

ANTI-CORRUPTION STRATEGY 2021 - 2030 TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Adopted by the Assembly of the Association on 12 December 2020

***Transparency International** is a global movement with a single vision: a world in which government, business, civil society and daily lives of people are free of corruption. Through national chapters in more than 100 countries and an international secretariat in Berlin, we are leading global action against corruption to translate this vision into reality.*

***Transparency International in Bosnia and Herzegovina** is a full-fledged national branch of the global Transparency International movement with the following vision: a society based on fairness, transparency and accountability that is capable of preventing and punishing corruption, whose mission is to fight for systemic changes in society and articulates citizens' demands for accountability, transparency and efficient governance. We achieve this in partnership with public, private and civil sectors.*

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ANTI-CORRUPTION STRATEGY 2021 - 2030 AND LINKS BETWEEN THE GLOBAL AND NATIONAL STRATEGIES

The Anti-Corruption Strategy 2021-2030 is a strategic framework for the actions of Transparency International Bosnia and Herzegovina (TI BiH) that is based on the TI BiH vision and mission. The Strategy stems from the global anti-corruption strategy of the Transparency International global movement as a baseline strategic framework for the global action of this global movement. In that sense, the TI BiH Strategy is contextualised according to the specific challenges Bosnia and Herzegovina is faced with.

THE CHALLENGES WE FACE

To advance or retreat?

The following decade (2020-2030) will be key in fight against corruption, on which the entire progress of Bosnia and Herzegovina will depend.

Transparency International defines corruption as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain. This includes corruption in private and business sectors, including petty corruption, which affects citizens most severely; grand or high-level corruption, which is detrimental for society as a whole, and political corruption, which allows political decision-makers to maintain their power, status or wealth.

BiH is faced with serious internal and external challenges. The key internal challenges certainly include the complex and dysfunctional state structure, sluggish economic development resulting in a high level of unemployment and poverty, systemic violations of human rights and freedoms, strong presence of populism, authoritative tendencies and ethnic division, and increasingly pronounced migratory trends.

Due to higher connectivity and accelerated technological development, external challenges will have major and deeper impact on the situation in the country. In that regard, there is no doubt that the global trends indicating a decline of multilateralism and rise in authoritarianism and populism, climate crisis, including increased inequalities, conflicts and related migrations will give rise to serious violations of human rights. The devastating pandemic will undoubtedly affect and shape the world in the coming period. In the European context, internal turmoil in the EU is certainly important for the country, which has already resulted in a deep crisis in the process of EU enlargement to the Western Balkans.

The time ahead of us, although offering great opportunities, will bring with unprecedented challenges.

Opportunities for and challenges of anti-corruption action

We have set the goals for the next decade being aware that in all parts of the world, including BiH, there is a growing understanding and higher awareness of corruption in society. The detrimental impact of corruption on the overall development and prosperity of society is increasingly apparent. It is a reflection of the global trend indicating the adoption of anti-corruption laws and reform across the board over the past decades largely due to the efforts and endeavours of Transparency International. The legal and institutional frameworks, albeit insufficient in and of themselves if not implemented or operational, are nevertheless both prerequisites and means for civil society and activists to hold authorities accountable and insist on law enforcement. In this regard, despite the current delays and crisis, the EU integration process is still the key reference framework for the country's reform process.

In the past decade, political participation has increased partly due to new technologies and platforms, which have contributed to awareness raising, information and opportunities. In many countries and across interstate borders, the current communication and new forms of digital engagement will continue to redefine political and public policy processes, with young people leading the way. In BiH, there are preconditions in place (a large number of Internet users, increasing computer literacy) for stronger political participation based on new technologies.

This trend has been further accelerated by crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, the shock caused by the pandemic has clearly showed the price of misinformation to many societies and started a new debate on the importance of reliable official information and expertise, as well as new initiatives and regulations to combat the harmful effects of fake news and media manipulation in their many new forms.

Other favourable technological advances show no signs of slowing down either. In governance and civil society, technologies extend the reach and effectiveness of accountability programs to previously unimaginable proportions. We live in a new environment of tools to ensure integrity and compliance - from blockchain-based land registers, through algorithmic detection of procurement fraud, to the publication of real-time data on political donations and the increasing use of open data by anti-corruption reformers.

However, the success of anti-corruption efforts will require a clear articulation of citizens' demands, based on indicators, as well as consistent monitoring of the situation and results achieved. Here, the role of civil society organisations is irreplaceable. Creating new and

strengthening existing partnerships, with international, regional and actors in the country is certainly a necessary precondition for the success of advocacy initiatives. The transformation potential of the country's EU integration process should be further strengthened and used to intensify anti-corruption reforms.

Challenges ahead

In addition to the opportunities, the prospects for establishing good governance in the country are laden with multiple challenges. If there is no decisive response to these challenges, it is clear that the risks of ever-increasing corruption - and the scale and intensity of the damage it causes - will certainly worsen.

Generally speaking, BiH has seen negative trends, i. e. a worsening of corruption, collapse of the rule of law and systematic human rights violations for more than 10 years since the international community withdrew from the operational management of the country.

BiH is characterized as a hybrid regime (in which elements of democratic governance are present through formal and institutional arrangements, while practices are predominantly authoritarian), with a severely disrupted principle of separation of powers and dysfunctional governance. In this sense, state capture has three levels.

