



Note on the Non-Governmental Group of the Arab Anti-Corruption & Integrity Network (ACINET)

1. Background:

Through a wide-ranging consultative process that engaged 19 Arab countries, UNDP supported the establishment of the Arab Anti-Corruption & Integrity Network (ACINET) in Amman on the 30th of July 2008 as the first inclusive regionally-owned platform for knowledge networking, capacity development and policy dialogue in its field.¹ In doing so, it has built on its extensive experience in the area of governance, particularly its Accountability, Transparency and Integrity (ATI) portfolio; its longstanding country presence and cooperation with stakeholders in the region; and the positive results of the Initiative on Good Governance for Development (GfD) in the Arab Countries and other related projects.

Following the declaration of ACINET's establishment, UNDP supported an eight-month preparatory phase, after which the Network, whose secretariat is hosted by UNDP-POGAR in Beirut, launched its first annual work cycle (2009-2010) in April 2009 under the chairmanship of Jordan.

In less than a year, ACINET was able to make a number of achievements and has supported concrete UNCAC implementation steps in a number of MENA countries. UNDP, UNODC, the World Bank, OECD and others have also reached out to ACINET on matters of enhancing regional anti-corruption cooperation and have provided their support to its work. UNDP plans to continue supporting ACINET over the next four years in the context of a new regional anti-corruption project, as it seeks to develop the Network's non-governmental component, i.e. ACINET's Non-Governmental Group.

2. Concept of ACINET's Non-Governmental Group:

A Key feature of ACINET is that it was conceived and endorsed by MENA countries as an inclusive forum for interaction between governmental officials and non-governmental actors. With the successful completion of establishing and activating the governmental component of the Network, the focus is now geared towards establishing ACINET's Non-Governmental Group. This process will be driven by non-governmental actors from the region, assisted by UNDP which will support stakeholders in establishing the Group and integrating it into the ACINET process.

The Group is expected to include civil society organizations, business entities with internal integrity compliance programmes, private-sector associations (syndicates, chambers etc.),

¹ For more information on ACINET, please contact info@arabacinet.org.



research and academic institutions and media. Once established, the Group will become an institutionalized part of ACINET, thus enabling direct and periodic interaction among its members as well as with the governments in the region and peers beyond the region. This will create viable opportunities for dialogue and will open the door wider for possible cooperation, partnership building and collective action towards enhanced integrity.

3. Establishment process:

As of 30 April 2010, and in terms of actions made towards the objective of establishing ACINET's Non-Governmental Group, UNDP's Programme on Governance in the Arab Region has so far undertaken the following actions:

- Completed the mapping of specialized civil society organizations in the region in partnership with Lebanese Transparency Association (LTA). The outcome served in identifying key actors, major areas of activity and comparative advantages.
- Organized a regional workshop on the "role of civil society and media in supporting UNCAC implementation" in Beirut (Lebanon) on 13-14 June 2008. Participants agreed on the importance of establishing the Group, and delineated issues and challenges that are particularly relevant to the proper engagement of civil society organizations and media institutions in this initiative.
- Supported the participation of a delegation of non-governmental actors, including members of the committee, to participate in the sixth Global Forum in Doha on 7-8 November 2010 to foster interaction with participating governments. The reports provided by members of the delegation, after the Forum, highlighted ideas and possible approaches to establish the Group and define its agenda.
- Organized a regional workshop, in partnership with MENA-OECD Investment Programme on "integrity in the private sector" in Manama (Bahrain) on 16-17 March 2010. Participants agreed on the importance of establishing the Group, and delineated issues and challenges that are particularly relevant to the proper engagement of the private sector in this initiative.
- Established a six-person committee to draft the Group's rules of procedure that will detail the framework under which it will function. It includes representatives from civil society sector, the business sector, and the media sector in addition to a parliamentarian.
- Organized a regional training on anti-corruption assessments in Beirut (Lebanon) on 29-30 March 2010. It brought together leading non-governmental anti-corruption practitioners from 12 Arab countries, representing civil society organizations, private sector associations, the media and academia. In addition to receiving training on anti-corruption assessments, the participants outlined the conceptual framework for



the non-governmental group based on the findings of the mapping and previous preparatory activities.

The next steps would be:

- Supporting the constitutive committee to draft the Group's rules of procedure in light of the framework set in Beirut;
- Organizing constitutive meetings, as necessary, to discuss and agree on the rules of procedure; and
- Declaring the launching of the Group in the framework of one of ACINET major activities in 2010 – expected date 2 July 2010.

Once established, UNDP will continue to support, together with its partners, the Group as an autonomous part of ACINET in the context of the upcoming UNDP regional anti-corruption project (2010-2013). For more information about this initiative, please contact anti-corruption@undp-pogar.org.
