Diagnosis on the Transparency International Anti-Corruption Legal Support Centers in Europe and Latin America: challenges, lessons and good practices

Jorge Romero León

Collection **Working Paper n 25**

Series **Diagnosis**
Area **Democratic Institutionalism**

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Diagnosis series

Area: Democratic Institutionalism

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Prologue

When our traveling legal advice office in India visited a village in Jharkand, we expected a few hundred people to show up. Instead more than 2500 came to seek redress against corruption that deprived them of everything from their pensions to food ration cards. Corruption stole from their mouths, their comfort, their children – it stole their daily lives.

Often we focus on the abuse of power, bribery and secret dealings by big corporations, powerful economies and corrupt dictators. Similarly it is important to bring our attention to the petty acts of corruption that, for example, consume up to 20 percent of the income of the poorest Mexicans, or multiply the already horrific impact of a natural disaster.

The advice given by chapters to victims and witnesses of corruption at our Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres is free, confidential and open to all. Our chapters enable people worldwide to know and assert their rights, empowering them to speak up, and bring forward a positive change in the fight against corruption. Today, around 60 chapters work on individual cases of corruption, providing support to victims and witnesses.

The *Diagnosis on the Transparency International Anti-Corruption Legal Support Centers in Europe and Latin America: challenges, lessons and good practices* is an important evaluation of our work in Europe and Latin America. The assessment brings together vital key lessons learned and offers a number of respected recommendations which will inspire the further development.

We thank the international cooperation Program for Social Cohesion of the European Union, *EUROsociAL II,* the FIIAPP, the CEDDET Foundation and the consultant Jorge Romero Leon for their insightful work.

Cobus de Swardt
Managing director, Transparency International

Overview

Similarly to other worldwide regions, nowadays we are aiding a growing acknowledgement from the Latin American and European governments that the fight against corruption must not only be focused on the role of public officials, but that it also requires a shared responsibility between all members of society. In this sense, the denunciation of acts of corruption and the protection of informants are two of the key tools that promote governmental and private accountability. In order for citizens to exercise their right, a cultural change within the organisations is required and confidentiality and protection of informants against possible reprisals must be guaranteed. Civil society representatives have an equally fundamental role in the impetus and social mobilization of the denunciation of corruptive practices in all spheres, advising and empowering the people to guarantee cultural change and the protection of informants.

In 2003, Transparency International, the civil society organisation that spearheads the worldwide fight against corruption, introduced in its work direct legal support for people who wish to report acts of corruption, and for the people affected by such acts. This 'approach' went live with the creation of an 'Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre'. The Centres are one of the most successful tools of Transparency International to drive systemic reforms, to tackle corruption in particular sectors and to empower citizens. They provide free, confidential and safe legal assistance to informants or victims of corruption cases.

The first ALACs were established in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and Romania in 2003 to encourage their citizens to challenge the acts of corruption and to claim their social rights to live in a safe environment. 10 years after its creation, there are now 90 Centres operating in 61 countries, which have processed more than 140,000 anti-corruption reports, engaging them with their advocacy work and campaigns to prevent and sanction corruption. The Centres have become whistleblower channels and places to demand rights, complementary to those provided by the State, and often safer, both in Europe, where there are 22 Centres in operation, and in Latin America, where there are 9.

The report provided explores the experiences and lessons from a diverse group of Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres in Latin America and Europe, including Argentina, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Ireland, the Czech Republic and Venezuela.

With the challenge of incorporating the civil society in actions which incite different governments in the fight against corruption, this analysis was commended by the European Union's Cooperation Programme with Latin America, EUROsociAL II. This initiative is financed by the European Commission and is led by the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies (FIIAPP)[1]. The work is carried out within the framework *"Strengthening social and institutional cooperation strategies in the fight against corruption"* in Latin America, coordinated by FIIAPP with the Economic and Technological Development Distance Learning Centre Foundation (Fundación CEDDET) as an operational partner[2].

The commitment of EUROsociAL is framed within the shared goal of the bi-regional association between the European Union and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). The Santiago Declaration, which emerged after the EU-CELAC Summit of 2013, establishes the mutual commitment to the fight against corruption and to the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. The European Union has been an important support for the development of different Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres both in Europe and in Latin America.

The report identifies some of the best practices employed by the *Centres* to tackle the challenges of providing specialised legal assistance to citizens, and explores which activities work to facilitate an effective collaboration between civil society organisations and State authorities, to deal with corruption and promote integrity and good governance.