The first level of state capture - a captured democratic process - is manifested in the way that almost all public resources and the functioning of institutions are used for the purpose of maintaining the power of the political elite. The second level refers to a captured institutional framework - where the separation of powers is practically abolished in practice, and the institutions are largely stripped of any actual power or instrumentalized to serve the particular interests of the ruling elite. The third level refers to captured economic flows due to the omnipresence of the state in the economic domain, as well as the unfavourable business environment, where any economic activity requires the patronage of political elites.

This situation has multiple detrimental implications, starting with the violation of human rights and freedoms, the impossibility of economic development and the increasingly pronounced exodus of the population from BiH.

The consequence of this situation is a hypertrophied and inefficient public sector, which, being the stronghold of the power of political elites, continues to grow rapidly. On the other hand, the institutions themselves are devoid of any actual power, which is concentrated in the hands of a narrow political elite.

Weak and under capacitated institutions, undermined by corruption, will find it difficult to respond to increasingly pronounced challenges, such as the COVID 19 pandemic and / or the migrant crisis, which creates serious potential for deepening crises and humanitarian disasters.

The indisputable interest of political elites in maintaining the status quo, which are acutely aware of their highly questionable legitimacy, leads to an increasingly pronounced growth of authoritarian tendencies, i. e. an increasingly repressive response to any criticism of the current situation.

Economic growth and development are hampered by the high degree of state interference in economic flows and distribution, which maximizes profits for the ruling elites, and distributes loss and debt equally to all citizens.

On the other hand, articulation and collective action contributing to the fight against corruption are constantly undermined by the ruling elites with populist policies aimed at ethno-national homogenization.

The crisis in the process of the accession of the Western Balkan countries to the European Union, caused by internal considerations within the EU, but also by the lack of readiness and commitment among the Western Balkan countries, will further affect the country's transformation potential.

THE COUNTRY WE WANT

Governments are held to account for the common good.

Together we must seize the opportunities and face the challenges for the vision of a society based on fairness, transparency and accountability, capable of preventing and punishing corruption. But how to set the goals for the next decade for us to succeed?

The main question is: What is it that will define the environment we want in 2030 and beyond?

Transparency International's experience to date clearly shows that preventing and controlling the abuse of entrusted powers relies on strong and effective institutional frameworks, both nationally and internationally. Over the past five years, through the implementation of the previous strategy, we have recognized the fact that in order to stop corruption, in addition to being fully in place, these frameworks must be fully implemented and supported by stronger public and citizen demand for accountability.

The challenges ahead only reinforce this assessment.

When holders of entrusted powers in government or enterprises abuse their power, it means that the fundamental importance of citizen mobilization as the ultimate instance of abuse control is not adequately recognised and supported in institutions and political practice.

More importantly, the principles of entrusted power at the core of the fight against corruption are either incomprehensible to many of the current government and business leaders, or deliberately disregarded, or have ended, under modern political pressures, in a state of erosion and utter disarray.

This includes, among other things, the principle according to which, in order to achieve good governance, power should be shared and distributed through a system of checks and balances rather than being concentrated in a single entity. Furthermore, there is another principle, according to which the purpose of the power entrusted to the holders of office and business leaders by the community and stakeholders is to achieve or support the common good of society - not just to ensure mere survival in office, success over opponents, or increasing one's influence, status, or wealth.

Facing these challenges, Transparency International BiH has a clear, positive goal for the ten-year period ending in 2030. We believe that it is no longer enough to seek only to prevent

and punish the ever-changing undesirable behaviour of those in power. Faced with new contexts, forms and mechanisms of corruption, we want a country without corruption where:

Power held to account, for the common good.

What is “the common good”? Terms such as "the common good " or "public interest" will always be challenged no matter what. For us, the common good is defined by the outcomes set within the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 (SDG). These outcomes serve humanity as a whole in the long run, including through respect for the specific needs of minorities. They include eradicating poverty and famine while reducing inequalities, providing access to basic services such as health, education and infrastructure, and protecting the environment. These are the ideas we are guided by when considering ways to ensure the common good of society.

This goal touches upon all forms of entrusted authority - not only public authority and authority of the state, but also power whose holders are businesses or non-profit institutions. It includes holders of power at all levels, including those responsible for decisions that affect the services and rights of citizens on a daily basis. In line with the scale of the challenges, we focus on the concentration of power in different sectors that most often leads to grand and political corruption - to the uncontrolled political and social impact of narrow groups that effectively capture the state.

The key elements necessary to achieve this goal have been identified in extensive consultations (Figure 2).

