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RESEARCH PROJECT: “ALACs”

Promotion of Participation and Citizenship in Europe through the “Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres (ALACs)” of Transparency International. Analysis and Enhancement of an Anti-corruption Tool to Enable Better Informed and Effective Citizen Participation in Europe

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and overview report**

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1. Introduction and context

This report aims at providing an update on the progress made to date on the FP7-funded programme „Promotion of Participation and Citizenship in Europe through the Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres (ALACs) of Transparency International”. It will also provide an analysis of the trends of implementing ALACs in the (Western) European context.

Through its work, TI builds coalitions of key stakeholders at national, regional and international levels; produces best practice tools and fosters communities of excellence; facilitates dialogue among citizens and practitioners; advocates for policy reforms; conducts in-depth analyses; explores synergies with other global movements and, critically, gives practical assistance to victims and witnesses of corruption to address their grievances and foster an overall culture of transparency and accountability.

An important note of context to mention at the onset is the current strategic direction of the Transparency International (TI) Movement. The new 5-year strategy, adopted by TI in 2010, sets out some ambitious directions for the Movement. This pertains to furthering our work with institutions, providing a strong focus on laws and values, and, in particular, at increasing the engagement of people in fighting corruption at a global level. In synergy with the other areas of focus of the strategy, public engagement will reinforce the demand for solid institutions and provide a strong mandate for political leadership to succeed in their commitments.

Therefore, a common focus of the TI movement over the next five years will be to increase significantly the number of people and organisations involved in stopping corruption and promoting transparency, accountability and integrity around the world, as well as supporting them in their work against corruption. This includes scaling up a number of existing initiatives, such as the Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres, as well as facilitating and supporting the development of new areas of work to engage people throughout the TI Movement. In this regard the Programme of *Promotion of Participation and Citizenship in Europe through the Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres (ALACs) of Transparency International* has provided a unique opportunity for learning specifically within the European context, but providing important pointers for the work of the ALACs globally.

The relevance of the ALAC approach in Europe is apparent: Public perception of corruption in the EU is startling: 78% of Europeans say that corruption is a major problem for their country (EuroBarometer 325) and 74% believe that corruption has worsened in their country over the last 3 years (Global Corruption Barometer 2010, TI). Similarly, the Global

Corruption Barometer in 2010 found that the vast majority of citizens in Europe think that ordinary people can make a difference in the fight against corruption and could imagine themselves getting involved.

Taking this into account, the ALAC provides a vehicle for the fight against corruption. By providing a safe, tangible and viable mechanism for people to pursue their corruption-related grievances, ALACs both provide a channel for engaging citizens in the fight against corruption, as well as unearthing data and knowledge which would otherwise remain hidden. Furthermore, the data derived from ALACs does not merely diagnose corruption problems, but also identifies those areas where people are prepared to act, thereby indicating the areas where change is most achievable and is likely to respond to the needs and aspirations of citizens.

ALACs can thus be an innovative and needed complement to traditional approaches in addressing corruption. Not only do they inform policy decisions, but they also demonstrate to citizens that change is possible and that they can be at the forefront of creating this.

2. Establishment of new ALACs

The contextual environment in Western and Central Europe

With the support from this project, four new ALACs are being established in Europe, namely in Finland, Hungary, Ireland and Lithuania. While ALACs exist in more than 50 countries around the world, no TI National Chapter in Western European country had opened an ALAC before this project. The project has thus helped to pioneer this anti-corruption approach in a new contextual environment.

As compared to the countries assessed in the first phase of the project, namely Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic and Romania, the external environment in these four countries is very different. For example, the perceived level of corruption as measured by Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index (CPI) is significantly lower. Finland, in particular, has constantly held top positions in the CPI. In 2011, of 183 countries, Ireland ranked 19, Hungary 46 and Lithuania 50. For comparison: In 2011, Azerbaijan ranked 143 and Bosnia and Herzegovina 91.