The document is one of the components of a scaled-up technical support strategy implemented between April and September 2014. It includes an analysis based on in-depth interviews and an international meeting held to discuss the analysis, to share

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1. FIIAPP is a Spanish public institution devoted to international cooperation. Its projects aim to improve the legal frameworks of civil service and of the quality of life of citizens in countries in which it works. For this, three types of actions are carried out: 1) Management of consultancy projects for administrations that work with more than 1,100 civil servants per year; 2) Realisation and promotion of studies on administrations and public policies; 3) Participation in the training of senior public officials and political leaders. The Deputy Prime Minister of Spain chairs the Foundation; the ministers of Foreign Affairs, of Justice and Health also comprise the board of trustees. Since its establishment in 1997, FIIAPP has managed more than 1100 projects with a budget of more than 600 million Euros
2. The CEDDET Foundation is a non-profit organisation dedicated to development cooperation that was created as a joint initiative between the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Finance and the World Bank in 2001. The Secretary of State for Economic Affairs of Spain chairs the Foundation's board of trustees, whose mission is to promote knowledge exchange and to create expert networks to make a sustainable contribution to the development of countries and fundamentally, to institutional reinforcement with the aim of creating a pleasant environment to achieve stable economic and social development. The CEDDET Foundation collaborates with various international bodies for cooperation in order to develop programs for institutional strengthening.

experiences and to explore collaboration and learning alternatives among the participating *Centres*. The report organises, summarises and presents the information from the different stages (analysis, discussion and recommendations). It outlines the lessons identified by the *Centres* from the analysis and discussion during the third week of July 2014, in the city of Buenos Aires. The report shines light on the commitments made by the *Centres* to strengthen their advocacy and legal assistance work and presents a set of recommendations which will enable the *Centres* to progress towards institutional consolidation and to enhance their scope of possibilities.

The implemented technical assistance aimed to enable learning and horizontal feedback between the Centres in Europe and Latin America to strengthen their capacities on various fronts.

The expected results of the strategy included:

• Particular capacities in the participating *Centres* to provide effective and sustainable legal assistance to the victims and witnesses of acts of corruption; to effectively and cautiously manage sensitive cases in the security sector, and to work with vulnerable groups.
• Better security conditions for the *Centres'* staff and for the citizens who file reports of corruption and/or receive abuse for supporting them.
• Reinforced advocacy strategies, and use of Memoranda of Understanding, agreements and other formal tools for collaboration to facilitate the joint work with the authorities in charge of processing and sanctioning corruptive practices.
• Greater collaboration from the *Centres* with the various governmental strands and control agencies.
• Creation of a *community of practice* in which the *Centres* exchange knowledge, provide feedback and support the work of their peers.

This report summarises the findings of the technical assistance on the basis of two inputs: a diagnosis of challenges and best practices, and the dialogue between the participating Centres during the Buenos Aires meeting. The report is drawn up from the diagnosis and comprehensively gathers the feedback and details of the discussion. It identifies the specific contributions made by the Centres during the international meeting, the concerns and topics that were not considered in the diagnosis presented at the time, and the commitments made for short-term implementation. Additionally, the report includes an extensive set of recommendations to strengthen the work of the ALACs, to provide them with support from the Secretariat and to propel their collaboration with authorities by applying technical assistance strategies.

The document is divided into five sections. Section one introduces the context in which the Advocacy and Legal Advice Centres operate and outlines the most important background information so that it can be understood how they work. It also includes

the main challenges faced when supporting an informant and when establishing bridges of dialogue and collaboration with authorities. Section two is the core of the report and outlines the best practices identified through the diagnosis and by the ALACs during the discussion. It indicates the feedback and contributions presented by the Centres, and the main lessons from their work. Section three gathers proposals, ideas for best practices expressed by the Centres during the discussion but have not yet been implemented; and collaboration mechanisms to be developed. Section four gives an account of the commitments made by the Centres on the basis of the discussion, primarily ideas and best practices that the Centres believe could add value to their activities. The fifth and final section includes specific recommendations to strengthen the capacities and work of the ALACs in the medium term.

The topics of particular interest are included in boxes. In order to place an emphasis on the ALACs, their experience and best practices, several references are included accompanying the discussion of best practices in different countries. To facilitate comprehension of the report, footnotes and references are not included, except when a specific document is cited. All references used for the analysis are included in annex III.

The report aims to be a component to facilitate bi-regional dialogue, for joint learning between the ALACs on both sides of the Atlantic, and ultimately to provide greater backing of the improvement of advisory mechanisms and the protection of citizens who wish to denounce an act of corruption for the sake of the fight against impunity. In this sense, we hope that the following study enriches the joint work between the civil society and governmental bodies in favour of promoting social cohesion in Latin America.

Pedro Flores
Director of the FIIAPP

1. Context and background: the work of ALACs and the challenges they face

To understand the work of the *Advocacy and Legal Advice Centers* (henceforth, ALACs), their objectives, scope, strategy and challenges, it is paramount to locate them within the operational structure of Transparency International, which influences the vision and operation of each *Center*.

1.1. ALACs in the overall architecture of the movement

Transparency International is a *movement*. It is not an organization, in a strict sense, since it is incorporated collectively and collaboratively by organizations and individual members. The movement articulates a wide network of national chapters and individual members. The 'membership' of the movement, i.e. national chapters and individual members, has decision-making capacity. The membership meets yearly in a General Assembly and it chooses the Board of Directors every three years (Board positions are renewable one time).