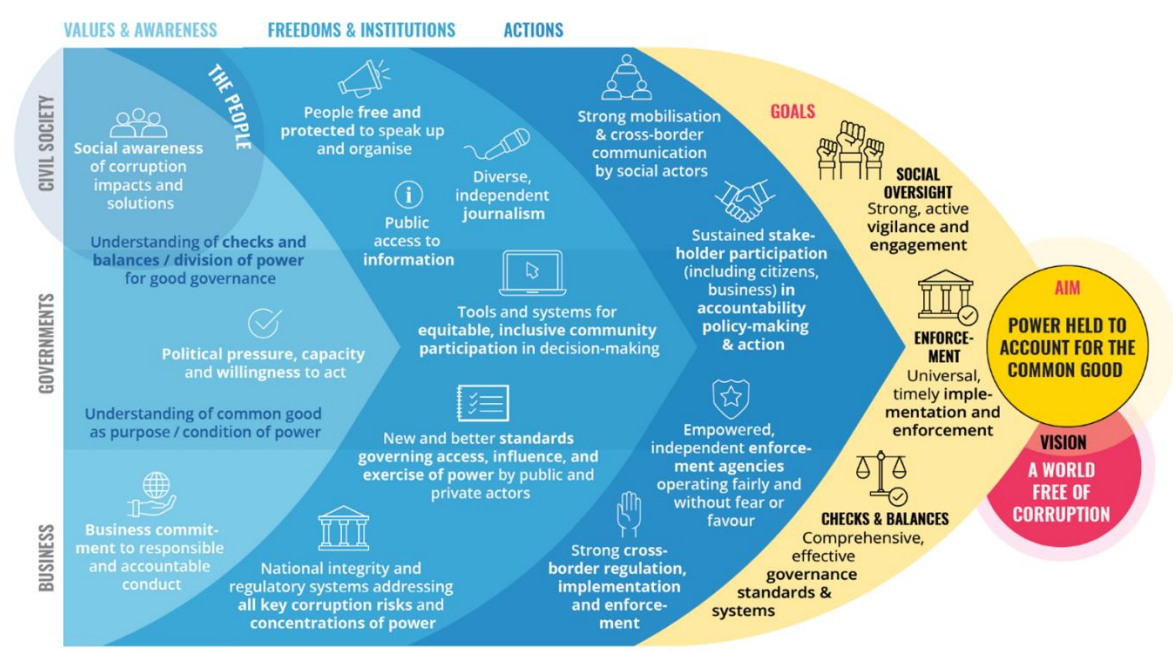


Figure 1. Our framework for change

Achieving these changes relies on a holistic approach that encompasses the roles and relationships of government, the business sector, and civil society. This requires better management of the interdependence of anti-corruption efforts at national and international levels. As regards the scale of the challenges ahead, in addition to the establishment and functioning of institutions, it is crucial to build or strengthen the following elements:

- the values and awareness that form the backbone of entrusted authority,
- freedoms that enable citizens to fulfil their roles in ensuring accountability;
- actions that ensure that the holders of entrusted authority are accountable for their actions for the common good.

Transparency International BiH understands the scale and breadth of these challenges, and is therefore particularly focused on:

1. CHECKS AND BALANCES

As long as power has the potential to corrupt those who possess it - and absolute power corrupts absolutely - Transparency International will remain committed to the main goal of creating and defending institutional checks and balances to prevent the concentration of power, which is the purpose served by all key freedoms and institutions listed in Figure 1.

This goal, which is achieved in different systems and cultures in different ways, is essential for holding authorities accountable. A strong and effective system of checks and balances implies a functioning rule of law, separation of powers among the three branches of government and mechanisms that ensure that those in power do not go beyond their competences. These systems include better standards governing access to and exercise of authority, as well as integrity and regulatory processes. These mechanisms must jointly address the sources of corruption risks and ensure independent regulation of the business sector and the separation of roles to prevent, narrow and detect abuse of power within organisations.

The system of checks and balances also includes safeguards that ensure confidence in decision-making processes, which, among other things, apply to automated decisions or those whose adoption involves the use of new technologies.

The system of checks and balances requires transparency, which is achieved through access to official information and independent journalism in order to ensure honesty, communication and participation in public life. However, it relies not only on enforceable laws and institutions, but also on values, awareness, and acceptance of the principle that good governance rests on the separation and deconcentration of power. Experiences from the previous decade show that even in countries with a long tradition of checks and balances, this

system must never be taken for granted. Many populist regimes, which come to power on a wave of promises to eradicate corruption, fail precisely because they tend to accumulate power and circumvent controls, instead of upholding this fundamental value.

2. LAW ENFORCEMENT

Equally, accountability rests on the universal and timely application and enforcement of generally accepted standards. As stated in the previous strategy (2015-2020), success in establishing anti-corruption conventions and laws often does not bring visible changes, mainly due to the lack of their adequate implementation and enforcement. Elsewhere, the application of anti-corruption standards and laws is used selectively, as a means to prolong, rather than abolish, the practice of impunity for corruption or to exercise control over political opponents or civil society.

In order to create conditions that will render corruption unprofitable, the system of checks and balances relies on the work of independent courts - as independent institutions that are guided in their work by the principles of fairness and impartiality.

However, as is the case with the system of checks and balances, meeting the challenge of anti-corruption laws enforcement is not possible through a mere mechanical application of the law. New, better standards for defining violations of the law in terms of integrity and corruption, as well as political commitment to law enforcement, rely on strengthened values and awareness, as well as social commitment and the ability to initiate action.

3. SOCIAL OVERSIGHT

Although the acceptance of anti-corruption values is needed in all sectors, the third key to ensuring the accountability of government is the ability of civil society to insist on accountability through political, legal and day-to-day social action. Civil society includes community organisations and networks, trade unions, religious networks, professional associations, and non-profit organisations, and citizens alike.

The very nature of entrusted powers implies that accountability rarely works if the community or affected stakeholders are unwilling and unable to deliver on that trust — whether by instituting proceedings, seeking redress for themselves or other victims, shaming offenders, or advocating for change. As shown in Figure 2, social action and societal oversight rely on the direct, sustainable participation and mobilisation of citizens and non-governmental actors for accountability, equality and fairness. Therefore, they must enjoy fundamental human freedoms to organise, associate, access information and express

themselves, i. e. to act. One of the key roles of free and independent media is to ensure that the public has the right to be informed and the ability to act.