Similarly, when looking at the effectiveness of institutions, significant differences can be found between the group of established ALACs and the Western European countries. The relevance of the development and effectiveness of institutions in this context was clearly stated by the research team in deliverable 4 for this project: "...we may observe a correlation

between the degree to which the country's institutions are developed, and the frequency of corruption... The better state institutions and bureaucratic procedures function, the less often citizens must accede to demands for bribes in everyday situations.” Nevertheless, this impact seems to be most prevalent on petty corruption: “Corruption does not vanish entirely in this process, however; rather, it shifts from quantitatively widespread petty corruption to the qualitatively different, and often spectacular, individual cases of high level corruption.”

Due to the demand-driven nature of the ALAC approach, the external environment is likely to have an impact on their operation in this context. Among others, the following questions arise:

- Where institutions work effectively, is additional, non-institutional advice as offered by ALACs indeed needed? If victims and witnesses of corruption have access to secure and safe channels to report their grievances and can trust in the effective follow-up of their reports, it might not be necessary to offer additional advice services. In these environments, it is therefore of particular importance to assess whether an ALAC does indeed add value to existing public services.
- Given that everyday corruption is less prevalent than in other parts of the world, will there be as many reports as in highly corrupt societies? Will the reports be of a different nature and refer to different sectors in society?
- What will be the impact of all these factors on the marketing of the ALAC services? For example, as compared to other parts of the world, is it more likely for ALACs in European countries to deal with whistleblowers than with individuals who were asked to pay a bribe?
- Where institutions are more developed, it is likely that the ALACs need to observe more regulations themselves. What impact does this have on data protection requirements, professional regulations (e.g. the provision of legal advice might be very strictly regulated), etc.?
- How can funding be secured in a context which is widely being perceived as “less corrupt”?

Given that the recommendations from the research team were elaborated based on information gathered in countries with a significantly different external environment as compared to the four new ALACs, the following questions arise in addition:

- To what extent can these recommendations be incorporated in a model that might manifest itself in a substantially different way in Ireland and Finland as compared to Azerbaijan and Bosnia and Herzegovina?

- Does experience to date confirm the assumption that “especially where widespread petty corruption is far less of a problem than high level corruption, cooperation with whistleblowers is the indispensable precondition for a more effective fight against corruption”?

Experience with the establishment of new ALACs

Due to the short time in operation, it is too early to draw conclusions from the experience in these four countries. Up until now, only in Hungary and Ireland have ALAC services been publicly launched and promoted. In Finland and Lithuania, advice is being given to citizens on an ongoing basis, but ALAC services have not yet been publicized. Preparations for the launch are underway in Lithuania while this report is being written.

Background and preparation of ALAC launches

TI National Chapters in all four countries have been operating for many years. In all countries they focussed on raising awareness about corruption issues in their countries and on evidence-based advocacy for anti-corruption reforms. Advocacy efforts are mostly targeted at policy makers and business actors. Usually, they are combined with alliance –building and networking activities.

At the same time, all National Chapters have been receiving requests from citizens for concrete support to help solve their corruption grievances. The establishment of ALACs is a response to this demand. ALACs put the chapters in a position to deal with these requests in a professional and systematic way and to use the information they receive from citizens in their advocacy efforts. They provide the chapter with the necessary resources to handle complaints and with a structure to either deal with them directly, e.g. through the legal experts who work for the ALACs or provide their support on a voluntary basis, or to pass them on to other complaint mechanisms and services.

The experience with all four new ALACs shows that the establishment of the service is directly related and highly dependent on the overall work of the chapter, on the vision of the individuals driving the chapter and on the available resources.

Preparation work can take significant time and may be resource-intensive. As a first step, it needs to be clarified whether there is a need for advice or whether existing official and non-official complaint mechanisms offer sufficient support to citizens to report incidences of corruption. This includes mapping of other available services, such as the existence of

hotlines for problems in the health sector or free legal advice centers (non-issue related), etc., and clarifying the relationship of an ALAC with these services, identifying the preferred attitude of citizens to report corruption (over the phone, by walking in to an office, through an electronic interface, etc.), identifying potential client groups to develop targeted publication and promotion material and identifying the legal and regulatory requirements for the establishment of an ALAC.

Where this preparation work had already begun to take place outside of this project and in the years preceding it, namely in Ireland and Hungary, the ALACs are furthest advanced.

