

STRATEGY PROGRAMME

March 2008

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION THROUGH ADVOCACY & LEGAL ADVICE CENTRES IN ASIA PACIFIC

Advocacy & Legal Advice Centres (ALACs) provide legal information, advice and assistance to victims and witnesses of corruption, enabling them to know their rights and pursue complaints. ALACs aim to empower citizens to take up the fight against corruption. ALACs compile and analyse the reported cases of corruption, providing an important source of information for identifying the soft points in the system that allow corruption to thrive.

This information, providing a profile of how corruption actually works, can then be used to develop advocacy strategies aimed at strengthening the ability and willingness of institutions to act upon corruption-related complaints. In this way, systemic improvements (legal, administrative and institutional) are achievable. Advocacy campaigns also create a virtuous circle, helping to establish the profile and reputation of the ALACs, which in turn encourages more citizens to join in and take action against corruption.



TI Bangladesh

GOAL

The programme seeks to enhance the capacity of victims and witnesses of corruption in Asia Pacific to redress their grievances and bring about systemic change.

OBJECTIVES

- Establish **an open channel for citizens** (as either victims or witnesses) to voice their complaints about cases of corruption.
- Provide support in these cases, including **helping citizens take their case forward to the appropriate anti-corruption authorities or the media.**
- **Advocate for and support necessary institutional and structural changes** based on evidence from case analyses.

TARGET COUNTRIES

Bangladesh, Fiji, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu

DURATION

Minimum duration: three years

APPROACH

The ALAC Programme promotes **local ownership** and the grounding of knowledge and expertise through the centres. At the same time, TI national chapters that are developing ALACs receive **support from the TI Secretariat** in the form of training, advice on proposals, and technical and operational support when the programme implementation commences.

ALACs employ **multi-stakeholder processes** to create dialogue, informal feedback, and working partnerships with government

institutions charged with anti-corruption. Many ALACs develop very functional relationships with government agencies including the judiciary. These relationships are typically underpinned by a memorandum of understanding (MOU).

ALACs help citizens to develop, articulate and pursue complaints; they **do not “investigate”** complaints to determine whether they are right or wrong. In other words, ALACs should be considered as a step *prior* to the submission of a complaint to government authorities, not in competition with it. ALACs help to ensure that government agencies receive well developed complaints that facilitate their investigation work; they are thus providing a service to both citizens *and* government agencies.

KEY INTERVENTIONS AND COMPONENTS

OPERATIONAL WORK

- Define the scope of ALAC and exact mandate for client services.
- Establish infrastructure, procedures, staffing, and legal advisory capacity.

COOPERATION AND OUTREACH

- Develop and sign memoranda of understanding with responsible institutions.
- Develop outreach strategies and promote services to public.

LEGAL AND ANTI-CORRUPTION ADVICE

- Provide daily advice and referrals to clients.
- Provide follow-up support to appropriate authorities.

ADVOCACY

- Analyse case data and establish a profile of corruption.
- Campaign for the performance of anti-corruption institutions to be improved based on case analysis.
- Promote the establishment and effective enforcement of whistleblower protection legislation.

Contact Information: