Strengthening Integrity for the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

Experiences from the

Eastern European and the CIS Region

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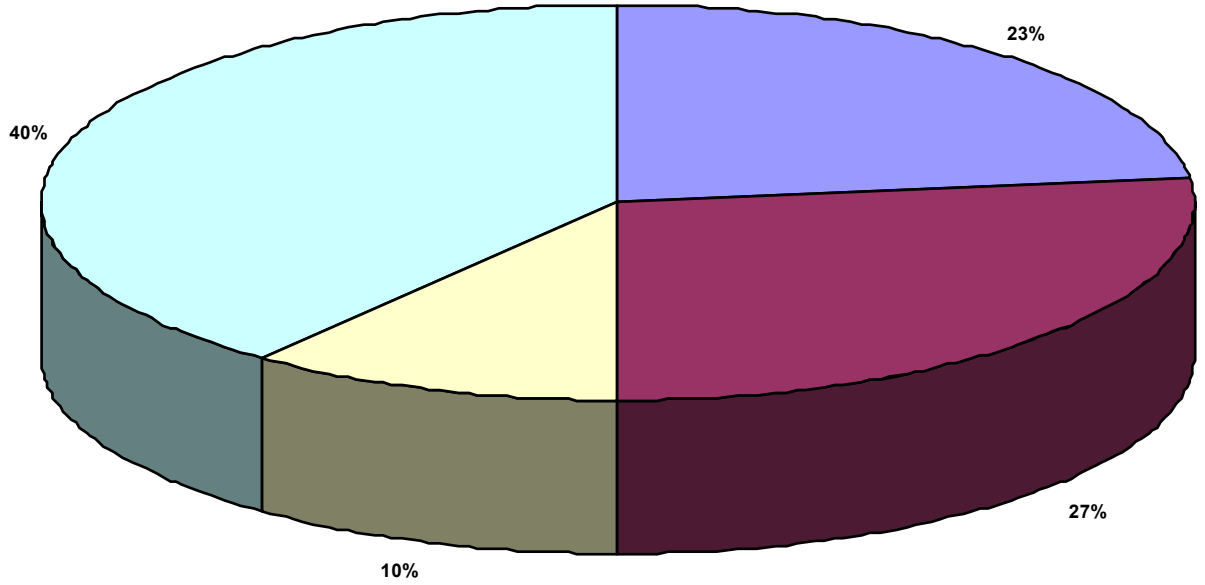
Beirut, June 2010

UNDP Programming for Anti-Corruption in the Region, 2004-2009



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New tendencies

Some innovative projects or ideas > anti corruption in specific sectors, more direct relation to service delivery and subsequently to the MDGs;

Projects mainstreaming Anti-Corruption within local governance, human rights and access to justice, poverty reduction and environment as well as BCPR activities

(e.g. Macedonia, methodology for assessment of corruption at the municipal level; Kosovo, support to Municipal transparency and accountability; Montenegro, Kosovo, Serbia, judicial transparency and rule of law; Armenia, anti corruption in the health and education and social sector, anti-corruption and gender; Tajikistan, integrity in the Water sector).

Water Integrity Assessment in Tajikistan

Background:

Tajikistan is the 5th most water-rich country in the world, but only 59% of its population has access to safe drinking water (47% in the rural areas)

In spite of its rich water resources, the country has the worst access to safe drinking water in all of Central Asia (the problem is not availability, is governance)

With some 70% of infrastructures needing reconstruction there has been serious deterioration in drinking water quality > health threat to the population

Only 40% of treatment systems are effective, as a result: water born diseases prevalent in rural areas

The project

Develop an **'integrity vulnerability mitigation plan' (Action plan)** to implement reforms that can reduce the risks for corrupt practices to occur in the water sector.

- **To inform strategies and actions** to reduce the risks for corruption to occur in the water sector, by developing an 'integrity vulnerability mitigation plan';
- **To provide a useful tool to track progress** over time (using this first assessment as a baseline); and
- **To raise public intolerance to corruption**, and to advocate for action by all stakeholders to improve transparency, integrity and accountability in the water sector.

- Partners: Tajik Agency on Financial Control and Anti-Corruption, Ministry of Water and Land Reclamation, the Strategic Research Centre and civil society organizations,

Methodology

Step-by-step assessment approach:

1) **Water stakeholder mapping**

2) Reach consensus on **which respondent groups should be targeted** by the assessment, and which organizations/institutions should be surveyed in each group. Proposed 6 groups of respondents:

Rural consumers, Urban consumers, **Water Users' Associations**, **Rural providers**, **Urban providers**: **Private contractors.**

3) Organize and conduct **Focus Group discussions**

With each group of respondents to identify priority corruption risk areas which should be included in the survey.

Methodology

4) **Analyze results of FGDs** (by the Research Group) and **develop survey questionnaires** accordingly **- Corruption risks identified**

5) Conduct the nationwide surveys

key elements:

Who will serve as surveyors?