Current state of play, success and challenges

The ALAC in Hungary was publicly launched end 2010. Ireland launched Western Europe's first TI Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC) in May 2011. In Finland and Lithuania, citizens who approach the National Chapter are being advised by staff, but the ALAC services have not yet been promoted to the public.

The TI National Chapters in Hungary and Ireland approach the ALAC model in different ways. While the Hungarian ALAC has developed a sophisticated electronic interface which filters grievances as much as possible, aiming at receiving only anti-corruption complaints, the Irish ALAC is deliberately open to receiving all types of grievances. TI Ireland decided to aim at helping all those reporting cases of wrongdoing and ethical malpractice primarily for two reasons: 1) Because many victims and witnesses of corruption-related offences might not be aware of the corruption aspect in the cases and 2) because they aim at reaching out to and supporting all citizens in problematic situations. ALAC staff will listen to their complaints and refer them to a different service if the case turns out to be non-corruption related. In Hungary, the complaints are being carefully filtered and the clients are referred to other services and sources for help if the complaint does not relate to corruption. The main aim is to manage workload for the Hungarian ALAC while still offering all complainants support.

In Hungary and Ireland, the existence and promotion of these services has increased the number of reports significantly. In both cases, the number of reports was particularly high on the days immediately after the launch of the service which attracted high levels of media attention.

The messaging and marketing of the ALACs in the two countries is very similar: TI Ireland adopted the logo pioneered by TI Hungary, representing three monkeys who invite the

potential clients to see, hear and speak up. The logo had been developed and selected through a competition run by TI Hungary in 2010 in preparation of their ALAC establishment.

TI Lithuania is currently developing their ALAC service and will focus even more on electronic reporting (through a web-based interface or through a helpline). Based on solid research, TI Lithuania found that these channels are likely to be most effective in Lithuania, while they keep open the option of using face-to-face meetings as well.

The number of clients in this short period of time is impressive and can be seen as a huge success for the ALACs in Hungary and Ireland. According to the quantitative data provided, at least 150 individuals reported corruption-related incidences and received support and advice between January and October 2011. In addition, the cases provide qualitative and quantitative information to the Chapters. Case studies can be used in education and research and provide evidence for their advocacy. High profile cases help to raise public awareness about corruption and inform their public interest advocacy. In addition, the ALAC helps to reach out to individuals and to build an individual supporters community in the anti-corruption field.

The main challenge relates to the financial sustainability of the ALACs. In none of the countries, the funding base for ALACs has been secured, and funding for the Irish ALAC runs out as early as spring 2012. To address this challenge, all chapters are working with volunteer and pro-bono support. However, securing such voluntary support for this type of work is hugely challenging and innovative ways will have to be explored to sustain the work in this environment. In addition, the core expenses of an ALAC (office space, phone line, webspace, coordination and marketing) require funding.

The promotion and marketing of ALACs to a large audience is another challenge. To inform potential clients about the existence of the service, it is necessary to identify adequate channels and platforms and to develop attractive information and promotion material. Europe has comparatively expensive media markets, so achieving a high saturation with limited financial poses another challenge.

The media can therefore play an important role, both in supporting the promotion of the service and in giving exposure to high profile cases if the clients agree to this. It is therefore important to develop solid and trustful relationships with journalists who are interested in reporting such cases. Ideally, media organisations will also agree to providing free or discounted advertising space to market the ALAC services.

Cooperation with the authorities is another important focus of the ALAC work. Authorities should be ready to help ALAC clients to receive relevant information and to access public support services where this applies. Authorities could further help promoting the ALAC service to potential clients.

ALACs in Western Europe: a new experience

After having established ALACs in South East Europe in the early 2000s, during a second phase, this model of citizen engagement in anti-corruption efforts was applied mostly in the developing world, namely in Africa, Asia and Latin America, as well as in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Thanks to this research project, the ALAC model is being pioneered for the first time in two Western European countries. The experience in Ireland and Finland is therefore of particular interest and importance for the TI movement as a whole and will be the subject of this chapter.

The TI National Chapters in both countries are rather small in size: TI Ireland was run for several years by one paid staff, the Executive Director, and TI Finland was entirely run by volunteers until 2011, when staff was recruited for the first time, thanks to two European Commission funded projects.

