



**PROMOTING THE
AFRICAN UNION CONVENTION
ON PREVENTING AND
COMBATING CORRUPTION**

Tactical Area 4

Strengthen anti-corruption institutions and anti-corruption work by public authorities

ADVOCACY TOOLS AND TACTICS

This is one of six toolkits – each focusing on a different tactical area – from the collection, *Promoting the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption: Tools and Tactics*.

While monitoring and advocating for the implementation of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption, several Transparency International chapters developed advocacy tactics to hold governments accountable. These have helped them work with decision-makers to meet the as yet outstanding commitments in implementation and enforcement of this convention.

This collection was developed as part of Transparency International's project, Towards Enforcement of Africa's Commitments against Corruption (TEA-CAC), funded by Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). It presents tools and tactics that are based on real examples of creative advocacy work so that other civil society organisations can replicate them in their own anti-corruption campaigning.

The other toolkits:

Tactical area 1

Increase public awareness to the implementation status of African states' anti-corruption commitments

Tactical area 2

Empower African civil society organisations to effectively engage in anti-corruption activities

Tactical area 3

Strengthen the capacities of media partners to monitor the implementation of anti-corruption commitments and demand accountability

Tactical area 4

Strengthen anti-corruption institutions and anti-corruption work by public authorities

Tactical area 5

Advocate for legal reforms in the domestication of the AUCPCC

Tactical area 6

Monitor the AUCPCC's implementation

You can access each toolkit and the full collection of tools and tactics on the [Transparency International website](#).

TACTICAL AREA 4

Strengthen anti-corruption institutions and anti-corruption work by public authorities

Traditional anti-corruption policy focuses on government enforcement of anti-corruption standards. Over the last decade, collective action has become the norm. The UN Global Compact, the World Bank Institute and the OECD's Anti-Bribery Recommendation all endorsed governments collaborating with business and civil society to fight corruption. However, cooperation between civil society and government is not easy or quick and requires patience, hard work and solid advocacy. Government engagement, as noted above, is a common approach among the many tactics developed by Transparency International's national chapters to promote the effective implementation of the AUCPCC.

In South Africa, Transparency International's chapter, Corruption Watch, has a "whole of society" approach to fighting corruption. For this, Corruption Watch joined a committee made up of various government agencies to better coordinate the handling of cases of corruption. Through this committee, the organi-

sation is able to refer individual cases of corruption to the appropriate law enforcement agencies and stakeholders that can best investigate them. In Côte d'Ivoire, Social Justice understood that the authorities viewed civil society organisations with distrust. Through targeted dialogue with government officials in private meetings, they built trust to become active partners with their elected representatives in fighting corruption.

The Ghana Integrity Initiative retains its organisational independence while collaborating with government officials to organise the commemoration of the AUCPCC and other anti-corruption milestones through various events.

In Tunisia, after the first municipal elections took place, I WATCH launched a capacity building programme for local authorities who often do not have a legal background.

ENGAGING THE GOVERNMENT WITHIN MULTI-STAKEHOLDER FORUMS (SOUTH AFRICA)

How it relates to the AUCPCC

Article 12 of the AUCPCC (civil society and the media) stipulates that states will undertake to “Be fully engaged in the fight against corruption and related offences and the popularization of this Convention with the full participation of the Media and Civil Society at large...”

Why use this tactic?

In a “whole of society” approach to fighting corruption, there can be a realisation by both civil society and government actors that no institution can deal with this issue alone. Governments can view an anti-corruption organisation as a partner that could bolster its credibility in a context where citizens may distrust authorities. Conversely, an anti-corruption organisation can help victims find justice in corruption cases by engaging in a civil society-government forum or providing submissions to a government inquiry. In seizing this ideal, “win-win” opportunity, corruption allegations can be brought to law enforcement on a confidential basis.

Description and objectives of the tactic

The tactic brings relevant players fighting corruption into one room. By building trust among various anti-corruption actors in a committee-like multi-stakeholder forum, both individual and sector specific corruption complaints can be passed in confidence to law enforcement officials and other stakeholders who have the capacity and powers to investigate. In a similar manner, civil society organisations can engage when a government creates a special commission of inquiry. Such ad hoc public investigation bodies are also an

opportunity to refer concrete cases of corruption on a sector-by-sector basis for investigation and resolution.