The national chapters (operating in over 100 countries) are accredited by the Board, and though they are bound to a set of guidelines to belong to the movement, they are independent organizations that operate freely in each country, promoting integrity and developing education, participation and advocacy strategies to combat corruption on their own terms, and according to their own objectives and priorities.

Because chapters join the movement voluntarily, they participate in the definition of the movement's strategy and jointly articulate its objectives and priorities; there is a natural symbiosis between the approach of the movement and work carried out at the national level. The movement orients, informs and feeds back to chapter strategies, approaches and operation at the national level. This is the backdrop that fostered the creation of *Advocacy and Legal Advice Centers*, as an approach to promote citizen participation and corruption complaints.

The ALAC approach was first introduced in 2003, in four countries: Albania, Bosnia Herzegovina, Macedonia and Romania. Shortly thereafter, with the support of multi-annual regional funding projects funded by DFID and the European Union, as well as other project of lesser scale for regional work in Africa, the approach was extended to over 25 countries in 2007, and over 50 countries by 2010. In the past five years, the approach has extended to reach 61 countries, including Latin America.

Figure 1. The place of ALACs within the structure of Transparency International
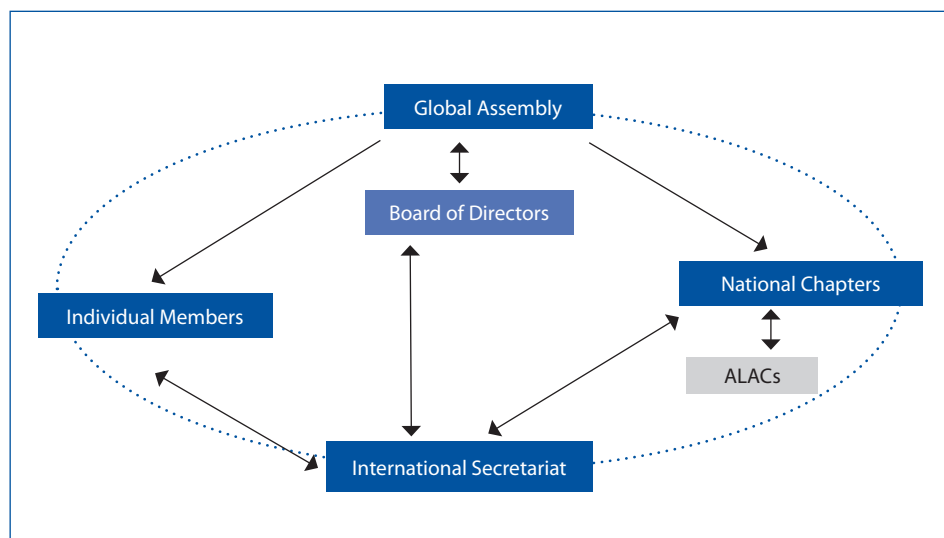
National chapters and individual members incorporate the Global Assembly. ALACs operate as a part of the structure of national chapters, and they have similar structure in every country: a coordinator and technical team in charge of tending to claims and complaints from citizens, mechanisms to gather claims and complaints through telephone service, a webpage or offices with operating hours for service to the public; and stakeholder engagement activities to reach out to authorities, media and other organizations.

On the basis of this structure, ALACs carry out diverse support, legal advice, investigation and advocacy activities, with a common theory of change framework, objectives and activities.

1.2. What do ALACs do?

The theories of change of the movement, the national chapters and the ALACs are closely aligned and related. The central objectives of the ALACs are fostering citizen participation, ensuring authorities heed and address citizen's anti-corruption claims

and complaints, and anchoring legal and institutional reforms to strengthen public integrity and the institutional capacity to identify and sanction acts of corruption.[3]

In this context, ALACs carry out specific activities, which include:

*   Specialized legal advice aimed at mobilizing citizen claims, and the use of real and virtual spaces to gather claims and complaints.
*   Case-specific backing and support, intended to facilitate engagement of and dialogue with authorities, and promote an attitude change leading to the investigation and sanction of acts of corruption.
*   Mobilization of citizens and authorities, to demand improved regulations and mechanisms to curb corruption. This mobilization takes place through the two activities mentioned above and through broader advocacy work with networks, partner social organizations and media, to garner support of proposed changes and transformations.

Even though ALACs do not directly carry out advocacy activities through networks and media in every country, there is related advocacy work in all nine countries participating in the study. This work is coordinated or supported by the national chapter, which backs ALAC personnel usually focused on legal advice, investigation and dialogue with authorities.

In addition to these activities, which are 'standard' to all ALACs, many national chapters incorporate legal advice to facilitate access to public information, and to transform transparency regimes.