A solid funding base of the TI National Chapter plays an essential role in the establishment phase of an ALAC because the conception and establishment of ALACs are carried and driven by the National Chapters, in addition to their normal duties, the implementation of projects, etc. The more limited the resources of the National Chapter are, the more difficult and lengthy is the establishment phase. If, as detailed above, the contextual environment requires particular attention to the question of the ALAC niche, the (unpaid) preparation work can be relatively long. This has proven true in both cases: ALAC preparation work began in 2009 or even before, with financial support from this project starting in March 2011. The ALAC started operating early 2011 in Ireland and TI Finland has not yet publicly launched their advice services.

In both countries, National Chapters have been receiving corruption complaints from citizens before opening an ALAC. In Finland, for example, the chapter has been receiving 2-3 such requests per month. Since the public launch of the ALAC in Ireland this number has jumped to 136 within four months, with 121 of these reports being classified as corruption-related. This impressive figure shows that, firstly, the need for such service in Ireland is very high and, secondly, the service is widely known despite its recent establishment.

In Finland, the picture is very different: So far, the number of complaints has remained stable at a very low level. This may well be due to the fact that the ALAC was not publicly launched and advertised and that there is no clear distinction yet between ALAC services and the regular operations of the Chapter which was only recently staffed. Also, the perception of Finland as being a “clean” country probably contributes to this. However, it is too early to draw conclusions regarding the question whether an ALAC-type approach to anti-corruption work is effective in Finland. It will instead depend on a more decisive communication of the ALAC services to the public to get a sense of the type of complaints people do or do not bring forward in Finland.

An early reflection on ALACs in high-income countries

On the basis of TI Ireland’s experience, there is a good indication that the ALAC model may indeed prove its relevance and potential impact in high-income countries contexts. Similarly, recent research provides further evidence of the causal link between the improvements in institutions to citizen complaints². There are however some considerations to make when establishing an Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre in Western Europe and other high-income contexts. For TI, this is a strategic issue to consider in its work, in particular in the context of the recently adopted 2015 TI strategy and its new emphasis on engaging more people in the fight against corruption.

For this reason, TI-Secretariat recently co-hosted a workshop together with TI-Ireland to discuss the relevance of the ALAC concept in high-income countries. The workshop brought together nine TI National Chapters, with participants from Luxemburg (who launched an ALAC on December 2011), Portugal, France, the UK, Greece, Czech Republic, Finland and Canada. It drew extensively on the experience and expertise of the established ALACs and provided some important insights for further development of the concept in the region. While the workshop report is enclosed with this report as Annex I, the following are some key reflections on the relevance of ALACs in high-income countries.

For one, civil society can be more “crowded” in high income countries and competition for funding fierce. It can therefore be useful to **narrow and refine the focus of an ALAC** (for instance on whistleblower protection, procurement, etc), in the niche where its services are able to add most value. It can also be of value to identify issues that require awareness-raising

² Schleifer, Andrei, “Education and the Quality of Institutions”, Harvard University, Department of Economics; Boston, 2011.

in a given context. For example, there are negative connotations associated with whistleblowing in many societies³.

Also, it is key to **survey the landscape** of civil society to assess what kinds of services the ALAC could offer, and identify opportunities for setting up partnerships with organisations that offer a similar or related service. This may also ease a strain on an ALAC struggling with a large volume of complaints. For instance, the Bar Council of Ireland secured an agreement whereby every qualified barrister in Ireland was obliged to sign onto their pro bono register. There are many different ways for such partnerships to operate. They may act as a first level filter, triaging and sending on only the most high priority cases to the ALAC, or vice-versa.

Another important strategic choice to make from the onset is to attempt **striking a balance between awareness and capacity**. There is a tension between creating public awareness of ALAC services and having insufficient resources to respond to public need. A well known yet under-resourced ALAC risks disappointing the public and losing credibility. Generally, in many cases public need greatly exceeds the scale of ALAC operations. Building the reputation of the ALAC or Chapter is important for its ability to have a systemic impact.