The objectives of using a multi-stakeholder forum to address systemic corruption are to:

- + Receive and assess allegations of corruption. Often, such forums can become a “one-stop” clearing house (based on the mandate of the parties in those meetings) to determine which agency has specific responsibilities to best deal with the allegations.
- + Follow up. Once the allegations are referred for investigation, the forum can collectively make sure there was an appropriate “consequence management” in addressing the allegations so that no cases “fall through the cracks”.
- + Address the systemic nature of sectoral corruption. Proper analysis of corruption data can detect hotspots or corruption trends in specific institutions, in, for example, particular hospitals in the health sector. Presenting such patterns at an official forum or commission makes it possible to deal with systemic issues across the sector and formulate preventive recommendations.

Key conditions for success

- + Government must be open to partnership and receive civil society input. Conversely, some in the civil society may be critical of those willing to work with the government, which is perceived as opportunism and undercutting objectivity.
- + A whistleblower hotline, such as a Transparency International Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre or other reporting channels for receiving allegations of corruption, provides concrete cases that

can be referred to an anti-corruption forum or steering committee, thereby giving credibility.

Background to the tactic

The most important progress in the fight against corruption in South Africa in recent years has been the adoption of the 10-year national anti-corruption strategy. As part of that strategy, the government formed several anti-corruption forums, of which Corruption Watch is an active member. Initially, the forums were a consultative mechanism for private sector and law enforcement, but Corruption Watch fought hard to have civil society represented. The first forum was focused on corruption in the health sector. The second was formed as a local government anti-corruption forum, and the third forum was on infrastructure.

“We attended the launch of the first forum and publicly said that we are also working on these issues, and are getting reports about corruption in this sector, so we should be included in the forum,” says Kavisha Pillay, head of stakeholder relations and campaigns. Corruption Watch then advocated for space for civil society in the forums, holding media briefings and writing open letters to the government.

How to do this

1. Lobby for the creation of multi-stakeholder forums or commissions of inquiries

Corruption Watch South Africa advocated for the creation of the sector specific forums. Corruption Watch also advocated for the creation of the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture, Corruption and Fraud in the Public Sector including Organs of State, better known as the Zondo Commission or State Capture Commission.

2. Advocate for inclusive terms of reference for civil society participation

When they were successful in getting the appointment of a standing forum or a special commission of inquiry, Corruption Watch found another campaign was needed to obtain an invitation for the organisation to be asked to join as a member of those forums or have standing to submit evidence to an inquiry. In relation to the Zondo Commission, the organisation recognised early on that advocacy was needed so

the commission of inquiry would have broader terms of reference to permit civil society to submit specific cases and recommendations.

3. Communicate about the forum or commission

Communicating about why your organisation is a part of a government created forum is important. In the case of a special commission of inquiry, Corruption Watch gave daily updates to summarise the developments at the Zondo Commission and looked at the commission’s recommendations and how to move towards successful implementation. With the forums, Corruption Watch kept the public informed generally and relevant stakeholders specifically about allegations brought forward.

“If we are able to demonstrate as a collective that we are serious about government forums and commission recommendations, and support the government to take the necessary steps by submitting cases and analysis, even in the form of successful prosecutions or successful litigation, then definitely we are halfway there to winning the corruption battle,” says Corruption Watch’s Pillay.

4. Bring broader civil society into government forums

Corruption Watch encouraged other major civil society organisations dealing with corruption issues in the sector (such as health issues) to join the forums, and suggested private sector actors to the government.

Additional information

Prepare in advance to be ready to comment on the terms of reference when the state creates an anti-corruption body, since civil society may be deliberately or unintentionally excluded from participation. Likewise, be ready to comment on the selection of the commissioners in case there are some of doubtful integrity appointed for political reasons. Corruption Watch found that the process of setting up a forum or commission can sometimes drag on. Therefore, should there be delays in implementation that stretch overly long, a cost-benefit calculation can be strategic to reassess the use of this tactic and step back from a stalled process.

Corruption Watch, State Capture Boosted Violence and Organised Crime, [a joint submission](#) by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) and Corruption Watch

to the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into Allegations of State Capture (Zondo Commission), 2019.

Corruption Watch made a [second submission and presented oral evidence](#) in February 2021, reflecting on their interventions to monitor appointments to key crime and corruption fighting institutions.

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ENGAGEMENT AND TRUST-BUILDING WITH THE GOVERNMENT (CÔTE D'IVOIRE)

How it relates to the AUCPCC

Article 12 of the AUCPCC (civil society and media) stipulates that states undertake have civil society and the media “be fully engaged in the fight against corruption and related offences and the popularisation of this convention with the full participation of the Media and Civil Society at large.”

anti-corruption regulations and practices that do not match their commitments under the AUCPCC

- + build opportunities to overcome barriers of distrust with authorities to effectively implement the AUCPCC in law
- + demonstrate the positive results for society from engagement with government officials

Why use this tactic?

