

Data Sheet

USAID Mission:	Georgia
Program Title:	Good Local Governance
Pillar:	Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance
Strategic Objective:	114-0231
Proposed FY 2004 Obligation:	\$7,510,000 FSA
Prior Year Unobligated:	\$0
Proposed FY 2005 Obligation:	\$10,000,000 FSA
Year of Initial Obligation:	FY 2004
Year of Final Obligation:	FY 2008

Summary: Activities under this objective emphasize local decision-making in the regions outside Tbilisi to respond to citizens' needs and priorities for services. Activities fall into four areas: 1) more efficient and responsive local governance; 2) citizen participation; 3) independent media development; and 4) rule of law and anti-corruption.

Inputs, Outputs, Activities:

FY 2004 Program:

Citizens Engaged in Local Decision-Making (CELD) (\$2,000,000 FSA). CELD will focus on local governments themselves, through outreach to constituents, service delivery through a small grants program, and training to improve municipal budgeting skills that maximize the impact of limited resources available to local governments. The program will focus on building an informed citizenry that will be able to hold government officials accountable for providing needed community services. Technical assistance will be provided for training local government officials and community leaders in local resources mobilization, and preparing and managing budgets and service delivery. Principal contractor: to be determined.

Citizen Participation and Media Development (\$2,300,000 FSA). This program will help leading Georgian NGOs establish a firm constituency base, achieve financial sustainability, develop more effective lobbying techniques to advocate for citizen interests, and actively address legal issues affecting the NGO Sector. The program will also encourage students to participate as members of their neighborhood through volunteer actions, community service, and joint initiatives with area schools. This program will expand to 40 schools this year through school-to-school mentoring. A "Media Innovations" program improves journalistic skills, fosters management skills that will help media outlets emerge as profit-making businesses, and strengthens the legal and regulatory framework to safeguard free speech and ensure access to public information. Principal grantees: Save the Children (prime), International Research and Exchanges Board (prime), International Foundation for Election Systems (sub).

Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption (\$2,600,000 FSA). USAID will support implementation of the Administrative Code and its Freedom of Information (FOI) clause to assist in controlling administrative agency abuses and limiting opportunities for corruption. USAID will work to control corruption at the local government level by linking its efforts with other democracy and governance programs. The program will work to increase citizen awareness and involvement in public hearings, and support an independent judiciary and greater professionalism among judges and lawyers. Principal grantees: Institutional Reform and the Informal Sector Center at the University of Maryland, and the American Bar Association's Central European and Eurasian Law Initiative.

Parliamentary Strengthening (\$900,000 FSA prior year recoveries).

Program Development and Support (\$610,000 FSA). USAID will utilize these funds to support program-funded staff and to cover other costs related to program design and development.

FY 2005 Program:

Parliamentary Strengthening (\$1,200,000 FSA, \$900,000 FSA prior-year recoveries). USAID will provide technical assistance to improve the operations of parliament and its members, including capacity building. Principal contractor: to be determined.

Youth in Politics and Media Innovation (\$1,600,000 FSA). Incremental funding to increase the role of youth in political development of Georgia and to enhance the professionalism and financial independence of the media. Principle contractor: to be determined.

Citizens Engaged in Local Decision-Making (\$2,500,000 FSA). Incremental funding to implement the second year of this program. Principal contractor: to be determined.

Youth Development Program and Citizen Participation and Media (\$1,550,000 FSA). Two new activities will be launched. Principal contractor: to be determined.

Rule of Law and Anticorruption (\$2,500,000 FSA). A new program will be launched to provide assistance to the judiciary, to improve civil society's anti-corruption efforts and to strengthen laws and institutions that promote good governance. Principal contractor: to be determined.

Program Development and Support (\$650,000 FSA). USAID will utilize these funds to support program-funded staff and to cover costs related to program design and development. Principal contractor: to be determined.

Performance and Results: After two years, the Local Government Reform Initiative-funded activities have demonstrated significant achievements in the five pilot cities. In these cities, water supply, trash collection and other services are now provided on a regular, sustainable basis. Parks have been renovated; street flooding has been successfully eliminated; and citizens have repaired their own buildings.

More than 26 NGOs have formed a Legislative Monitoring Group (LMG) that works to improve the legal framework and tracks and defeats legislative initiatives designed to adversely affect Georgian NGOs. The LMG has helped quash draft laws that would have taxed donor grants and NGO income, levied customs duties on imported humanitarian goods, held NGOs responsible for statements made by members not authorized to speak on their behalf, and complicated their registration and reporting requirements.

The piloted local media ratings system, financed primarily by Georgian media sources, will expand to the national level and is predicted to increase advertising revenue from \$3 million annually to almost \$20 million by FY 2008. Such a growth in advertising revenues should enable the broadcast media to become financially independent. Media Innovations helped establish the Georgian National Association of Broadcasters that unites 44 television, radio, and cable outlets; it also supports the Free Press print media association.

After four years, Georgia's Rule of Law program is beginning to make an impact. More than two-thirds of Georgian judges received training on the Administrative Code and its Freedom of Information (FOI) provision. Information obtained in FOI suits has been used to pressure local governments to amend budget expenditures and conduct budget operations in a transparent manner.

Other successful rule of law efforts included an international, award-winning series of public service announcements titled "Know Your Rights," the closing of military pretrial detention centers that were in violation of international standards, the administration of Georgia's first bar exam, the creation of a corps of judges devoted to improving judicial integrity, the establishment of a hotline for the public to report suspected judicial abuses and corruption, the formation of a coalition of NGOs to work on anti-corruption issues, and a coalition to work on women's rights issues. USAID supported its Georgian partners in efforts to stop a bill that would have drastically impinged on freedom of the press.