Lastly, **managing public expectation** of what services can be provided and at what scale is important to avoid disappointment. Raising awareness without the resources to respond to public demand can be as, or more damaging than remaining relatively unknown. However, ALACs / TI needs to become known and accepted by the public at a local level - in order to increase their “weight” when undertaking advocacy.

3. Support from the movement

General support to ALACs by the TI Secretariat

2011 was an important year of continuation as well as transition for the work of the Transparency International Secretariat (TI-S) unit supporting the work of ALACs worldwide. While the rapid expansion and replication of ALACs continued with the support of the unit, its work was also increasingly geared to support the ambitious goals set out in the TI movement’s 2015 strategy, and in particular focus on engaging more people in the fight against corruption than ever before. The three key areas of support provided by the ALAC unit were: 1) Capacity development and training of new ALACs, in particular in Europe and Central America 2) Fundraising support to existing and new ALACs globally, and 3) Development and completion of the new ALAC database software. This project made an

³ See “Alternative to Silence – whistleblower protection in 10 European countries”, Transparency International, 2009

important contribution to the success of this work, and notably so in the context of the database software.

As laid out in our last report for this project in late 2010,⁴ the work of the TI Secretariat in support of the ALACs has typically been one of seeking to systematically document emerging practice across the movement, and help replicate and scale it up wherever possible. With a distinctly local intervention like the ALAC, this has been a very deliberate decision. The challenges and impact of the work occur primarily at the local level. For TI-S to try and micro-manage the operations of the ALACs would be inappropriate.

The focus of support by TI-S has therefore been to facilitate the knowledge exchange across National Chapters running, or planning to open ALACs, providing technical advice to new ALACs in particular in their start-up phase, constantly updating and making accessible to the TI movement the global knowledge base of this highly dynamic approach, developing tools such as an ALAC manual, the ALAC Capacity Assessment Tool (ALAC CAT) and the new database software solution (which both received critical support from this project), supporting fundraising at the global, regional and increasingly national levels as well as bringing out and communicating impact of the ALAC work to diverse audiences, e.g. through case studies and stories describing concrete ALAC cases.⁵

In this context, this project has provided support to the work done by the TI Secretariat for and with the global community of ALACs, as well as support specifically to the TI Chapters who are project partners. The two key areas of work that have benefitted from this project's support are described in more detail below.

Supporting the communications and advertising strategies of ALACs

Advertising and outreach activities are key aspects of the work of ALACs insofar as they are critical in reaching potential clients. Unless sufficient numbers of citizens know of the services, contacts by clients remain limited. In the past, TI Secretariat has only had limited involvement in the definition of local advertising strategies. Rather, the focus has been on collecting and documenting examples from ALACs themselves to share with others who are in the process of launching advertising campaigns. The primary reason for this is the very local nature of advertising markets. Successful marketing strategies have to be defined in-

⁴ Strong fundamental, vast potential. Overall ALAC Situation Analysis Report by the Global ALAC unit at TI Secretariat (2010): <http://www.soziologie.uni-konstanz.de/alacs/project/deliverables/>

⁵ For recent examples see Transparency International's Annual Report 2010, pages 15, 23, 29 and 55: http://transparency.org/publications/publications/annual_reports/annual_report_2010, as well as the Global Corruption Barometer Report (GCB) 2010: http://transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/gcb/2010/true_stories.

country, and ideally with the help of specialists. The funds available to ALACs in most countries have been very limited, and in particular the advertising budgets have been far too small to run advertising campaigns comparable to the commercial campaigns that set the creative standards, and determine market prices for airtime and physical advertising space. However, most National Chapters have chosen very effective, often creative and innovative strategies to overcome this limitation with the help of pro-bono partnerships with advertising agencies and media providers, the use of public interest marketing opportunities, such as in public television and radio, and the building of strong relationships with journalists which has often resulted in good coverage. There are a number of lessons to be learned from these experiences, and this project has provided TI-S with an opportunity to begin documenting these in more detail while also providing practical support to ALACs in this area.

In this project, it was foreseen that the secretariat would play a more proactive role in supporting the new ALACs in their advertising. TI-S took a largely demand-based approach to ensure relevance of its support to the real needs at local level. In practical terms, TI-S held a series of telephone conferences with the TI Chapters who established new ALACs under this project in summer 2011. Practical plans were discussed, and TI-S provided comments and feedback on developments in the Chapters. In some cases, such as TI Ireland and TI Lithuania, TI-S was able to provide specific feedback on aspects of the development of the web-presence of the new ALACs.