International action is certainly an important aspect, so this goal will be strengthened by the ability of civil society to connect and mobilise across national borders. In addition, in authoritarian contexts where control of government, the business sector, and the media is in the hands of few, social movements remain the ultimate mechanism of government control. It is the power that citizens, customers, investors, business actors and stakeholders ultimately have that brings about accountability.

Together, these goals indicate what is needed to make the holders of entrusted authority accountable to citizens for their actions for the common good of society. We cannot make the changes needed to meet these goals alone, despite the commitment to achieving these goals as shared by the entire Transparency International movement. Partners in government, the business sector and civil society have a crucial role to play in securing this picture of the world we strive to. To streamline our own, specific contribution to change, we rely on the goals that form the core of our strategy.

HOW WE INTEND TO GET THERE: OUR GOALS

An overview

In order to achieve these general goals - as well as our goal of a world in which the government is accountable to citizens for their actions for the common good - Transparency International in BiH has identified 4 specific goals of its own action by 2030:

1. Protection of public resources

- 1.1. Public contracting (competitive, transparent and open)
- 1.2. Narrowed space for abuse in the public sector
- 1.3. Creation of preconditions for the business sector to operate on the principles of integrity

2. Secure integrity in politics

- 2.1. Fair and honest election process
- 2.2. Appointments / employment and holding an office in the public sector free from undue influence
- 2.3. Equal access of all legitimate actors to the decision-making process

3. Enforce laws and sanctions

- 4.1. Law enforcement institutions are independent and have the capacity and will to act
- 4.2. The judiciary is independent and has the capacity and will to act

4.3. The legal framework is in line with international anti-corruption standards

4. Defend civil society and promote integrity

5.1. Promoting integrity-based values

5.2. Activists, whistle-blowers and journalists are free and protected to act against abuse

5.3. Citizens are empowered to demand accountability

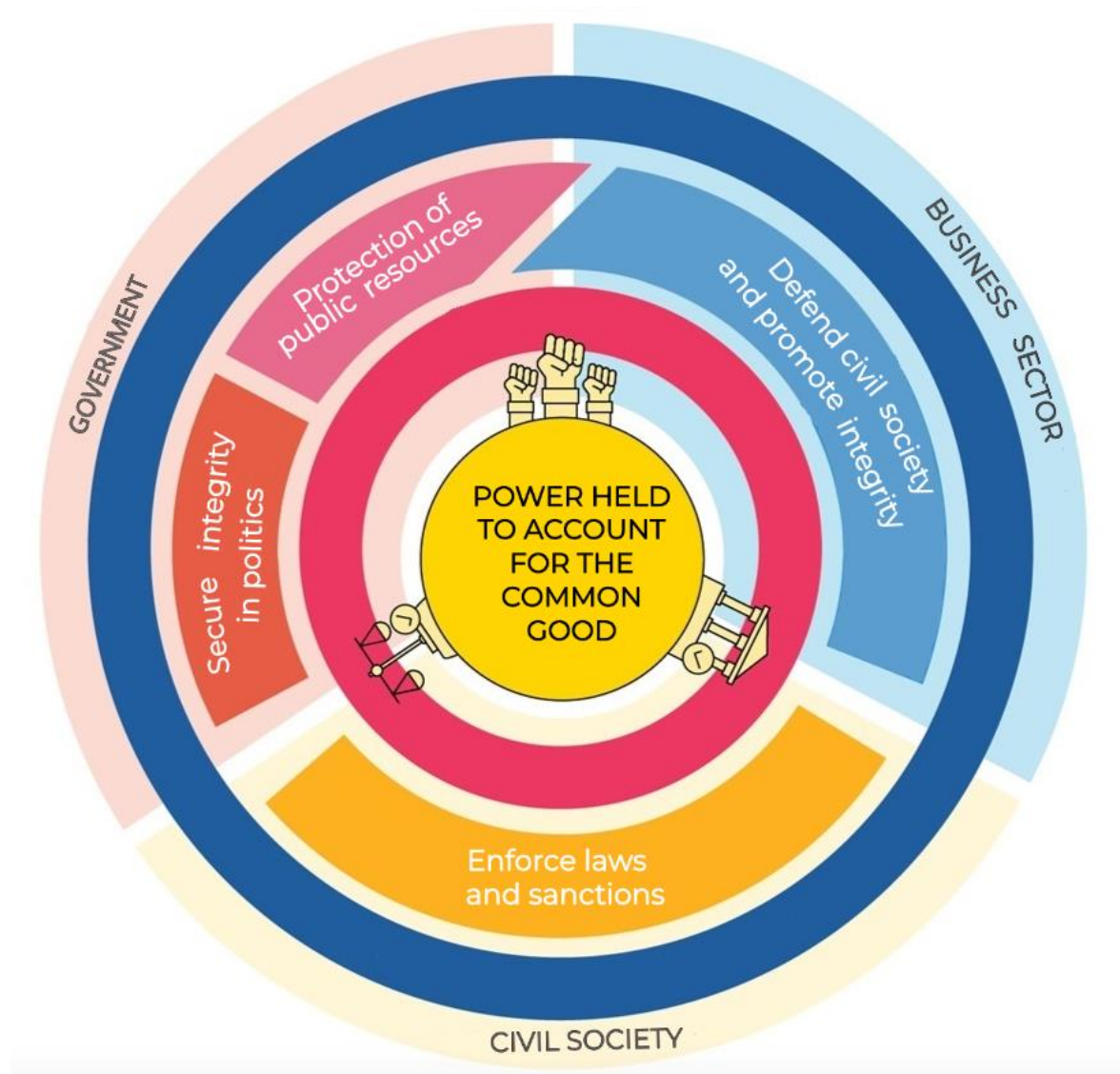
5.4. A new generation of leaders empowered to act against corruption

In order to be able to respond to previously mentioned challenges and opportunities, and based on the feedback on priorities and actions in the next decade which we have collected from members and employees of the organization and partners, these goals are aimed at achieving 15 outcomes as detailed below.

