



Report on the 2011 ACT- Against Corruption Today Campaign

**Activities implemented for International Anti-Corruption
Day, 9 December 2011**

Abstract

This is a report of the activities supported by the UNDP Global Programme on Anti-Corruption for Development Effectiveness (PACDE) as part of the ACT- Against Corruption Today global campaign launched to mark the 2011 International Anti-Corruption Day. Section One provides details of the global level activities undertaken and an overview of country level campaign trends and priorities. It also presents some key lesson learnt and recommendations for future campaigns. Section Two contains descriptions of country level activities.

ACT- Against Corruption Today

Report on the 2011 International Anti-Corruption Day Campaign

Section One: Overview and Summary

The UN General Assembly declared 9 December as International Anti-Corruption Day in 2003. Since then, 9 December has come to represent a powerful call to action against corruption, a touchstone in efforts by civil society, media and the general public to increasingly expose and eliminate corruption across society, especially in the public sector and to compel the governments to explain the actions taken to address corruption. International Anti-Corruption Day has become a catalyst for promoting multi-stakeholder dialogue around corruption and broader governance challenges.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) have been in the forefront of supporting commemoration of International Anti-Corruption Day worldwide and using this day to advocate on anti-corruption. In particular, they promote ratification and implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and raise public awareness on the costs and impact of corruption. In 2009, UNDP and UNODC launched a global campaign under the theme ‘Your No Counts’ on International Anti-Corruption Day.

The 2011 ACT- Against Corruption Today Campaign

The theme for the 2011 global campaign to mark International Anti-Corruption Day was **ACT- Against Corruption Today!** The objective of the campaign is to raise public awareness about corruption costs, bring their attention to the national and local efforts to address corruption and promote UNCAC and International Anti-Corruption Day.

The 2011 ACT campaign has had remarkable success in getting public commitments from national governments to combat corruption, strengthening dialogue between civil society and governments, and raising people’s awareness about the costs of corruption and encouraging them to take a stand against it.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issued an official statement on International Anti-Corruption Day, urging everyone to pledge “to do our part by cracking down on corruption, shaming those who practice it and engendering a culture that values ethical behaviour.” UNODC Executive Director Yury Fedotov also issued a statement in which he called on the remaining 35 states to ratify the UNCAC. Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, the Director of UNDP’s Democratic Governance Group, sent a message to all UNDP staff stressing the importance of addressing corruption to build responsive, capable and inclusive states that meet the needs of their people.



Poster on women's role in combating corruption produced for the ACT campaign

At the global level, UNDP and UNODC established a dedicated [website](http://www.actagainstcorruption.org) for the ACT campaign (www.actagainstcorruption.org). The website contains a wide range of ACT campaign materials, including the ACT logo and two sets of posters on corruption — one set highlighting the costs of corruption and the other showing the positive development impact of people’s actions against corruption. The ACT logo and first set of posters are available in the six official languages of the United Nations plus Portuguese. An advocacy leaflet on how different stakeholders — government officials, citizens, civil society organizations and media — can act against corruption was also updated and made available for download on the website. This leaflet, also available in the seven languages mentioned above, was produced to ensure clarity and consistency in the ACT campaign advocacy messages.

Also in December 2011, UNDP revamped its [governance and anti-corruption](http://www.anti-corruption.org) Web page and launched the beta version of the [Global Portal on Anti-Corruption](http://www.anti-corruption.org) (www.anti-corruption.org). This public portal responds to growing demand across the world for information about anti-corruption measures and best practices. It is designed to be a one-stop shop for sharing knowledge on anti-corruption work being undertaken by various stakeholders in different countries. It presents documents related to anti-corruption legislative frameworks; national anti-corruption strategies and work plans; and information about anti-corruption agencies, national and local anti-corruption initiatives and measures, and the work carried out by civil society organization to combat corruption.

UNDP intends for this portal to become a fully integrated online anti-corruption community of practice where members can share knowledge and exchange best practices, discuss and stay up to date on developments in anti-corruption and provide support to their peers in other countries on developing and implementing anti-corruption measures.

Measuring audience reached by the ACT campaign

To encourage national level implementation of the ACT campaign, the UNDP Global Programme on Anti-Corruption for Development Effectiveness (PACDE) provided a total of \$100,000 in small grants (up to \$3,000 per country) to 47 UNDP and UNODC Country Offices. In addition, several UNDP Country Offices, such as those in Burundi, Slovakia and Tunisia, used Country Office funds to support national level dialogue on anti-corruption and promote the ACT campaign.