In addition, TI-S developed a first compendium of advertising examples to document current experience and practice across the TI movement. This guide will be updated continuously with new examples as they emerge, and will be shared on TI’s intranet and in particular with new ALACs as they develop their first advertising campaigns. Its first version is enclosed with this report as Annex II.



A particularly encouraging example of innovation in the ALAC communications context resulted directly from this project. TI Ireland took inspiration from the TI Hungary’s Merj Tenni! design which inverts the concept of blindness and deaf-muteness in the case of abuse and calls citizens to action against

corruption. TI Ireland uses the same idea in their advertisement of the Iris ALAC, as can be seen here:



Developing a second generation database for ALACs

The project has made an important contribution to the development of a new software solution that will aid the professional management of ALACs, enable collection of unique datasets on corruption, and support monitoring and evaluation of the centres' work. For TI Secretariat (TI-S), this is one of the key strategic lines of work within the broader area of technical support to ALACs and, in the years to come, the wider people engagement work under Transparency International's new 2015 strategy. In 2011, the database development has been one of a limited number of top organisational priorities. The support from the European Commission will have contributed, by the end of the year, to the finalisation development of the software as well as an extensive suite of training materials. In 2012, the EC funding will play a critical role in supporting the roll-out of the database to the ALAC network, and in particular to those National Chapters participating in this project.

The importance of the database for TI's work against corruption

The importance of the database development for TI's work can hardly be overstated. As it will form the backbone of day-to-day management of client relationships in ALACs, it is *the* key tool enabling professional and secure advisory services to victims, witnesses and whistleblowers. On the basis of the data that will be collected with the help of the software, a new perspective on corruption as experienced by citizens is expected to emerge. ALACs will be able to share statistical information about sectors and institutions affected by citizen complaints, mechanisms of corruption reported, and data on the impact of measures taken to address citizens' grievances. With more than 100,000 citizen complaints received through ALACs in more than 50 countries to date, this will over time yield absolutely unique information and learning about corruption and what works to address it.

For TI-S over the last two to three years, development of the database represented perhaps *the* key strategic technical assistance contribution towards the work of the growing number of ALACs around the world.

The process of database development

The database development process began with a consultation workshop involving about 15 representatives of TI Chapters in December 2008. The next large component of work was the design of the fundamental structure of the software solution. Because of the nature of TI's decentralised organisational structure and the highly local nature of many corruption issues, this was a challenging task. In essence, TI-S took the approach that the software had to first and

foremost serve the needs of National Chapters, and at the same time deliver comparative statistics to support advocacy and communications at the national, regional and global levels. This mandated a structure of independently installed software packages administered by TI's Chapters themselves which communicate with a central level database to which non-sensitive, statistical information is being sent. To enable the use of the software in parts of the world where internet connection is still expensive and intermittent, two broad installation options were made possible: a remote server installation and a local installation. In addition the new software had to support multiple installations within a country to account for the growing number of sub-national offices and mobile ALACs.

Once the basic structure had been defined by the relevant staff at TI-S and a number of software experts that were consulted, work on the technical specifications document began in September 2009. In summer 2010 an external expert started to develop a more detailed scoping of development options and a draft software development plan.

A contracting agreement was reached in July 2010, and software programming started. At the same time, TI-S also engaged pro-bono services to develop a data privacy management approach for the roll-out of the database. As the software development process moved forward, consultations continued with the ALACs and various TI-S experts to define critical parts of the database in much more detail, such as the classifications of sectors and areas in which corruption could take place, its mechanisms and multiple other aspects of the directly corruption and impact related data collection, management and analysis. During this phase, the potentially game-changing nature of the product became evident to those involved with the project. It was therefore decided to focus on quality and include additional functionality and features in the database that had not been initially foreseen. For example, the TI-S team decided to include a far more advanced search and analytics component than initially foreseen, as well as expanded financial, systemic change and advocacy modules.