The goals are not listed according to their importance and priority, because they all require active work throughout the decade. As shown in Figure 2, the goals are also interlinked and require action across government structures, the business sector and civil society. Each of them contributes to the fulfilment of our general goals to a different extent. As explained below, each goal implies different levels of focus on actions, freedoms, and institutions, as well as on the values and awareness required by the framework for change, where each goal is supported by a number of corresponding outcomes.

These goals range from those with immediate and specific impact - including basic, urgent action, where we are already heavily engaged - to those with broader and long-term impact, which require us to adjust tactics and further capacity for the efforts required by the new decade.

Figure 2. Transparency International's 2030 goals



1. Protection of public resources

Protecting public resources has always been one of Transparency International's key activities through the fight against bribery of government officials, theft and exploitation of public programs. In a situation where the distribution of a large portion of the GDP is in the hands of the government, which is responsible for the use of natural resources, it has never been more important to act towards the protection of fair, legal and equitable distribution of public resources for the common good.

There is a clear link between the protection of public resources and other goals. This connection is achieved by ensuring and expanding political and business integrity. More importantly, it intensifies and raises demands for law enforcement and prosecution, where civic accountability plays a crucial role. Transparency International BiH will strive to achieve the following two key outcomes:

Outcome 1.1: Public contracting that is open, competitive and transparent

Open, competitive, transparent and accountable public contracting is crucial for achieving results for the common good. As part of our efforts to combat the abuse of discretionary authority and undue influence in the delivery and provision of important goods, services and infrastructure, we shall:

- advocate for clean contracting solutions, and independent oversight by civil society, with the participation of all stakeholders to protect the public interest and ensure the application of robust and credible legal and political sanctions for any abuse of power;
- offer and implement new tools and accountability mechanisms to protect public investment in response to crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic and recession, climate crisis, natural or man-made disasters, and the social effects of conflict.

Outcome 1.2: Narrow space for abuse in the public sector

Building on our long-standing efforts to establish and strengthen the legal framework and institutions, and maintaining pressure through active societal oversight:

- we shall advocate for the highest standards of public transparency, including open access to data, the state's compliance with budget openness standards, government spending, tax information, land registry databases, government permits, and other relevant data sets;
- we shall cooperate and provide legal assistance to affected communities and organisations, as well as integrity institutions, to uncover cases and provide sanctions against bribery, theft and misuse of resources for private gain, especially in areas with high social needs, including health, education, economic support and employment support, and environmental protection;
- we shall ensure that automation and new technologies are used to prevent abuse of power, and not as new instruments for exclusion, denial of public rights or arbitrary decision-making.

Outcome 1.3: Create preconditions for the business sector to operate on the principles of integrity

Strengthening integrity in the business sector is unequivocally an essential link in the overall fight against corruption. A lack of integrity in the business sector distorts competition, impedes economic growth, prevents citizens from having access to quality services. Recognising the importance of integrity in the business sector, we shall seek to:

- establish a continued dialogue with engaged business entities and business associations, with the support of existing and new platforms that bring together more stakeholders and collaborative learning in the function of changing the promotion of integrity;
- develop tools and standards that help businesses improve their integrity;
- inform the public and advocate for more effective regulations governing the fight against bribery and corruption;
- work with partners to ensure that integrity and anti-corruption issues take a more prominent place in new norms and standards for responsible behaviour;
- collaborate with partners, journalists and businesses to expose non-transparent relations or inappropriate influences between industries or companies and the public sector as well as flaws in corporate behaviour and reporting practices, including through work with victims of corruption and whistle-blowers;
- insist on law enforcement and prosecution of corrupt companies and executives.

2. Secure integrity in politics

Securing political integrity is the first of two broader goals, which is necessary for consistent governance for the common good.

Direct efforts to protect public resources and stop the flow of dirty money are key for prevention of abuse of public authority and bringing perpetrators to justice. The goals also require a positive approach aimed at ensuring a more consistent use of authority for the common good, as opposed to the wealth, status or permanent power of leaders, their immediate supporters or others closely associated with them. This goal refers to the need for new, better standards governing access to, influence and exercise of power, as well as the way in which they are reflected in stronger integrity frameworks and systems of checks and balances - thus maintaining better public confidence and, in turn, creating further political capacities and political will.

As with any goal so far, this one is not just about standards, but also about applying the regulatory framework and criminal prosecution. However, key standards and processes of political integrity themselves are often unclear and constantly changing around the world as they are based on weak or disputed values in the context of a low level of public awareness. Through better coordination of efforts with partners, we shall work to achieve the following two key outcomes:

Outcome 2.1: Fair and honest elections

The exercise of political authority for the common good relies on elected officials and leaders who exercise their functions through open and fair political competition, reflecting the will

and voice of the entire community, including ordinary people and legitimate interest groups, not just narrow private interests. To ensure greater integrity in election outcomes and appointment, we shall:

- promote standards for improved control and transparency of the electoral process and political funding;
- monitor and report abuses of public resources for political or electoral gain;
- advocate for standards and practices in political campaigns, communication and advertising - (especially on the Internet) - that do not undermine, but rather strengthen political integrity;
- identify and demand the reform of mechanisms that give particular or criminal interests an undue influence on election outcomes.

