

Empowering Citizens to Fight Corruption



"If corruption is a disease, then transparency is a central part of its treatment." - Kofi Annan

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"Fighting corruption is not just good governance. It's self-defense. It's patriotism." - Joe Biden



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Countering Human Trafficking in Pakistan

Human Trafficking is the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons by improper means (such as force, abduction, fraud, or deception) for an improper purpose including forced labor or sexual exploitation. According to UNODC latest Global Report on Trafficking in Persons, globally more than 65 million people were forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflict, violence or human rights violations at the end of 2015.

While in Pakistan, over 19,000 victims of internal and external trafficking and related offences were detected in 2014 and over 12,000 during Jan-Sept 2015; the majority of internal victims were women while majority of external victims were men. Many people are trafficked for bonded labor and forced beggary within and outside Pakistan. This also includes forced marriages and the illegal organ

removal and trading for transplantation. A UNODC research says that most traffickers & victims belong to four districts of Punjab; Sialkot, Gujranwala, Mandi Bahuddin, Gujrat and are trafficked via Balochistan to Iran and then elsewhere.

Not surprisingly, corruption is a companion to human trafficking. Often corruption serves as an enabling factor that facilitates internal and external trafficking as it plays a central part at every stage of the trafficking process. Studies show that trafficking victims tend to belong to countries where the public sector is perceived to be highly corrupt. Pakistan, which is ranked 117th out of 180 countries on the latest Corruption Perception Index published by Transparency International, has been a source, transit, and destination country for both international and

transnational human trafficking.

The nexus between human trafficking and corruption strongly calls for jointly addressing the two tissues.

Pakistani government advanced its efforts to counter human trafficking via formulation of Pakistan's Bonded Labor System [Abolition] Act BLSA) 1992 and a comprehensively designed Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking Ordinance (PACHTO) 2002 to criminalize human trafficking with severe penalties. As a result of these efforts, Pakistan was upgraded to Tier 2 in the Human Trafficking Watch List run by the US State Department.

In the recent times, the government has accelerated its efforts to strengthen the legal framework to counter human trafficking. In the mid of 2018, the parliament passed "The Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act" & "The Prevention of Smuggling of Migrants Acts".



Cartoonist: Mr. Zahid Gara

Besides, FIA now operates from 11 offices throughout Pakistan including those in the districts with the most traffickers and victims - Gujranwala, Gujrat, and now at Kartarpur border in Narowal too. FIA has also expanded its protection services to trafficking victims of Pakistani origin residing in the Middle East too through its link office in Oman.

All these efforts present an optimistic scenario for Pakistan to counter human trafficking. However, a lack of emphasis on integrated approach towards anti-trafficking that addresses the corruption aspect in the trafficking process is hindering Pakistan's progress on combating this issue. This requires putting in place a comprehensive regulatory framework that goes beyond convicting those involved in human trafficking but also holding the responsible public officials at all levels who participate in or facilitate human trafficking, accountable.

Editor: Ms. Farkhanda Jabeen

USAID Anti-Fraud Hotline

The conclusion of this quarter marks the successful completion of the first quarter of ninth year since the inception of Anti-Fraud Hotline. AFH has thus far played a pivotal role in ensuring transparency and prevention of fraud and corruption in the utilization of USAID funds across Pakistan. The activities of AFH have consequently resulted in the USAID funds reach the targeted beneficiaries, for whom the resources had been allocated.

Since its inception, the Hotline continues to provide OIG with the necessary information into alleged corruption cases in various USAID funded projects across the country. The investigations carried out have thus far lead to substantial savings of American taxpayer's money with recoveries of funds worth millions of U.S dollars and subsequent

termination of corrupt employees of respective organizations. In consideration of the resounding success in achieving its objective, an agreement was duly signed between USAID and TI Pakistan in September 2017 to extend the Hotline for another two years.

The AFH complaint management cell has staffed multilingual trained complaint management officers, who receive complaints through various mediums such as the toll free hotline, SMS, WhatsApp, email and direct upload on to the AFH website. After a careful review by the senior management staff of the AFH team the complaints are uploaded on to the AFH website. Only OIG and TI Pakistan authorized personnel can view the complaints thus ensuring integrity of the complainant's information.



This quarter, AFH handled over 3100 calls, and as a result 92 complaints were registered. Since its inception, AFH has effectively handled over 105,000 calls

In the reporting quarter, AFH received over 3100 calls, and as a result 92 complaints were registered. Since its inception in January 2011, AFH has effectively handled over 105,000 calls which have resulted in the successful formulation of around 8350 complaints. Over the years, these complaints have provided USAID/OIG with useful and informed insight into corrupt practices in a number of USAID funded projects.

AFH also continued to receive complaints regarding projects that had no association with USAID. However, since USAID has signed an MoU with various organizations and multilateral agencies, therefore, such complaints are assessed to see if they have a relation with any of the partner organization and are thereby referred to them as part of the Hotline's referral services. The referrals are also made by the OIG as well. Around 2000 complaints have been referred to other agencies and donors for their review and follow up. In cases where the complaints do not have USAID or other donor agencies nexus and pertain to issues faced by citizens related to legal matters are forwarded to TI-Pakistan's Advocacy and Legal Advice Center (ALAC) for consultation and advice.

AFH does not only focus on reporting complaints regarding corruption but also works towards spreading awareness regarding corruption hazards and fraud prevention among USAID implementing partners, sub-grantees and G2G partners. Besides reporting complaints, AFH also scans and monitors local newspapers for the violation of PPRA rules in USAID funded projects. In case of any violations regarding PPRA rule, AFH sends letters to the procuring agencies informing them of their violations. Copies are also dispatched to the regulatory authorities as well.