This work calls for technical capacities and specialized legal advice that is different to that required by the legal support of anti-corruption claims and complaints. Legal assistance for enhancing the transparency of policy and public functions is carried out in every Latin American ALAC that participated in the assessment, except for Venezuela, where the access to public information is limited, and in every European ALAC except for Ireland, where the work for access to information is recent and operated from the national chapter, independently from the ALAC work.

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3.   These objectives stem from the *ALAC Manual* and are included in the template used to complete a Logical Framework by the International Secretariat. Following work with the Cooperation Agency of the United Kingdom, these objectives have been incorporated into a 'theory of change' developed in other strategic documents, with the same objectives but with different justification detailing enabling factors and activities. See DFID's final project report on "Anti-Corruption: Delivering Change", 2013. The objectives and justification of the prevailing theory were validated by every *Center* on the in-depth interviews, and at the meeting: 1) mobilizing and empowering citizens, 2) facilitating the work of authorities in charge of the investigation and sanction of corruption claims, and 3) transforming regulations and institutions to strengthen the fight against corruption.

The different types of legal advice and support in the ALACs

The ALACs that participated in the dialogue conduct different types of legal advice and support. It is important to consider this diversity to understand the challenges faced by the *Centers'* staff when providing services and building capacities.

First, not every ALAC provides case-specific support. All ALACs provide assistance to complainants, but in Ireland and Hungary this advice does not translate into direct assistance or support. Legal advice consists in counseling claimants about the content and reach of the law, on whether the claim or complaint relates to a corruption case, and possible courses of action to legally challenge it. In the Czech Republic and in every Latin American country, complainants and corruption victims receive counseling and advice, and in some cases there is legal support for following up on a complaint through the entire legal process.

"Legal assistance" is provided when, in addition to counseling, the complaint is complemented with independent investigation, when efforts are made to make the complaint visible to authorities, and when a dialogue with authorities is brokered to address a specific case. "Support" is provided when ALACs provide backing for the complaint throughout the process.

Assistance and support activities are provided in every Latin American ALAC, but not for all cases.

In addition to legal advice, assistance and support, in some cases the ALACs take on the complaint and introduce it from the ALAC (in Argentina, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and the Czech Republic), i.e. the ALAC presents the claim or complaint as its own, usually through litigation, or it functions as the complainant's legal representative. This is done to mitigate perceived risk, to maximize the possibility of obtaining results, or to mobilize pressure on specific cases. This is especially the case in access to information requests and legal suits, which are undertaken in almost all ALACs, with the exception of Ireland.

In Honduras, due to the high-risk faced by the ALAC, some cases are made available and turned over to media and journalists, in order to make the case visible and facilitate independent investigation, but the case is not supported directly, and there is no legal representation behind the claim. All countries at the meeting in Buenos Aires analyzed this practice, and though it was not picked up as part of the commitments, or pledges made by Centers to further their work, it can be one of the forms media support takes, especially through close collaboration with investigative journalists.

Finally, in some cases, ALACs only provide counseling and support for administrative offenses, but not criminal.

An offense is administrative when it is stipulated in codes and laws that follow a non-penal adjudication process, usually decided by administrative agencies, not courts under the judicial branch. Criminal offenses must be challenged and adjudicated before a judge and they require a substantiated investigation by public prosecutors, and due process. They represent a higher degree of complexity.

Broad communication and advocacy efforts

In addition to their focalized and case specific strategies, ALACs carry out sustained efforts to broadly disseminate their work and the access lines and websites to reach their services.

Almost all ALACs referred to looking for media support and collaboration to complement their dissemination strategies, which can help spread the word of a phone or website being open. In some cases, the direct support of State authorities was also instrumental to broad dissemination, and in the provision of infrastructure to support the complaint phone (which occurred in the Czech Republic and Honduras). During the meeting, ALAC representatives suggested exploring whether collaboration agreements can facilitate access to dissemination and communication infrastructure, and the convenience of collaborating thus. These mechanisms are explored in depth in section two.

During the discussion in Buenos Aires, the ALACs of the Czech Republic and Ireland emphasized their achievements over the past two years promoting legislation to improve investigation, whistleblower protection, transparency and access to information mechanisms, based on sustained and consistent work to approach and engage public officials and influential lawmakers.

The ALACs in Latin America, on the other hand, have also driven proposals for legal reform with less success. But they have been instrumental in investigating major corruption cases in collaboration with authorities in Guatemala and Honduras, and they have laid a solid foundation for litigating access public information in Argentina, Honduras, and El Salvador. Venezuela has championed an innovative model to bridge the gap between citizens and police, through informal discussion spaces. All of these practices are discussed at length in section two.