Building initial trust through small successful collaborations on events that spotlight positive government initiatives can lead to dialogue on other, more politically sensitive issues of corruption. Impact can be achieved by relationship-building to then take anti-corruption issues forward and identify topics for future, subsequent discussions. Dialogue can often change perceptions and create opportunities that did not seem to exist before.

Description and objectives of the tactic

By engaging in specific, focused and targeted dialogue with open-minded government officials regardless of their level, anti-corruption activists can address many specific problems and build trust based on specific issues and solutions. Sustained engagement can lead to the co-creation of joint solutions. Rather than remaining entirely silent about such exchanges, this tactic tries to provide periodic public feedback on the impact of the civil society organisation’s input, which is crucial to maintaining the public’s trust and the willingness to endorse the organisation’s engagement with authorities.

The objectives of this tactic are to:

- + identify necessary policy and programmatic changes in government policy to fill gaps in their

Key conditions for success

- + Be willing to balance confidentiality with transparency. Assurances will have to be made that initial conversations will be kept confidential, since the purpose is not to quote officials in their response but assist the government in understanding and dealing with corruption.
- + Open door/willingness to cooperate by all parties. This tactic will not work in a hostile political environment in which government authorities will punish those speaking with civil society.

Background to the tactic

The public and smaller civil society organisations in Côte d’Ivoire should be active partners with their elected representatives in fighting corruption. Yet the authorities often view civil society with distrust, and formal government engagement can be difficult for the public, civil society organisations and other stakeholders. Building a working relationship with a government sends an important signal about official support for civil society involvement in implementing and monitoring the AUCPCC. In many countries, existing coalitions and multi-stakeholder platforms are ready to perform this role.

How to do this

1. Find the right person inside the ministry who could be a champion

Doing some research to find officials who are open to listening to civil society ensures success.

2. Seize opportunities to begin the dialogue

Make a request for a private meeting of a government oversight or investigatory body when there have been reports of corruption in the news. It captures official attention as a hook to prompt dialogue.

3. Provide an agenda or subject for conversation

A short note or briefing paper can highlight the issues that you wish to discuss in advance of a meeting with government officials. When there is no prior identification of civil society's analysis, then government ministers may become defensive without knowing what is to be discussed or how to answer criticism.

4. Invite open-minded government officials to speak at an NGO event

Giving the government a platform to speak with citizens remains an attractive offer for officials.

5. Promote wider community engagement with civil society by bringing citizen representatives to a meeting with government officials

On specific topics and focused conversations, involving notable citizens can bring gravitas and weight to the conversation. Businessmen, philanthropists, community leaders all lend weight to a meeting.

6. Build a coalition when possible

A government official may turn down a meeting with one organisation but must prioritise dialogue when it involves a group of civil society organisations.

7. Find common ground and recognise that some issues are difficult and complex

It can be helpful, when a government expects civil society to be on the offensive and critical, to acknowledge the complex nature of fighting corruption and the grey areas that may arise.

8. Keep the conversation going

In the closing segment of any meeting with government officials, identify topics for subsequent discussions that can keep the dialogue alive and lead forward into further topics that may be an official priority.

Additional information

Many activists have reservations about “talking shops” in government meetings that do not seem to lead to action and change. There can be good reasons for their suspicions, given that many societies are characterised by structural inequalities that allow more powerful individuals greater voice, while dominant views can be so powerful as to inhibit critical questioning about alternatives. When adopting a tactic of engaging authorities at a personal level as well as institutional level to build trust, any civil society organisation should expect to be called upon to justify their decision. There may even be accusations of civil society being “co-opted” by the government by those suspicious of such an interaction. There are strong arguments for individual dialogue, however, such as seeing these dialogues as opportunities to express anti-corruption positions and arguments to reach people who may not otherwise be exposed to them. Although challenging at times, civil society-to-government talks create the possibility that officials engage with activists’ positions more seriously than they might otherwise.

UNDP published an extensive report on preventing corruption and securing public sector excellence. The report has useful case studies from a number of regions that distil both academic analysis and practitioner experience: [Good Practices in Public Sector Excellence to Prevent Corruption: A Lessons Learned Study in Support of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption \(UNCAC\)](#).

Transparency International’s Anti-Corruption Helpdesk published an overview document: [The Role of Civil Society in Fighting Corruption in Côte D’Ivoire](#), which provides examples of concrete measures that civil society there is taking for corruption prevention and sensitisation.