FRAUD AWARENESS AND PREVENTION WORKSHOP

Oct 10, 2018:

The workshop focused on raising awareness to enhance understanding on prevention of fraud and corruption amongst the implementing partners of USAID-funded projects.

The aim was to provide an opportunity to the participants to directly engage and discuss their concerns with the representatives of USAID, OIG, NAB and TI-Pakistan. It enabled participants to develop pivotal understanding in identifying entry points for fraud and corruption, thereby urging practice of preventive measures to help address the relevant issues.

Moreover, the workshop insisted on an active partaking with respect to awareness of Anti-Fraud Hotline so as to vigilantly report instances of corruption in USAID funded projects.

The session was attended by 129 participants from 62 organizations.

Citizens Voice against Corruption (CVAC)

TI Pakistan rejects the notion that people are apathetic in the face of corruption. Rather, they demonstrate that they will become involved in the fight against corruption when they are provided with simple, credible and viable mechanisms for doing so.

Keeping in view this, TI Pakistan regularly engages the public and youth in particular, to create awareness and assist them in legal matters.

In this quarter, TI Pakistan organized a legal advice camp (Mobile ALAC) in Chishtian, Bahawalnagar to provide free legal assistance to the citizens who visited the camp and registered their complaints.

These complaints were later referred to the concerned authorities By TI Pakistan.

Similarly, to enhance social accountability, TI Pakistan promotes citizen access to elected representatives. In the reporting quarter, meetings between Local Government representatives and citizens were organized in Hala, Matiari, Sindh. Vice Chairman Taluka Municipal Committee, Hala, and other LG Representatives were present to reply to the public's concerns.



SDG 16: Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions

In September 2015, world leaders agreed on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – a set of 17 Goals and 169 targets to guide global development. These goals are universal and potentially transformative in nature. The 2030 Agenda reaffirms the wealth of evidence that ‘there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development’. It also recognizes that good governance and strong and accountable institutions underpin development and peace-building efforts. The focus around the SDGs has now shifted towards implementation, particularly at the national and local level. It is time for Pakistan to implement the SDGs in a participatory manner, and crucially, to implement Goal 16 and its targets.

To achieve this, TI Pakistan has been working to enhance the capacity of Civil Society Organizations and NGOs around different SDGs, in particular Goal 16 by discussing how to engage with governments and other local stakeholders to support the planning, implementation and accountability of Goal 16.

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AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



In the last quarter, TI Pakistan provided its input in provincial consultation on Voluntary National Review on SDGs organized by Punjab SDGs Unit, P&DD, Sindh SDG Unit and UNDP.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development encourages member states to conduct regular national reviews of progress made towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals through an inclusive, voluntary and country-led process.

Promoting Social Accountability

Citizen Report Card Study: In this quarter, TI Pakistan conducted two Citizen Report Card studies - one in Matiari and Hyderabad (Sindh) and the other in four tehsils of Lasbella (Balochistan) which included Bela, Uthal, Winder and Hub.

The objective of the studies was to take feedback of citizens on the quality of public service in health, education, water, sanitation, and police sectors in the respective districts. In each of the districts, the survey forms were filled by experienced enumerators under the supervision of field monitor and TI Pakistan representative. TI Pakistan is in process of finalizing the reports to present the findings of the studies.

Right to Information (RTI) Workshops: To raise their democratic voices to hold government and other local stakeholders accountable, citizens should be aware of their right to access public information as per Right to Information (RTI) law

. TI Pakistan organized two RTI workshops - one in Badin, Sindh on 'Sindh Transparency and Right to Information Act 2017' and the other in Bahawalnagar, Punjab on 'Punjab Transparency and Right to Information Act 2013'.

The primary goal of the workshop was to help enhance the capacity and understanding of young people on how they can use the Right to Information Law to exercise their democratic rights and responsibilities and strengthen their engagement with government.

The trainers also highlighted the importance of exercising RTI by citizens in reducing corruption. The participants actively took part in the workshop and Q&A session.



Youth Engagement in Local Governance

TI Pakistan representative participated in a Learning Visit and Experience Capitalization Workshop on Youth Engagement in Local Governance organized by Local Governance Initiative and Network (LOGIN) - a multi-stakeholder knowledge exchange platform that supports greater decentralization and strengthened local governance in South and East Asia.

The learning event served as an entry point for the Network’s members to facilitate discussions and experience sharing among members on effective strategies for youth inclusion, with the Filipino model of Sangguniang Kabataan/ Youth Council as a reference point.

International Anti-Corruption Day 2018

Every year, Transparency International Pakistan organizes walks and seminars on International Anti-Corruption day all over Pakistan. This year, on December 9th 2018, TI Pakistan organized walks and seminars in 24 districts across all the provinces of Pakistan. A large number of citizens, civil society members, media personnel, lawyers, students, teachers and religious leaders participated in these gatherings.

Seminar on ‘Role of Women in a Corruption-free Society’

In an effort to encourage women to raise their voices against corruption and share their related struggles, Transparency International Pakistan organized a seminar on “Role of Women in a Corruption free Society” in Burewala, Punjab on November 26th 2018. The seminar was attended by over 100 females.

The speakers highlighted the importance and usage of RTI laws to increase awareness among women about their right to access information from the public departments. In the next session, a courageous woman with physical disability named Bismilla Begum shared story of her struggle to get her rights amidst corrupt practices. Finally, a panel discussion was arranged between the speakers and participants.