1.3. The challenges faced by ALACs

The main challenges faced by ALACs derive from the technical capacities required to provide highly specialized legal assistance. ALACs have limited financial and human resources, and though they usually have seed funds to initiate activities, most of their

work is financed directly through projects, citizen donations and formal agreements that provide in-kind resources (dissemination, technical support) to support complaint mechanisms. In all cases, financing is barely enough to finance their structure, and ALACs make extraordinary efforts to complement installed capacities creatively.

Challenge 1: Do more with the limited financial resources available. The first set of challenges ALACs face is associated to the limited human and financial resources they have at their disposal. This situation makes it difficult to plan, to commit to legal assistance cases, and to finance sustained outreach campaigns, necessary to mobilize communities consistently. To meet this challenge, ALACs prioritize among their various activities, and they complement their installed capacity through collaboration with authorities, practitioners, networks and media.

The operational (non-financial) challenges identified by ALACs can be divided into three groups: challenges of reach and demand, challenges associated with the highly developed expertise needed, and challenges associated with broader advocacy (*how* to transform rules and institutions).

1.3.1. Scope and citizen demand challenges

The main challenge associated with citizen participation is the limited reach of the ALACs and national chapters. ALACs use various strategies to reach specific populations and communities, disseminate the *Center's* services and mobilize citizens. These strategies usually require diverse funding and the use of different types of networks and coalitions, as well as a creative combination of alternatives to *reach* citizens.

Challenge 2. Reaching the people the ALAC should support and represent. In addition to opening the centers to represent citizens who are willing to denounce corruption, ALACs usually have a specific strategic agenda, and they focus on tackling specific corruption issues and acts, or corruption cases in strategic sectors. To align citizen complaints to their strategic agenda, ALACs can search for specific cases, form alliances with specific sectors and groups, or they can go out to "search for" cases. This strategy, detailed in section two, entails not only going out to search for clients, but to do it with a specific focus and strategy: to support groups and sectors particularly affected by corruption, carry out activities to facilitate citizen complaints and support of these complaints and cases in the medium and long term.

Once the ALACs' work and services are made visible, it is necessary to have a plan and an appropriate structure to meet demand. During the meeting, the representatives of Ireland and Hungary emphasized the importance of assessing whether ALACs have the necessary resources to process complaints once the "doors are opened", especially when a phone is created. Honduras and Guatemala identified the number of complaints they processed after periods of widespread dissemination as a problem.

While it is possible to broadly disseminate the center's contact numbers, and receive complaints through the website, it is important to take into consideration that the amount of complaints received immediately after broad dissemination is considerable, and it is crucial to have the necessary resources and strategies to address these complaints.

Challenge 3: Create the necessary structure and tools to meet the demand. Creating the required structure to assist complainants begins with having enough staff to meet demand, and a basic attention protocol to identify the steps that must be followed once the ALAC's phone/doors are opened to receive complaints. Every ALAC was aware of the need to have an established support structure, clarity on how complaints are addressed and prioritized, and the scope and reach of the assistance provided, but not all of them had the same demand. In some cases (Guatemala, Hungary) demand exceeded expectations and made ALAC staff question the relevance of maintaining dissemination strategies while the ALAC's capacities were not increased.

Among the most successful mechanisms to effectively support complainants, Ireland, the Czech Republic and Honduras emphasized systematizing cases. Systematizing cases entails creating mechanisms to catalogue all cases by type, and the creation of criteria and protocols for certain types of case, making it easier to process cases from the get go. Systematizing cases makes it easier to identify what must be done in the most common cases, and in the most complex. This systematization is carried out in almost all ALACs but with different degrees of detail, and information is not always updated periodically, nor are reference materials created to facilitate processing new cases.

Even when ALACs have good protocols and sufficient staff, demand will likely often exceed their capacities. To advise, assist and represent claimants effectively, ALACs usually strengthen their internal capabilities, they constantly assess demand and ways to satisfy it, and they complement their installed capacities with additional resources, through collaboration with state authorities, private attorneys, legal assistance centers and investigative journalists. Strategies to 'complement' ALACs' limited investigation, communication and engagement resources are at the core of the creation and exploration of good practices, and they are presented in detail in section two. Every strategy was widely discussed by ALACs in the Buenos Aires meeting.

1.3.2. Challenges associated with highly specialized legal assistance

The creation of the legal assistance service characteristic of the ALAC approach requires highly specialized skills during the development of the anti-corruption support structure and throughout strategy implementation. During the interview and later in the meeting, the Director of Transparency International Ireland stressed the importance of understanding the magnitude of the challenge of legally advising complainants, in order to plan strategically, and the importance of making sure the structure to support complainant once service is open is up to the task. All ALACs concurred. This requires carrying out a basic risk assessment, a more or less accurate estimation of demand and to have support protocols and systems ready to identify and filter the cases that will be supported by type of complaint, level of priority, risk and complexity.