Outcome 2.2: Appointments / employment and holding a public office free from undue influence

A necessary precondition for the public sector to be able to work in the public interest, is the process of appointment and employment based on merits and transparency:

- promote standards and procedures for appointment and employment in the public sector based on the principles of merits and transparency;
- monitor and report abuses in appointment and recruitment processes;
- promote the standard and performance procedures for managerial functions in the public sector;
- effectively monitor the performance of managerial functions in the public sector.

Outcome 2.3: Equal access of all legitimate actors to the decision-making process

Overall action to strengthen political integrity and prevent the capture of institutions and decision-making processes is focused on ensuring that all public decisions serve the common good of society through the control of undue influence in the drafting and adoption of laws, policies, plans and public investments, as well as ensuring the transparency, equity and effective influence of the broader community. To that end, we shall:

- monitor and disclose cases of undue influence resulting from non-transparent lobbying and conflicts of interest,
- fight against favouritism in the allocation of public resources and jobs by insisting on the control of discretionary powers and the highest standards of transparency and disclosure,
- advocate for new standards to combat the undue influence of business and other entities that have a major impact on public and political life, laws, regulations, policies and democratic processes,

- support the role of a broad range of public interest groups in decision-making, especially those with legitimate interests but a weaker voice,
- support and strengthen the system of checks and balances with regard to public decisions through parliamentary and societal oversight.

3. Enforce laws and sanctions

Insisting on law enforcement and sanctioning is a cross-cutting and core element of this strategy. Enforcement is so fundamentally important that we use it to measure whether one of the long-term general goals has been achieved: universal and timely implementation and application of already adopted standards and laws. Without enforcement and criminal prosecution, there is no determination of accountability for the abuse of entrusted powers to the detriment of the common good. Standards that have been strengthened or developed under all four of the above mentioned goals are contingent on better law enforcement.

Progress has been made in adopting legal frameworks for preventing, detecting, investigating and sanctioning corruption, as well as in establishing specialized institutions. However, law enforcement and prosecution are often absent or too weak, selective, inadequate to prevent or combat the most serious forms of corruption, and are ill-adapted to new networks and concentrations of power.

This goal is urgent and immediate in relation to existing corruption issues, but also requires a continuous effort throughout the decade to build better processes for lasting accountability. In this regard, we shall work to achieve the following three outcomes:

Outcome 3.1: Law enforcement institutions are independent and have the capacity and will to act

In order for those in power to be held accountable for their actions before the law for the common good, public institutions and processes are needed to prevent, detect and punish those who abuse their powers. To build or strengthen these systems, we shall:

- establish, promote and support the independence of law enforcement institutions and advocate for their effective competencies and capacities, including prevention competencies;
- work with law enforcement agencies, governments and experts (including technological innovators) to ensure that they are equipped with effective powers and tools to prevent and detect corruption, including in the context of new technologies and new power concentrations;
- cooperate with law enforcement institutions, civil society and professional partners and journalists in order to bring cases of corruption to the attention of law

enforcement agencies, and in order for these agencies to act in full capacity in these cases and inform the public about the results of their actions.

Outcome 3.2: The judiciary is independent and has capacity and will to act

The implementation of the law is largely based on the will and ability of the judiciary to conduct and act in corruption cases; its failure to act in these cases remains a major cause of impunity for corruption offenses around the world. To strengthen efforts to combat impunity, we shall:

- select key cases of corruption suitable for the conduct of high-level public campaigns, in situations where the efficient action of the judiciary has been called into question or failed, in order to expose abuses and exert pressure for change;
- mobilise public opinion and act towards institutions in order to reform the legal system to ensure the independence of the judiciary and the efficient and impartial prosecution of abuse of power;
- run campaigns and advocate for punishment on behalf of victims of corruption, especially members of vulnerable or marginalised groups, including by considering the possibility of initiating strategic litigation where the risks and resources allow.

Outcome 3.3: The legal framework is aligned with international standards for combating corruption

Integrate the existing international framework for the application of anti-corruption laws into domestic legislation. To address this issue, we shall:

- make intensive use of advocacy techniques, including relevant international forums, to insist on the country's responsibility to improve the legal framework based on international instruments and standards;
- support the improvement or development of the existing legal framework in accordance with international instruments and standards that will enable the effective fight against corruption, including cross-border investigations, extraditions and prosecutions at the regional and global level;
- ensure that the competent authorities have the competence and capacity to administer justice and compensate the victims of corruption across international borders, including fair and timely compensation for social damage suffered.

4. Defend civil society and promote integrity

Another goal underlying the overall strategy is to defend civil society. Like the application of the law, it is directly related to the general goal of ensuring social action and oversight, without which the system of checks and balances does not work, and government officials rarely account for their actions. Integrity and accountability rely on the ability of people, social groups, whistle-blowers and the media to stand up and fight for what is right, expose abuses

of power, exercise civil rights, use legal remedies and initiate political change. Practice shows that civil society, which as a beneficiary of entrusted powers has an active role in ensuring accountability, is the most effective driver of transparency, trust, law enforcement and reform.

An integral part of defending civil liberties is the promotion of an integrity-based value system.