The national level ACT campaigns have had a strong media outreach. National level activities prior to, on and after International Anti-Corruption Day were widely covered by print media, radio, television, online newspapers. Public service announcements were broadcast on radio and television in several countries. The events associated with the campaign’s launch were also promoted through social media (e.g., via Twitter and Facebook and through SMS text messages), thereby helping to reach hundreds of thousands of people. Furthermore, several countries organized public outreach events such as music festivals, flash-dance mobs, parades and football matches, many of which attracted large crowds. UNDP estimates that approximately **120 million people** worldwide were reached through the ACT campaign. (See Annex 4 for estimates of number of people reached through the ACT campaign by country.)

Notable ACT campaign trends and developments

The country level activities have varied enormously, but a number of common trends are highlighted below:

a. *Public commitments by decision makers and key stakeholders to address corruption:*

International Anti-Corruption Day has indeed proven to be *a powerful call to action* for decision makers to take measures to combat corruption. In 2011, state officials and politicians in several countries committed to combat corruption in many ways — for example, by collaborating with other stakeholders, including civil society organizations (in **Cameroon** and **Ukraine**); implementing UNCAC (**Iran**); ratifying UNCAC (**Swaziland**); and articulating national visions on anti-corruption (**Tunisia**). Also of note is that **Guinea** ratified the UNCAC on 9 December 2011. These commitments illustrate the priority given to combating corruption and improving governance to assuage growing public discontent against perceived inaction by states to combat corruption. (See Annex 1 for more details on country-level impact.)

b. *Strengthening 'Arab spring' reforms:*

UNDP Country Offices in **Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia** and **Yemen** took advantage of 2011 International Anti-Corruption Day to organize high-level multi stakeholder forums to discuss how current administrations should address corruption and support relevant reform processes to improve governance, rule of law and service delivery. For instance, at a one-day conference organized in Egypt, the acting Minister of State for Administrative Development committed to the establishment of a portal to provide information about anti-corruption work of various actors on the ministry's website. In Yemen, a manual on transparency and information disclosure was launched at a workshop organized to mark International Anti-Corruption Day. Jordan organized a film festival on corruption and human rights that was attended by activists from across the Middle East.

The multi stakeholder forums provided an opportunity for dialogue among civil society actors, youth activists, and media and government representatives.

c. *Focus on corruption in sectors:*

UNDP Country Offices that are working on addressing corruption and governance bottlenecks in specific sectors used the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day to highlight their programmes and efforts as well as bring stakeholders together for a policy discussion — for example, in **Montenegro** (health sector) and **Tajikistan** (education sector). UNDP **Panama** and **Bolivia** used the education sector as the entry point for a broader national discussion on anti-corruption. Two REDD+ countries, **Costa Rica** and **Indonesia**, raised awareness about corruption risks in programmes addressing climate change.¹

d. *Youth:*

Several Country Offices designed activities specifically to attract youth involvement in anti-corruption efforts. Among them were the following: **Bolivia** (youth contest for best proposal on how to promote integrity and the development and release of a video game on fighting corruption); **Panama** (breakfast conversation with school students); **Liberia** and **Nigeria** (school debates); **Egypt** and **Yemen** (conference with youth organizations); **Cameroon, Tunisia** and **Vanuatu** (music festivals); and **Trinidad and Tobago** ('flash-mob' dance and t-shirt design competition).

e. *Building synergies with civil society efforts:*

The ACT campaign also provided an opportunity to strengthen partnerships and build synergies among the work of UNDP, UNODC and civil society organizations. **Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania** and **Mexico** worked with Transparency International and its local chapters to organize the ACT campaign in their countries. In addition, UNDP helped to promote local civil society platforms that highlight corruption costs and provide opportunities for the general public to report corruption. For example, UNDP, UNODC and UN Millennium Campaign in **India** partnered with I Paid a Bribe (ipaidabribe.com) to promote a 'My ACT Story' contest. UNDP **Tunisia** launched a website (www.laboursedelacorruption.com) where citizens can report corruption anonymously; the website also keeps track of how much money is lost due to corruption. *Zabatak* ('You are busted!'), an ushahidi-based platform for reporting corruption anonymously, was promoted during the forum organized by UNDP **Egypt** for International Anti-Corruption Day.

UNDP also supported local civil society advocacy efforts in **Liberia** and **Uganda**. In **Mexico**, UNDP along with its civil society partner Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas launched an online platform that provides disaggregated data on the national and local governments' performance and accountability.

