative arms of government: It is necessary for there to be constant policy based dialogue between the executive and legislative arms of government.

- ICT and the need for strong parliament-citizenry relations: In the modern world of technological development, parliaments need to be at the cutting edge of technology.

4. Additional Information: Guidelines and Standards for Democratic Parliaments

Donor guidelines on parliamentary strengthening

DFID, 2004, 'Helping Parliaments and Legislative Assemblies to Work for the Poor - A Guide to the Reform of Key Functions and Responsibilities', London
http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/helping-parliaments.pdf

Beetham, D., 2006, 'Parliament and Democracy in the Twenty First Century: A Guide to Good Practice', Inter Parliamentary Union, Geneva
http://www.ipu.org/PDF/publications/democracy_en.pdf

USAID, 2001, 'USAID Handbook on Legislative Strengthening', USAID
http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/democracy_and_governance/publications/pdfs/pnacf632.pdf

International standards for democratic parliaments

Hubli, S., 2007, 'Towards the Development of International Minimum Standards for Democratic Legislatures: A Discussion Document for Review by Interested Legislatures, Donors and International Organizations', Prepared by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
http://sdnhq.undp.org/governance/parls/docs/NDI-FINAL%20DRAFT%20-%20International%20Minimum%20Standards%20for%20Democratic%20Legislatures.doc

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, 2006, 'Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures: A Study Group Report', London
http://sdnhq.undp.org/governance/parls/docs/CPA%20Benchmarks%20Report%20-%20FINAL%20-033007.doc