CONTACT

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COLLABORATIVE ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMEMORATIONS (GHANA)

How it relates to the AUCPCC

Article 12 of the AUCPCC (strengthen anti-corruption institutions) stipulates that states will undertake to “Be fully engaged in ... the popularization of this Convention with the full participation of the Media and Civil Society at large.”

Why use this tactic?

Collaborative stakeholder actions bring together national stakeholders in civil society and government for commemorations of good governance standards, such as the African Anti-Corruption Day (11 July), International Anti-Corruption Day (9 December) or International Human Rights Day (10 December). Expanding the commemoration to a whole week of events allows other key stakeholders to collaborate in planning activities, giving each actor a day of activities.

Description and objectives of the tactic

An annual observance of an anti-corruption day can make it easier to mobilise various stakeholders. Since it is a general commemoration and not about a specific case, government and civil society can more easily work together. When well-coordinated, there is power in bringing together several organisations and visibility from the larger group of co-organisers. And the event allows working with a variety of civil society actors, including human rights, youth and women’s groups, in outreach to the public. Activities can include speeches marking the day of ratification of an anti-corruption standard, debates about its implementation or particular themes, quizzes about the standard, and awards.

The objectives of the tactic are to:

- + create visibility and public awareness of the AUCPCC and the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), as well as of the national framework providing guidance for anti-corruption efforts
- + use international anti-corruption frameworks as the theme for discussion, which may seem less confrontational to national and local authorities
- + avoid duplication and clashes if several organisations hold commemorative programmes on the same day
- + bring anti-corruption stakeholders and partners together to reflect, plan and fight corruption.

Key conditions for success

- + Planning is critical. An organisation must have the capacity to mobilise and coordinate, starting the planning well in advance to ensure there is sufficient time to bring key stakeholders onboard.
- + Retain organisational independence in the programme. While collaborating with government officials, maintain a critical but constructive approach.
- + Effective implementation can also mean bringing the private sector to the table as co-organisers and sponsors.

Background to the tactic

Ghana Integrity Initiative (GII) works through a multi-stakeholder approach. “In other African countries,

a Transparency International chapter may be the only anti-corruption organisation,” says Executive Director Linda Ofori-Kwafo. “But here in Ghana, there are a number of CSOs working on governance, and many are adopting anti-corruption into their work, so GII cannot work independently without regard to a number of organisations all engaging state agencies separately.” To avoid duplication of efforts and fatigue on the part of state agencies, GII has adopted a more collaborative way of engaging the government and stakeholders so that civil society has a stronger voice and works together as a team.

The advantage of this collaboration for an annual event lies in getting access to a government agency, a key anti-corruption state institution as convener and other actors partnering with them. This engagement is known to have brought together most actors in the governance space who have a role in the implementation of the National Anti-Corruption Action Plan (NACAP), such as the judiciary, executive and legislature through the various decentralised agencies, law enforcement, the private sector, and civil society and media.

How to do this

1. Write letters of invitation

to reach out to other government stakeholders to ensure broad official buy-in.

2. An initial meeting,

in which organisers form a planning committee for an exchange of ideas about their preferred activities during the commemorative week. Planning meetings then take place throughout the run-up to the events. Coordinated timing among stakeholders for this week of events can mean the agreed timeframe works for everyone, without clashes or duplication.

3. Develop a concept note early,

for mobilising funding as well as ensuring agreement among co-organisers. Start with this step at least six to eight months before the event.

4. Look for funding

by identifying which sponsors have resources, then approach embassies and other donors several months in advance to secure the necessary backing.

5. Start the media campaign

to secure interviews in newspapers or on radio to promote public awareness about the events. This step, no later than a month or two before the event, involves – among other things – creating a template press release and agreeing the key media messages among co-organisers.

6. Hold the commemorative events

with most meetings open to the public. Be sure, however, to reserve time for a few private discussions with the government about further strategy and initiatives.

7. Evaluate jointly

the successes and challenges in organising the commemoration with all those involved to learn for next year.

Additional information

No annual day of commemoration of the AUCPCC is going to directly minimise corruption but it can be a complementary tactic to promote better coordination among civil society actors. Anti-corruption advocacy can be perceived as negative and emphasising the darker and more criminal aspects of society. In this tactic of celebrating an anti-corruption convention, the message is a positive one that puts government authorities in a better light for having ratified a regional standard of integrity.

Review the [programmes and concept notes](#) for GII’s national anti-corruption week.

