



TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL: MEDITERRANEAN ADVOCACY AND LEGAL ADVICE CENTRES PROGRAMME

Numerous surveys and studies demonstrate the pervasiveness and damaging effects of corruption in the Middle East-North Africa (MENA) region. The UN Arab Human Development Report, the most significant pan-Arab index on quality of life, attributes a deficit in good governance to being one of the key factors for the region's under-development, concluding that corruption must be tackled if the region is to develop accountable institutions and implement the rule of law.

A critical problem confronting the region is public passivity in the face of endemic corruption. Such a mind-set fuels a vicious cycle: corruption spreads when it encounters indifference, which in turn confirms the impression that corruption is so widespread and ingrained that nothing can be done to counter it. Feelings of being powerless, frustration and alienation ensure that citizens are left with no effective mechanisms to protest against abuse, thus reinforcing the cycle.

The TI Mediterranean Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres (ALACs) programme aims to address these problems of public apathy and the lack of mechanisms for victims by establishing three ALACs in Lebanon, Morocco and Palestine in 2008 and potentially two additional centres in Egypt and Jordan in 2009. Through empowering citizens and involving high profile media and outreach campaigns, ALACs are an effective tool to advance civil society in their fight against corruption, and in the long run bring about systemic improvements.

Thanks to funding from the UK Department for International Development the TI Mediterranean ALAC programme will be implemented from August 2008 to January 2011.



OBJECTIVES

- **Empower victims and witnesses of corruption to actively address their grievances**

Citizens will be empowered to develop and file complaints in a variety of areas, including the agencies responsible for the functioning of the administration, economic development, social services and the judicial sector. Provided with constructive mechanisms and approaches for doing this, citizens will be able to seek compensation and engage effectively with institutions, which will become more responsive to public needs. Citizens will be more confident that their voices are heard and complaints are filed with the competent authority thus reducing perceptions of powerlessness and vulnerability.

- **Promote systemic legal, administrative and institutional change to strengthen the fight against corruption**

While the immediate beneficiaries of the project are the individuals who file corruption-related cases and have these resolved, the TI Mediterranean programme has larger goals to benefit the public. As individual cases are assessed and broader problems identified, calls for systemic reform will be made. Similar problems will be prevented and the public's interaction with officials will improve.

ACTIVITIES

- Set up toll-free hotlines and/or other forms of citizen-engagement outreach
- Provide legal advice and support to citizens
- Analyse complaints to identify legal, administrative and institutional weaknesses that allow corruption to flourish, and prevent law implementation and enforcement
- Advocate for structural reforms through constructive engagement with governmental and public partners
- Build ALACs and ALAC network capacity

BENEFICIARIES

- Victims and witnesses of corruption
- Public institutions
- Media
- Civil society

The ultimate beneficiaries of the programme are citizens of the participating countries.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Well-managed ALACs supply quality legal advice to citizens affected by corruption
- Effective interaction between anti-corruption civil society and public institutions
- Better understanding of specifics of corruption in participating programme countries
- Effective public interest advocacy by civil society
- Strengthened ALAC network at regional and global level

KEY FACTS

Focus

Advocacy and legal advice

Types of activity

Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres

Goal

Increase government responsiveness and accountability through building civil society's capacity to directly engage citizens in the fight against corruption

Implemented through

Transparency International Secretariat
Lebanese Transparency Association (LTA)
Transparency Maroc (TM)
Coalition for Accountability and Integrity – Palestine (AMAN)
TI National Contact Point Egypt – prospective 2009
TI National Contact Point Jordan – prospective 2009

Contact

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Participating countries

Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Palestine

Time span

30 months

August 2008 to January 2011

Funding

UK £1,020,040

UK Department for International Development