In June 2011, beta-testing of the database software began in seven countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Ireland, Georgia, Cameroon, Rwanda, Papua New Guinea (PNG). Feedback from these "pilot" ALACs was extremely positive already at this stage. Since fall 2011, training was provided to ALAC staff in several other countries⁶ including staff of the eight ALACs covered under this project in October 2011⁷. Both ALAC staff and the technical experts consulted throughout the project phase have commended the software.

⁶ Albania, Croatia, Bulgaria, Moldova, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Kosovo (*Zagreb workshop, 3rd and 4th November 2011, Bosnia and Herzegovina contributed as a resource to this workshop*), Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama, Venezuela, Argentina (*forthcoming workshop in Santo Domingo, 14th and 15th of December 2011*)

⁷ Ireland, Hungary, Finland, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Romania, Azerbaijan (*European Commission supported 7th Framework project, Berlin workshop 17th and 18th October 2011*),

The beta-testing phase as well as a parallel security review and test demonstrated the solidity and relevance of the software solution. Both also yielded some important final improvements, in particular to further increase the usefulness of the Case Management Module and the security hardening of the software.

By the end of 2011, up to 30 ALACs will have installed the software. From January 2012, roll-out to the global community will be completed.

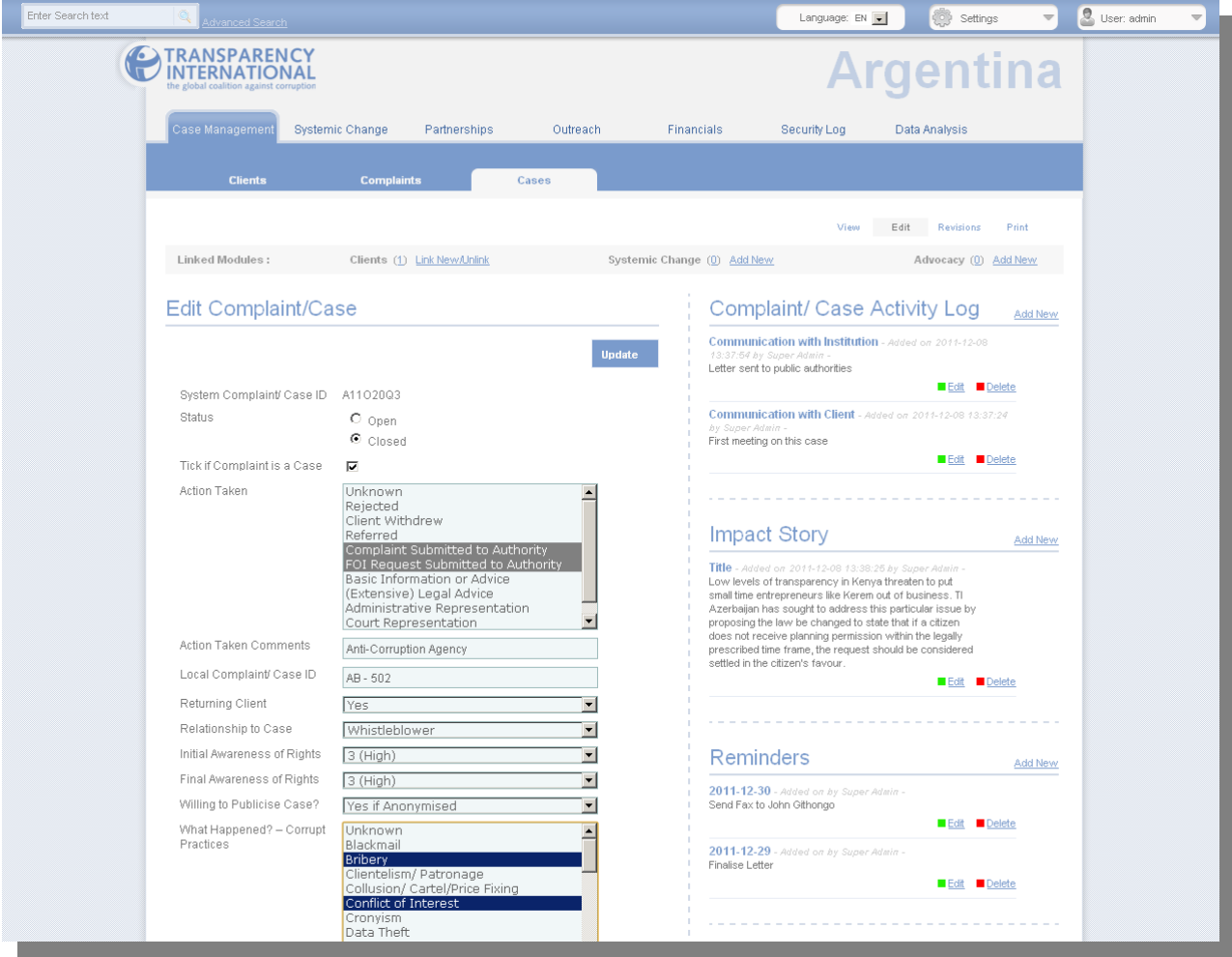


Figure 1 Screenshot of the new database (Case Management module)

Specific support provided by TI-S to the new ALACs

In the context of development of the new ALAC database, the key support services provided by TI-S to the new European ALACs, as well as the established ones taking part in this project were as follows:

TI Ireland and TI Bosnia Herzegovina were part of the beta-testing phase of the new software (June 2011-September 2011), receiving access to the new database at the earliest possible

time. This beta-testing phase included extensive one-to-one support in the installation and usage of the database software.

As TI Lithuania is developing its online-based services for people, the corruption-related categories contained in the database, which are a key element in collecting and analysing citizen-reported data, were shared early on for consideration in the development of the Chapter's platform, as was access to the trial version of the new ALAC database.

TI-S developed an extensive suite of training materials for the new database, which will be a critical support to the established and new ALACs as they install and begin using the new software (between December and March 2012). The draft database manual is enclosed with this report as Annex III. A continuously updated version of the manual is hosted within TI's intranet Chapterzone.