Without a generally accepted integrity-based value system or opposition from those affected by corruption, it will flourish and civic space will continue to narrow as is the case in BiH. Supporting the roles of social actors in securing accountability is crucial for achieving accountability in the decade ahead; to that end, it is particularly important to work to empower a future generation of leaders. To support the achievement of the above goals, we shall work to achieve four outcomes:

Outcome 4.1: Promotion of integrity values

Strengthening values is not just a matter of raising awareness and education. To put anti-corruption narratives and realities of the situation on a track toward greater success, we shall:

- use our research and team up with other partners to better understand why so many of our societies and decision makers continue to allow corruption to occur;
- design better strategies for instilling integrity values and fighting corruption in institutions, through the individuals who work and lead them;
- develop specific and culturally appropriate plans detailing the best ways to institutionalise, strengthen and share these values;
- work with young people and members of marginalised communities to identify how voices calling for general social well-being can be strengthened - especially those not currently heard due to marginalisation based on gender, ethnicity, religion, disability or poverty.

Outcome 4.2: Activists, whistle-blowers and journalists are free, trained and protected to act against abuse

The freedom and protection of key individuals and groups who are best placed to identify and expose corruption are key to effective checks and balances. In the context of the daily narrowing of the civic space, this is the basic assumption that the holders of power could be held accountable before the law for their actions for the common good. As a member of the global civil society coalition, we shall:

- work with partners from all fields of society to empower victims of corruption, those who want to be heard and social actors who are looking for real change;

- provide legal assistance to whistle-blowers, witnesses and journalists and advocate for effective mechanisms to protect these categories;
- identify and join campaigns against obstacles to the meaningful exercise of basic human rights to freedom of assembly, association and political expression, as well as campaigns promoting independent journalism in the public interest;
- promote strict laws on the protection of whistle-blowers, the implementation of these laws by the authorities as well as their application in the workplace;
- raise public awareness of the importance of alerting and reporting corruption, and of providing support to those who may risk losing their livelihood, well-being or their own lives.

Outcome 4.3: Citizens are empowered to demand accountability

Empowered citizens can be the best guardians of accountability and efficiency in government programs and initiatives, as well as corporate accountability to the community. Civic initiatives such as community monitoring, social auditing, and participatory budgeting help ensure the best quality of delivered public goods. Where other mechanisms of government control are absent or have failed, social movements may be the best or only means of securing political accountability in the exercise of entrusted powers. To ensure that citizens are able to perform their social oversight roles, we shall:

- cooperate with institutions and communities to ensure that beneficiaries of government programs are involved in the design, development and implementation of all necessary mechanisms;
- advocate for the highest standards of the right to information, including implied disclosure and open data standards;
- facilitate innovation and the use of technologies in order to modernise and simplify the processes and procedures for the contribution and engagement of citizens in public decision-making, and support their right to information and peaceful engagement, organization and assembly to exercise political responsibility;
- ensure equal empowerment of women, ethnic minorities, activist organisations and marginalised groups to express their views and participate in decision-making on issues of integrity, accountability and the fight against corruption.

Outcome 3.2: A new generation of leaders empowered to act against corruption

A critical mass of leaders in all sectors of society must be aware, willing and able to inspire their colleagues and require them to demonstrate integrity in practice, resist or oppose corruption, and ensure the exercise of authority for entrusted purposes. Wherever corruption flourishes, the missing link includes strong knowledge, skills and commitment of leaders at all levels in institutions to avoid the pitfalls of corruption and to mobilise others to advance in the service of the common good of society. To better address this critical correlation, we shall:

- strengthen the capacity of activists and community leaders and train them to bring about change;
- collaborate with other educators, journalists, artists and professional bodies to share and disseminate our messages and skills in the governments and business communities in which we operate;
- through existing and new initiatives to highlight the power and value of integrity as a way of life and doing business, especially through the recognition of achievements that demonstrate that integrity and responsibility - not corruption - are what ultimately pays the most.

DRIVING CHANGE

What we have learnt

In order for Transparency International BiH to achieve these goals and lead the way in ensuring that authorities account for their actions for the common good, it is necessary to look at the lessons learned.

The Anti-Corruption Strategy 2021-2030 is the fifth strategy of the global movement, and the third strategy of TI BiH. It builds directly on the experiences of the previous one, which consisted of three key areas: Citizens and partners, Prevention, Enforcement and justice, and Strong movement.

The evaluation of the previous strategy confirmed the adequacy of its goals. Namely, many of the 2030 goals are designed to further the previous efforts in new or adapted ways and with a redirected focus. As compared to the 2015 Strategy, in this strategy Transparency International seeks to make a number of steps forward; to this end, the TI BiH strategy follows this approach. Although these advances have been successfully initiated, experience shows that their full realisation will be even more important in the decade ahead.

We are committed to being more active and vocal in combating impunity and grand or political corruption, establishing new and strengthening existing partnerships with investigative journalists, other organizations and citizens, through which we have exposed cases of corruption. We have also found that there is a lot to be done and that the results achieved so far are just the tip of the iceberg.

We have further expanded our approach and focus on indicator-based reform of laws and regulations to create social conditions that enable the fight against corruption. However, we recognise that actual change can be achieved through more efficient joint work and cooperation - both with external partners and internally, through joint planning and coordination.

We are committed to investing even greater efforts to protect activists and space for civil society. We have worked with partners to ensure the adoption of the whistle-blower protection law.