Train surveyors

Quality control during the survey

6) Presentation of **draft report (findings & policy recommendations) to Advisory Group** for feedback / validation prior to broader dissemination of findings

Methodology

7) Dissemination of the report to 'decision-makers'

Validate assessment findings

- Presentation of findings
- Statements by respondent institutions to validate the findings publicly and to agree to take action
- Presentation of anti-corruption tools to inspire practical action

8) Secure a commitment to action

- Multi-stakeholder 'group work' based on thematic areas
- Select 2 recommendations per group, and for each recommendation:
  - priority rating: high, medium, low
  - spell out specific actions to be taken
  - identify lead institution(s) responsible for these actions
  - estimate financial resources required
  - define timeframe (fiscal years)

  (Action plan)

Key questions for the Action Plan

- Who will be responsible for signing off on the plan?
- Who will be responsible for obtaining full political commitment to support the implementation of the plan? And for securing funding for the implementation of the plan?
- How will be responsible for the monitoring of the implementation?
- Who should be responsible for reporting on the implementation?
- What will be the reporting mechanism?
- Frequency of reporting progress?
- How will institutions be held accountable on their commitments?
- Which institution will exercise an oversight role over the implementation of the plan?

Design of a **monitoring system** to track changes over time

The most 'critical' **corruption risks** will need to be monitored on a regular basis once they have been identified in the baseline assessment

- A 'simple' monitoring mechanism could take the form of a 'simplified survey', based on the most critical corruption risks identified in the baseline survey.

- Alternatively, the Macedonian approach to corruption risk monitoring could be considered: for each risk, identify a corresponding anti-corruption mechanism, and an indicator to measure the effectiveness of this anti-corruption mechanism (drawing mainly from objective data sources, rather than from inputs from water consumers/ water providers)

Armenia: Anti-Corruption Participatory Monitoring Methodology for the Health and Education services

Background

Health and education were selected as sectors of focus given their importance in the MDGs and their link to poverty alleviation, Household surveys indicate health and education as two of the primary sectors in which citizens made unofficial payments, and these payments have relatively high frequency and amounts.

Though Armenia has a high level of education by world standards, problems arose in the early 1990s because of the economic crisis and significant declines in expenditures on health and education.

Some interviewed for this study consider informal payments as a **functional, rather than a corrupt, means to keep the health system operating**. In both sectors, systemic corruption is evident as informal and non-transparent payments become normalized.

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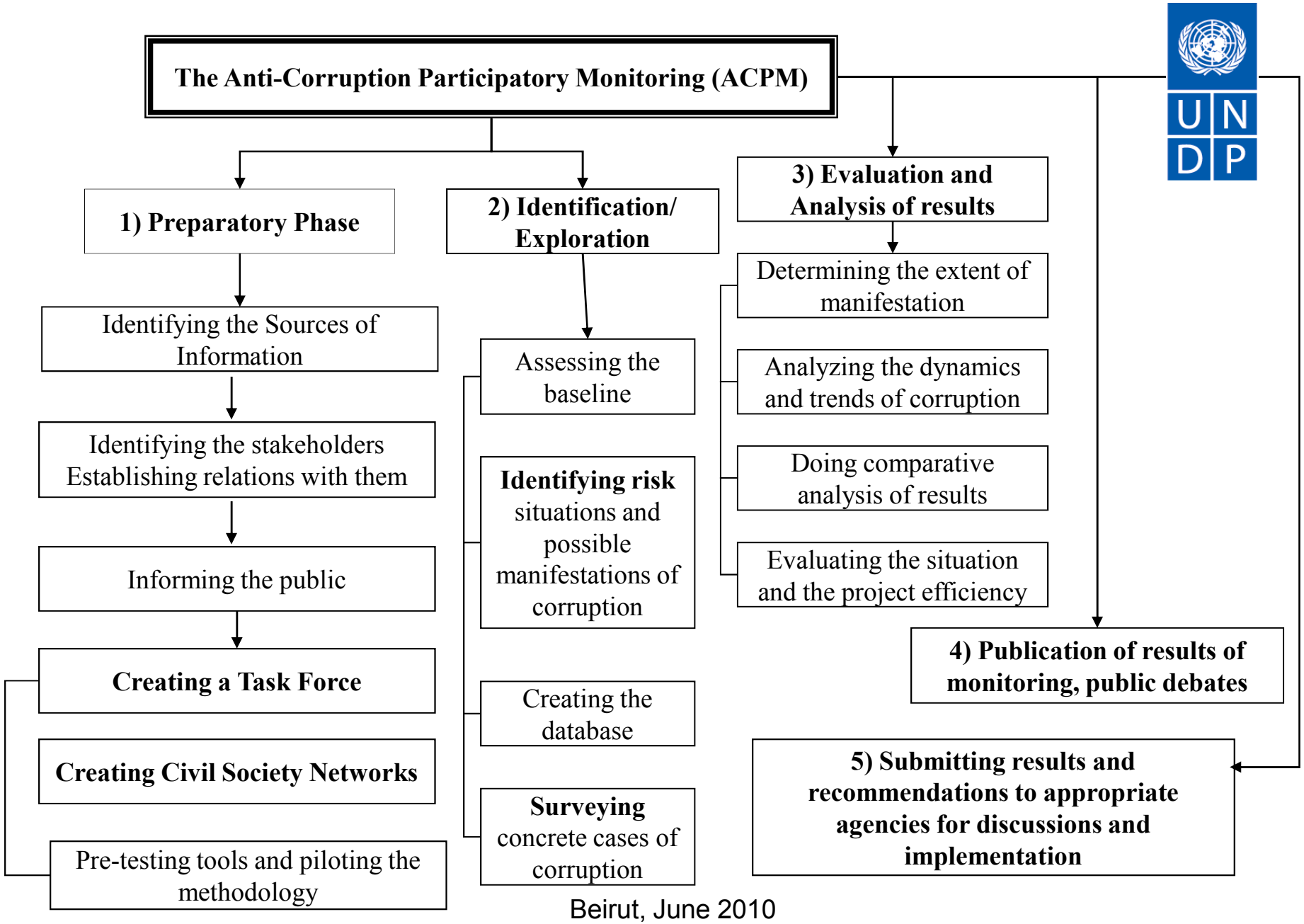
The project