Challenge 4: Effective and confidential case management. Confidentiality is one of the cornerstones of the work of ALACs, and it requires the adoption of basic protocols and procedures to receive complaints and corruption reports before the "service" is opened. Once established, these basic protocols and procedures are reviewed and periodically adjusted. Meanwhile, effective legal representation and assistance will necessarily depend on good case management**,** which in turn requires clear systems and procedures, to filter and select complaints and to process them according to the level of legal advice, assistance or support required, once the ALAC accepts a case.

In addition to these procedures, underscored in challenge 3 above, a periodic review of each case and of the course of action suggested by the ALAC is necessary to discuss the challenges each case presents, to explore opportunities and efficiently allocate scarce human and financial resources. Interviews and subsequent discussion made it clear that in all ALACs this discussion and revision is carried out, but it is not documented. This makes adjustments *ad hoc*, hinders strategic adjustment and makes it difficult to understand why and how support protocols and processes are changed. During the meeting, all ALAC representatives expressed interest in documenting their discussions and decision-making processes more effectively. This discussion, and a set of specific recommendations related to documentation of case selection and decision-making processes are developed in section five.

Challenge 5: Technical skills and legal expertise. Legal assistance is often provided in a policy and institutional context that requires expertise and extensive institutional experience on various specific issues, including access to information, oversight and procurement systems, as well as knowledge of the budget and policy processes for different levels of government. Whether these skills are provided by the national chapter or developed within the ALAC, the institutional discussion of the expertise required to meet these needs and how to obtain it is a constant of specialized legal assistance. Identifying the needs and communicating these needs within the institution is a difficult

challenge that requires developing constant communication and feedback processes, the capacity for critical reflection and a timely assessment of the weaknesses and strengths of every ALAC, context opportunities and critical junctures.

A different challenge associated with legal assistance but not related to expertise is handling the expectations of complainants with honesty and openness when assisting a case. The resolution of legal cases linked to corruption and government administration processes can often take a very long time. Since the ALAC provides direct counseling or takes on legal representation through the end, ALAC staff faces two challenges stemming from the long term adjudication: a) they must be very clear with complainants about the time investment needed, and b) they must deal with and manage the discouragement and other effects resulting from the slow process faced by complainants.

While this happens in all countries, the harmful effects of the long process have been especially felt in some Latin American countries –Argentina, Guatemala and El Salvador- where processes take years and dissuasion is prevalent. Thorough support, constant communication, and periodic meetings with complainants have been key to mitigate discouragement.

Finally, many ALACs litigate access to information. This requires additional legal expertise and a direct confrontation with the government—in most legal actions to open public information, governmental agencies are *defendants*. The consequence of this confrontation often affects the various relationships ALACs and chapters have with the authorities. For this reason, ALACs should clearly identify diverse government responses and explicitly differentiate their engagement strategy with officials and governmental agencies.

Challenge 6: Manage the diverse risks of supporting cases. ALACs and the people they support or represent often face legal retaliations or political pressure as a result of accepting or participating in a case. These reprisals may be direct and open or indirect and veiled.

When retaliation is open and direct, it is best managed based on risk mitigation strategies to identify real threats and work through their resolution, protecting whistleblowers and the staff as necessary and mobilizing support, to make the case (and the threat) visible. This type of retaliation almost never occurs in Europe, but there are a couple of representative cases. The director of the ALAC in Ireland, for example, emphasized the need to accompany claimants at every stage when there are threats, or when acts to retaliate have taken place, and to mobilize media and public opinion in support of the claimant, to bring pressure to bear on those responsible—in this case the entity directly responsible for retaliation was a private company involved in the whistleblowing complaint, IBM.

Direct assistance and mobilization of support is also central to address more serious threats, including threats to the physical integrity of persons, as in Honduras, Guatemala and Venezuela. Independently of security protocols, a combination of visibility and support is a central component of mitigation once threats or retaliation are evident. These strategies are discussed in detail in section two.

In addition to open and direct retaliation, ALACs and the people they support are often subject to a more indirect but equally pernicious form of control: what groups during the discussion called 'white power' or subtle pressure by indirect means, including ostracism, isolation and the use of direct and indirect attacks in electronic and print media, and from public office.

1.3.3. Challenges associated with advocacy in the broader sense

Challenge 7: Achieve a critical distance. In addition to facing the discontent of governmental agencies in specific cases, ALACs face a broader challenge, which is to achieve a critical distance from State authorities. This critical distance makes it possible to go after acts of corruption and opaque agencies, which generate animosity among different authorities, while fostering proximity to facilitate collaboration and promote transformation strategies. In different levels, all ALACs have expertise working with authorities in a collaborative way. To achieve this proximity, they differentiate their advocacy work and their anticorruption assistance, by creating clear, formal collaboration agreements and moderating their critiques, ensuring they are not only visible, but also strategic.