All project partners participated in the first full training on the new database on 17 and 18 October 2011 in Berlin. During this training, important final recommendations were made to further increase the usefulness of the software for ALACs, which have been incorporated in the release version of the database. In addition to the database component of the training, TI-S also invited an external expert (from Tactical Technology Collective)⁸, who provided an introduction on data visualisation for advocacy. Feedback from participants in this workshop was very positive both on the software as well as on the training itself.

Overall the development of the database and accompanying materials, as well as support to individual National Chapters (including support to the users of the existing database) was a central component of the work of TI-S' ALAC unit in 2011. This project provided critical support to this strategic initiative for TI. In 2012, the rollout of the database will continue and be completed. In this context, TI-S is planning online trainings as well as workshops to support National Chapters operating ALACs.

4. Conclusion

This project has provided a unique opportunity for Transparency International to increase learning and information exchange between established and new ALACs in Europe and Central Asia. It has provided TI National Chapters in four European countries to start offering anti-corruption advice to citizens. It has supported Transparency International's efforts to develop a highly sophisticated database for the administration and systematic analysis of data gathered through corruption complaints from around the world and to train ALAC staff from

⁸ <http://www.tacticaltech.org>

eight countries in its use. It further provided support to develop a communications and marketing guide. In addition, it provided civil society anti-corruption groups in eight countries with a valuable external view and analysis of their work.

One of the most valuable assets of working in an international movement is cross-fertilization of experiences and knowledge exchange. By bringing representatives from eight ALACs together and discussing progress in their work, this project has contributed to this essential part of TI's work. The project has also helped to test the ALAC approach in Western Europe. It is too early to draw conclusions from this experience, but first results seem to indicate that the approach is highly valuable in high-income countries with perceived low level of corruption even though it manifests itself differently in this context, due to its demand-driven nature.

The challenge remains to sustain ALAC services, particularly in non-aid recipient countries, in order to provide citizens with access to support in addressing corruption grievances and to use this information for anti-corruption reforms.

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RESEARCH PROJECT: “ALACs”

Promotion of Participation and Citizenship in Europe through the “Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres (ALACs)” of Transparency International. Analysis and Enhancement of an Anti-corruption Tool to Enable Better Informed and Effective Citizen Participation in Europe

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