



# ADVOCACY AND LEGAL ADVICE CENTRES EMPOWERING CITIZENS: SECURING LASTING CHANGE

Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres (ALACs) provide free legal advice and assistance to victims and witnesses of corruption. Through telephone hotlines, walk-in centres and outreach services, ALACs help citizens pursue corruption-related complaints. Their success serves as a rebuttal to the idea that corruption is inevitable. Harnessing the powerful, real life data gathered by ALACs on the consequences and mechanisms of corruption, Transparency International (TI) chapters engage in strategic advocacy to bring about systemic change. The diversity of cases and people who use the centres – from the unemployed to entrepreneurs and well-positioned whistleblowers – demonstrates the pervasive nature of corruption. In line with TI's approach of constructive engagement, ALACs build partnerships with public authorities and private actors to effect change. ALACs observe strict client confidentiality.

ALACs started in 2003 on a pilot basis in South Eastern Europe. Surpassing all early expectations, the ALAC model has since taken off and now represents one of the most dynamic of anti-corruption interventions. By 2011, it is expected that ALACs will operate in more than 50 countries in all regions of the world, from Guatemala to Georgia, Pakistan to Papua New Guinea, and Romania to Rwanda. This rapid growth is evidence of ALAC's practical and results-driven approach, as well as their high cost effectiveness.

## SUCCESS AND IMPACT

Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres (ALACs) yield remarkable impact in highly diverse environments:

- By providing a simple, credible and viable mechanism for citizens to pursue their corruption-related complaints, ALACs empower citizens in the fight against corruption.
- Examples of systemic changes driven by ALACs, include: the introduction of whistleblower laws, new administrative procedures, changes in court procedures, re-tendering on large infrastructure projects, resignations and prosecutions in situations where impunity was rife.

### What others say: evidence of impact

"Ample evidence of this success was available from all stakeholders: ALAC clients, other NGOs, government agencies and the media – all of whom were unstinting in their praise of the Centres. [...] Advocacy efforts – as directly linked to the ALAC initiative – have attained a greater impact than originally envisioned, especially in terms of legislative and policy reform."

External Evaluation of ALACs.

## KEY FACTS

- ALACs have already received tens of thousands of calls, visits and contacts from citizens.
- ALACs will operate in more than 50 countries in all regions by 2011, with an increasing number of centres opening at sub-national level and working with communities outside of capital cities.
- Cases taken on by ALACs range from small-scale bribery to grand corruption involving hundreds of millions of dollars.
- Cases cover a wide range of sectors and themes including public procurement, abuse or misuse of public assets, privatisation, environment-, human rights-, health- and education-related issues, the judiciary, customs, immigration services, small business licensing, planning and development inspectorates and others.
- As noted by an external evaluation, ALACs achieve significant impact at a remarkable rate of cost-effectiveness.

## OBJECTIVES 2010-2011

- Significant scale-up: Despite the remarkable success of the ALACs, many still operate on very small budgets. Greater resources have the potential to significantly broaden the operational scope of ALACs and their ability to effect change.
- Harness the power of ALAC data: ALACs generate a large amount of unmatched primary data on corruption that can be successfully captured and utilised for research and advocacy purposes.
- Document impact: The remarkable impact of ALACs is clear from the stories, case studies and statistics they produce. Comprehensively documenting and promoting these would inspire even more citizens to seek assistance from ALACs, and further advance systemic change.
- Promote innovation and collaboration: Identify new partnerships and technology to leverage even greater impact and contribute to the success of others' work.

In working towards these goals, Transparency International welcomes the support of partners in individual countries and specific regions.

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