Every ALAC collaborates with the government in different capacities, and through different mechanisms. Due to public officials' sensitivity to criticism, finding an adequate balance between collaboration and critical demand is a challenge, especially when the government responds to legal representation and litigation in a defensive way, or when authorities attempt to coopt the ALACs advocacy strategies and efforts to fight corruption. This balance is understood as *critical distance* in the report, and it means an effective and independent collaboration with state authorities, without losing sight of the ALACs and national chapters' interests and objectives.

Challenge 8. Communicating effectively to achieve different objectives. It is difficult to combine the skills needed for an effective communication with the expertise needed to curb corruption and provide specialized legal assistance. Although it would be ideal for all legal support staff to also be skilled communicators, national chapters often have to complement the work of the ALACs through their institutional communication resources, and they are tasked with developing ALAC staff' skills to communicate effectively. It is even more difficult to combine the skills needed for effective public lobbying and sensitivity to political nuance with the legal and communication

expertise available to ALACs. Due to the focus of advocacy strategies to achieve systemic transformation, these abilities are paramount.

ALACs often complement their skills and abilities with the resources of the national chapter, and with the resources available in the networks and coalitions they participate in, but in the long term, these skills and abilities must be internal to the ALAC. These skills are necessary to identify opportunities for reform at critical junctures, to translate the ALACs interests into specific reform recommendations, to map stakeholder influence and to identify "champions" and allies for proposed reforms.

At this time, almost all strategic communication activities are carried out from the national chapters. Stakeholder engagement to discuss and introduce legal reforms and institutional mechanisms is also led from the chapter, but ALAC coordinators participate actively in this dialogue, given their technical expertise and knowledge of the issues under discussion, and because they are aware of the details and nuance of proposed recommendations.

Box 1. Why support Advocacy and Legal Advice Centers?

Advocacy and Legal Advice Centers play a unique role in the ecosystem of civil society organizations in Latin America. They are the only spaces where legal advice and support is provided to victims and complainants of acts of corruption. Important battles have been won on the bases of their work to create incentives to investigate and punish acts of corruption, even in contexts where the performance of oversight agencies is hindered. They have achieved important precedents determining what information is public, and how it can be accessed. In addition, these centers have promoted major legal reforms to transform oversight and integrity systems in Ireland, the Czech Republic, El Salvador and Honduras.

ALACs serve the population, but they go beyond citizen support. They establish a formal channel for participation and convene state authorities, fostering dialogue. Through this dialogue, they have created spaces to identify problems dealing with citizen participation in specific sectors and agencies, including public transportation in the Czech Republic, municipal services in Hungary, local police in Venezuela and the health sector in Honduras. In addition to citizen participation, the spaces created by ALACs foster joint work and collaboration with other civic organizations, and between diverse organizations and authorities, at the local and national levels of government.

The specialized technical knowledge developed by ALACs in each country has served to push for legal changes and institutional mechanisms, seeking to curb corruption more effectively. This has already happened in Ireland and the Czech Republic. It is happening in Honduras, where extraordinary opportunities for developing an integrity system exist, and there are conditions for change in Argentina, Guatemala and El Salvador, where progress can be made in promoting further reforms.

Box 1. Why support Advocacy and Legal Advice Centers? (continued)

Finally, the formation of human resources specialized in fighting corruption with ALAC support can bring about results for the work of a broad range of civic organizations in the medium and long-term.

For all these reasons, the funds provided to support and strengthen ALACs capacities are strategic. Funds going to ALACs are allocated to strategies with a tested potential for success, to foster dialogue and collaboration between authorities, citizens and civil society organizations, and to strengthen the conditions to curb corruption and open access to information systems in the long run.

To meet the eight sets of challenges mentioned above, which are present in different ways in every ALAC that participated in the assessment and subsequent discussion, ALACs and their respective national chapter have adopted a wide variety of practices. The following section explores these "good practices" along with the rich and extensive discussion and feedback spurred by the Buenos Aires meeting.

2. Good practices, feedback and lessons from the assessment and discussion of ALACs

In what follows, we refer to 'good practice' when identifying a procedure, process, activity or institutional mechanism developed by each country national chapter or ALAC to address specific challenges or achieve particular goals, or both. Though the diagnostic assessment originally applied the term to a broad range of activities, we have adjusted the number of activities considered good practice as a result of the feedback and discussion after the meeting—to be more precise and succinct.

When identifying good practices identified by the diagnostic assessment, we use the following key for each country.

Europe Country - KEY	Latin America Country - KEY
Bosnia Herzegovina – **BiH**	Argentina – **A**
Czech Republic – **CR**	Guatemala - **G**
Hungary – **Hy**	El Salvador - **ES**
Ireland - **IE**	Honduras - **Hd**
	Venezuela - **V**

When elements from the discussion and feedback to the assessment are incorporated, however, we reference the country in full and all relevant components of the discussion, in order to emphasize what was proposed, and how participants in the Buenos Aires meeting received the experiences and lessons presented.