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CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING WORKSHOPS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TUNISIA)

HOW IT RELATES TO THE AUCPCC

Article 12 of the AUCPCC (civil society and media) stipulates that states undertake have civil society and the media “be fully engaged in the fight against corruption and related offences and the popularisation of this convention with the full participation of the Media and Civil Society at large.”

Why use this tactic?

Alongside national anti-corruption initiatives, tackling corruption at the local level is key because citizens encounter governments primarily in their own cities and towns where they access basic services. Much depends upon the capacity of local officials to respond to reports of corruption. Resolving cases of corruption at the local level then builds trust and legitimacy of the state and provides opportunities for citizen participation

Description and objectives of the tactic

This tactic is about training local officials on anti-corruption legal standards that they should use in their work. Those elected at the local level often do not have a legal background, so they come to a training course to learn. The local authorities need help to know where to go when a legal question arises. So, the tactic focuses on teaching them principles and sharing knowledge with them on which laws apply to corruption cases.

The objectives for this training are to:

- + Build capacity in local authorities on anti-corruption standards and techniques.

- + Encourage mutual effort with citizens. Citizens must know their rights to exercise them by, for example, asking local authorities for information and for relevant people to declare their assets. The public should know the importance of their involvement and participation in the fight against corruption.
- + Sensitise authorities that citizen participation ensures that the authorities' work meets citizen's needs. Educate the public about the importance of their involvement and participation in the fight against corruption.

The objectives of this tactic are to

- + Build capacity in local authorities on anti-corruption standards and techniques.
- + Encourage mutual effort with citizens. Citizens must know their rights to exercise them by, for example, asking local authorities for information and for relevant people to declare their assets. The public should know the importance of their involvement and participation in the fight against corruption.
- + Sensitise authorities that citizen participation ensures that the authorities' work meets citizen's needs. Educate the public about the importance of their involvement and participation in the fight against corruption.

Key conditions for success

- + Demonstrate respect for the office and the officials. The best way to reach local authorities is to show them that you consider them an authority, which makes them more responsible and accountable.

- + Start the training from local authorities' experiences and challenges. They might already have some concrete problems linked to corruption that can be addressed in the training.
- + Harness the enthusiasm of newly elected local officials who do not have the legal knowledge but are willing to fight corruption.
- + Keep those training seminars interactive through scenarios and case studies.
- + Offer ongoing support so that it does not remain a one-off activity.

Background to the tactic

In May 2018, the first municipal elections took place in Tunisia and 350 municipal councils were created. Those municipal elections were the first vote at the local level in Tunisia since the 2011 revolution and the adoption of the constitution on 27 January 2014, which enshrined the principle of administrative autonomy of local authorities and the election of municipal councillors by direct universal suffrage.

Local authorities are important (the Tunisian constitution calls them "the local power") and on a level with other political institutions, such as the judiciary. Local authorities make decisions every day at a local level, applying the AUCPCC clauses in their work, such as citizen access to information, bribery prevention and asset declarations. For those municipalities at the border, local authorities must be aware of the risk of money laundering among people dealing with a lot of cash.

How to do this

1. Develop the material for training programmes based on what local officials already know and the situations they are dealing with

Research is the first step, in part to decide on what the training material should include as well as to adapt the training material depending upon the function and context of the officials in municipalities. "Train a local official one day and then next day he is dealing with those issues," says Aya Riahi, a legal adviser at I WATCH in Tunisia.

2. Selection of the elected officials to be trained

I WATCH has partnered with 200 municipalities. The content of the training was sent to those municipalities. In turn, local officials not only received the training but also began to communicate about the AUCPCC with the public.

3. First training seminar with elected officials

The content of the training was about the AUCPCC and the intersections between Tunisian law and the AUCPCC. The course should be adapted to reflect the type of decisions being taken by authorities regarding citizens and corruption.

4. Follow-up with support

I WATCH offers ongoing support to those municipalities to help them solve practical problems that arise. I WATCH receives calls from them asking questions and what to do. For example, on access to information, many officials reach out to the chapter for guidance on if they are allowed to give out certain information to the public.

Additional information

Organisations implementing this tactic must make sure everyone is given the necessary information to ensure that the municipal officials, and the local public they serve, are adequately engaged. That requires a comprehensive communication strategy for a training programme to be relevant and taken up by stakeholders.

- + Transparency International Secretariat. [Local Governance Integrity: Principles and Standards](#)
- + Transparency International Secretariat. [Lessons Learned from Anti-Corruption Efforts at Municipal and City Level](#)

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