Goal: to provide insight and data that will lead to recommendations for systemic public policy changes in the health and education sectors.

To develop a system for consultation concerning the implementation of the AC strategy in the specific sectors and for the amelioration of the strategy

To strengthen the capacity of civil society to participate in anti-corruption initiatives, in particular in monitoring the implementation of the government's Anti-Corruption Strategy in the health and education sectors.

To develop institutional capacity to address corruption in the Health and education services



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AC Task Force

Creation of a **Task Force on Anti-Corruption/APMM** (expert's group) to:

- Elaborate a **Methodology for participatory monitoring in the health and education sectors** (1st year)
- Develop **monitoring and oversight tools** for APMM implementation (2nd year).

The Task Force is composed by representatives of Donors, IO, National Monitoring Commission representatives of civil society organizations, professionals/experts including practicing doctors, government officials from health, education and the statistical service, a sociologist and methodology expert contracted by UNDP, and UNDP staff.

Elements:

- Participatory processes,
- Transparent and democratic formation,
- Professional criteria were stressed for nominees.

The Task Force met weekly for 2 years, and government focal points commit their time on a non-paid basis as ex-officio Task Force members.

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Anti-corruption participatory monitoring Methodology

The goal is to prevent corruption in the education and health care sectors by increasing transparency, responsibility, accountability, participation and efficiency.

1) **Identification of "corruption manifestations"**: 26 for the health sector, and 19 for the education sector. Examples: recruiting personnel in educational institutions through protectionism and/or bribes; demanding informal payments from patients registered with health facilities; and extortion from patients at health institutions through prescribing unnecessary examinations.

2) for the 45 corruption manifestations > **group of tools** based on:

- observation,
- focus group,
- expert interview
- in-depth interview techniques

Guidelines for use of the tools were also developed. The tools were designed in sets to allow comparisons, for example between observations and interviews regarding a particular manifestation.

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Civil Society Networks

Civil Society Anti-Corruption Network (CSA) established **to implement the monitoring methodology.**

- Community meetings were held to introduce the anti-corruption initiatives for monitoring by civil society. Announcements inviting citizens to apply for the CSA group membership were distributed through print, radio and TV media, as was coverage of the meetings.

- Despite the risk of apathy and the fact that participation in monitoring is on a non-paid basis, over 200 applications were received from citizens. A transparent process of selection based on consistent criteria followed, with final interview panels comprising NGO representatives, journalists, UNDP staff and government officials.

- The Government's Anti-Corruption Monitoring Commission was also invited to participate on the panels. Sectoral specialists, lawyers, accountants, economists, journalists and NGO representatives are represented in the groups

Results

- The project produced a comprehensive analysis of the systemic causes of corruption in the 2 sectors as well as indications on the presence and type of corruption

- recommendations for the AC policy and for improving the legal framework

- 80 % of the recommendations were incorporated in the AC policy

Lessons learned - applying best practices in different settings

- Identify stakeholders to be involved (policy makers – users and suppliers – research centers, NGOs)
- identify the baseline, diagnosis of the scale and nature of the problem (conduct a risk assessment)
- build networks of actors from all spheres of society: private, public and civil society. multi-stakeholder coalitions
- increasing awareness should be a component
- develop an action plan, apply RBM principles
- Monitoring and evaluation, sustainability