¹ REDD refers to the United Nations collaborative initiative on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation.

f. *Social media:*

Social media (e.g., Facebook and Twitter) have become an important vehicle to reach hundreds of thousands of people quickly, cheaply and effectively. A number of countries (**Bolivia, India, Lithuania, Paraguay, Trinidad and Tobago** and **Vanuatu**) promoted national ACT campaigns through Facebook either by launching dedicated pages or through UNDP Country Office Facebook pages. Many countries (including Brazil, **Bolivia, Mexico,** and **the Philippines**) used Twitter to promote events. The most impressive figures so far in terms of the number of people reached through social media are from **the Philippines**, where the ACT campaign reached 360,000 followers on Twitter, and **Brazil**, where UNDP sent out ACT campaign messages to over 173,000 followers via Twitter.

g. *Media:*

Television was a key source for broadcasting live policy debate on combating corruption to millions of people (e.g., **Kyrgyzstan, the Philippines,** and **Swaziland**) as well as for promoting events organized for International Anti-Corruption Day (**Cameroon, Paraguay** and **Trinidad and Tobago**). Radio was a useful medium to promote public discussion through radio call-in programmes (**Benin, Cameroon, Kiribati** and **Liberia**). Mobile phones were also used to send text messages to all Digicel mobile phone users about the launch of the ACT campaign in **Vanuatu**. Also at the time of the launch, public service announcements were broadcast on television and radio in **Viet Nam**, on television in **Egypt** and **Tunisia**, and on radio in **Guinea**.

Further, media's role in combating corruption was highlighted in **Guinea, Kosovo** and **Yemen**. For example, **UNDP in Georgia, Kosovo** and **Papua New Guinea** presented awards to journalists who have exposed corruption issues.

Perhaps most importantly, national level activities undertaken at the launch of the ACT campaign were covered extensively by print media in all countries that received small grants from PACDE.

h. *Private-sector partnerships:*

Prominence was often given to the role of private sector in addressing corruption. UNDP Country Office **Trinidad and Tobago** successfully sought corporate sponsorship for ACT campaign events. **Lithuania** and **Russia** involved businesses that have signed the UN Global Compact in a discussion on the role of business in addressing corruption. UNDP **Egypt** also released a publication on the importance of corporate governance in combating corruption that is aimed at both the government and the private sector.

Lessons learnt and recommendations

a. Keeping up the momentum and renewing the national commitment to fight corruption:

The ACT campaign has been successful in generating public dialogue and policy discussions on addressing corruption at both national and global levels. It is essential not to lose the momentum and use the opportunities created by the ACT campaign to support UNCAC implementation (**Guinea, India** and **Iran**); civil society involvement in the review mechanism (**El Salvador**); and establishing appropriate mechanisms to address corruption (**Jamaica**). In addition, any policy discussion on anti-corruption could be used as an entry point to support broader governance reforms and promote sustainable development.

b. Media capacity to investigate and report on fraud, corruption costs, and illicit financial flows

Except in a few cases, media outlets have advertised and reported on events organized through the national level ACT campaigns. The sector has not, however, played a lead role in highlighting the costs of corruption and how it affects development at the local level. Support and encouragement therefore should be provided to media to investigate and report more extensively on corruption issues.

c. Stronger partnerships with civil society and private sector

The ACT campaign has helped prompt stronger partnerships among UNDP, UNODC, civil society organizations and the private sector in several countries, thus enabling greater synergies in efforts to address corruption and create sustained pressure for policy reforms as well as implementation of such reforms. Such partnerships should be further explored to develop common advocacy platforms with the private sector. Moreover, attention should be paid to involving women's organizations in the campaign against corruption in order to promote women's empowerment and build a stronger social movement against corruption.

d. Coordination with UN organizations and agencies

Several UNDP and UNODC Country Offices worked closely with UN Information Centres at the country level to reach out to media and disseminate ACT campaign materials and issue press releases about the UN's role in combating corruption. Such partnerships with UN Information Centres at the country level and with the UN Department of Public Information at the headquarters level could be better integrated in the future, including for similar other campaigns. Furthermore, opportunities should also be explored to work more closely and collaboratively with specialized UN agencies such as the UN Children's Fund and UN Women, given the negative impact corruption has on youth and women in particular.

Section Two: Implementation of the ACT-Against Corruption Today Campaign at the country level

UNDP, through PACDE, issued a call for Expressions of Interest on 14 October 2011, asking interested UNDP and UNODC Country Offices to apply for a small grant of up to \$3,000 to organize events to commemorate International Anti-Corruption Day with a national stakeholder. A total of 59 expressions of interest were received by the 21 October deadline from UNDP, UNODC Country Offices and civil society organizations.

An ad hoc panel reviewed and shortlisted the expressions of interest based on the following criteria:

1. Potential impact of the proposed activities at a policy level or at the level of implementation of anti-corruption measures.
2. Media outreach
3. Visibility of the proposed activities, specifically related to the number of people targeted and involvement of various stakeholder (government, civil society organizations, media and others) and raising awareness.

Based on the above criteria, 47 expressions of interest, including one from the UNDP Virtual School for Latin America and the Caribbean, were shortlisted and awarded grants ranging from \$1,500 to \$3,000 each.



Sector reports on tools, methods and good practices on fight corruption in education, health and water sectors