However, as the civic space for action continues to narrow rapidly, we have realised that Transparency International BiH needs to invest more efforts to properly harness the energy of civic movements and social actors. Protesting against the inequality, injustice and social

consequences of the abuse of entrusted powers, which does occur, has yet to raise the awareness of citizens and communities and help them understand the link with corruption.

Implementation

Our own experience shows to attain our goals, we must constantly improve our methods of work. Our vision, mission and goals are now more relevant than ever. Nevertheless, to achieve them, Transparency International BiH needs to become more flexible, vigilant, innovative and adaptable.

Much of the basics of our methods are still relevant. Through our advocacy, campaigns and research, we shall continue to work to expose the systems and networks that allow corruption to flourish and demand greater social justice in all areas and at all levels of public life. We shall advocate for policies and laws that will change corrupt systems and build coalitions to drive national, regional and global change. We shall work to empower individuals and communities to be able to hold the holders of office accountable and insist on the consistent application of accountability mechanisms.

However, we must continue to develop the way these methods work and apply, both within the organisation itself and in partnership with others. Under the Anti-Corruption Strategy 2021-2030, we shall achieve our vision by fulfilling the following six commitments.

Flexible time frames

Transparency International previously based its work on five-year strategies. This time, we decided to tackle the real scale of change and come up with a plan that will take into account the effects over a ten-year timeframe.

However, in order to be more flexible and adaptable, and in order to ensure the evolutionary character of the strategy, we plan to roll out our activities over three periods. The first two-year cycle will allow us to incorporate and test new approaches, focus on urgent global priorities in terms of accountability and transparency in the context of the pandemic response, consolidate the results of successful work so far and develop new, long-term courses of action. Learning from our experience and monitoring findings and new knowledge, we shall regularly monitor and review our strategy during this cycle, and continue to work through the next two four-year cycles.



Stronger partnerships

On the basis of our recent experiences, we shall work more closely with partners, reformers, friends and institutions involved in promoting democracy, the rule of law, human rights and other dimensions of social justice. We shall nurture strategic partnerships with other social actors at the national, regional and global levels, while working to consolidate our cooperation mechanisms. In particular, we shall be committed to developing partnerships that will enable us to connect in the best way at the community level, and support and engage in social mobilisation around the issue of accountability.

We shall strengthen our work through the development of new forms of partnership within the country, while maintaining an autonomous and independent position. We shall do this to ensure greater access to the centres of media and political leadership, but also to the general public.

Main principles and methods

To ensure success in our efforts, we shall strengthen the way our movement respects and applies the most important methods of work nationally and globally. This includes:

- Participation and multidimensional action: Corruption mostly affects those who are already in a marginalised and disadvantaged position. It further exacerbates historical injustices and perpetuates cycles of exclusion and oppression of women, gender and sexual minorities, ethnic, racial and religious minorities, people living in poverty, and so on. We shall take these differences into account when planning and implementing our actions, and this will include research into differences in the effects of corruption on different groups as well as disaggregated data at the relevant level. We shall ensure that none of our policies have unintended consequences for already marginalised groups; we shall keep gender and inclusion at the core of our activities, and use every opportunity to promote and ensure diversity in leadership and decision-making roles.
- Awareness of climate change and environmental issues: The environment is our most valuable resource and we owe a strong commitment to protecting our planet and climate to future generations. Our response to the global climate crisis is at the core of all our courses of action. In addition to targeted efforts to address the challenges of corruption related to the climate crisis, we shall work in an environment-conscious fashion at all levels of our operations.

- **Reliance on verified facts:** We believe in the power of concrete action; in this regard we shall continue to maintain our own high levels of excellence in providing verified facts and evidence for our recommendations, policies and actions. We shall continue to seek new and innovative ways to strengthen the evidence base of our work, in partnership with practitioners, academia, journalists and affected stakeholders. We shall analyse the challenges of corruption and governance trends at the state, sectoral and transnational levels and gather evidence on measures and actions that have proven effects on combating corruption and ensuring accountability. We shall improve our global indicators to measure corruption and the aspects that enable it, develop new research tools related to integrity issues and use them to shape and inform all our programs and strategies.
- **Technological awareness:** We shall use the power of technology to achieve the common good in all our goals and outcomes. We shall monitor the progress of technologies that enable new forms of corruption in order to counter them, and actively use new technologies that can improve and expand our global influence globally.
- **In an ethical and responsible fashion:** We shall act in accordance with what we stand for, striving for the highest standards of transparency, integrity and accountability in our work. In these areas, we shall strive to be a role model and example to others. We shall protect all colleagues and stakeholders by continuing to build our systems to identify and address integrity issues at the earliest stage.
- **Impact and learning:** The primary purpose of Transparency International's work is to contribute to change - in the values, institutions and actions that serve to hold those in power accountable, as well as in the lives of people around the world. As we move towards 2030, we shall apply the lessons learned on how best to monitor our national and global performance and adapt methods to achieve our goals in changing circumstances.

By placing greater emphasis on the complexity and interconnectedness of our goals and outcomes, and on links between our national and international activities, we shall develop more reliable and simplified ways to monitor and evaluate our achievements, trying to identify the most effective measures in the fight against corruption. We shall implement a common framework for monitoring, assessment and learning that is flexible and adaptable to different approaches. This framework is built into our online guide for implementing the strategy, and helps our national branches and global teams monitor changes and revise action plans in the light of emerging circumstances. Reflective processes for fostering culture of learning and sharing will equally take into account success and failures, providing national branches and the global secretariat relevant tactical information necessary to maintain and strengthen our day-to-day work for the common good.