2.1. Good practices in the provision of legal assistance

Good practices in the provision of legal assistance are associated with three issue areas: 1) outreach, 2) how to complement scarce resources for specialized legal support, and 3) how to bridge legal support with broader advocacy, which seeks to transform rules and institutions.

To effectively *reach out* to the population and specific groups, ALACs in different countries have:

- Created 'mobile units', to reach different geographic locations, carry out education and training activities, and process complaints. This allows the Center to broaden its reach (BiH, CR, Hy, A, Hd) work with target population groups, when they have them (A, Hd, V), and work with different government levels, which is necessary to reach service delivery units (CR, Hy, A, Hd).

  In addition to the good practice of setting up mobile ALAC offices, which is done in the Czech Republic, in Hungary and in some Latin American countries, the group discussed the practice of establishing partnerships with specific sectors and groups, to adhere to an overarching strategy, which has been tried by the ALAC in Argentina.

  During the Buenos Aires meeting the group discussed the practice of going out to 'find cases', which Argentina and El Salvador have explored, in diverse ways. In Argentina, the ALAC has developed a strategy to build partnerships and support strategic litigation in some communities, in accordance with the national chapters' strategic goals. This practice was validated as 'good' by the group given its relevance for aligning strategies, and to support marginalized and vulnerable groups. In El Salvador, on the other hand, the ALAC has fostered access to information cases during a key stage in the consolidation of the access to information regime.

  In both cases, the results have been very positive: key components of access to public information and marginalization are made visible, establishing precedents to facilitate advocacy work in the medium term.

  Established private partnerships with media for broad dissemination, including free publicity for the 'phone' or legal advice service, and 'exchange of services', through which ALACs agree to work with media in exchange for their publicity (IE, CR, Hy, A, Hd). There were no extensive comments to this strategy in the meeting, except to make it clear that it is necessary to have sufficient capacity to meet demand when phone, websites and other means to access ALAC services are broadly disseminated.

- Developed *ad hoc*, case-by-case collaboration with media, making the Center and its services highly visible in cases of national import (BiH, CR, Hy, IE, ES, Hd).

- Established collaboration agreements with public and private sector employees and unions, to educate them on integrity matters and develop their own complaint mechanisms (IE, CR, A, Hd). This strategy, in addition to making ALAC services available to specific sectors, can be used as a strategy to diversify funding, because agreements

can incorporate provisions to cover the costs of services provided. This dimension is discussed in section 2.4 below.

To *complement the scarce resources available* to the ALAC for providing the highly specialized legal assistance needed, the Centers have:

• Created 'filters' which allow them to select relevant cases, validate the evidence available and not only identify *corruption* cases but also the most relevant and promising ones, which they can then prioritize.

While most countries do this on an *ad hoc* basis, the best practice in the group considers a sort of 'triage' process with three specific criteria: truth and merits of the case, gravity of the case, and public interest affected (IE).

In addition to 'systematizing' information (i.e. processing cases according to previously established criteria), ALACs discussed the need to establish a typology of complaints and specific courses of action to be followed in *manuals* for staff. The creation of these manuals would facilitate case management, make it easier to identify priority or high-risk cases, and allocate the limited human and financial resources available to their attention.

During the meeting, the experiences in Honduras and Ireland were amply discussed. These countries have a specific set of criteria applied to each case. The Czech Republic ALAC, for its part, has systematized cases, generated information on trends and developed specific guidelines that make it easier for staff to process some cases. This 'systematization' and the subsequent development of criteria, guidelines and procedures is one of the best practices validated by the meeting and included in the discussion of commitments and next steps by several organizations (section 4).

• Established formal partnerships with law firms for pro-bono work in legal representation of anti-corruption cases (CR, Hy).

• Established formal partnerships with public and private universities for involving their legal clinics in support of legal representation, in access to information cases and cases related to integrity in public office (CR, Hy, Hd, A, V).

Although the practice exists in the Czech Republic and Hungary, the experience of Argentina particularly caught the attention of participating ALACs. In Argentina, the agreement is specific and formal, and it provides practitioners who work assisting and supporting cases in the ALAC. But the agreement also creates a 'clinic', education and dissemination work in the university, fostering a new take on public interest litigation and the relevance of training cohorts in public law, access to information and integrity. All ALACs expressed interest in further exploring the possibility of launching a cooperation agreement like this, to incorporate additional human resources to their

legal assistance work and to promote the strategic objective of empowering citizens to effectively combat corruption.

- Established formal partnerships with 'watchdog' organizations, to support their independent investigative work. These *watchdogs* include investigative journalists (in all countries, more on this in section 5, below); partner organizations with specific skills (CR, BiH, Hd, Ar), and support from national chapter investigative units, when these are not part of the ALAC (IE, ES, A, G, V).

In a few cases, the ALAC has developed its own investigative unit, allowing it to research specific cases, and carry out independent work to legally challenge corruption, independently of partnerships or citizen/victim complaints (BiH, CR, G, Hd, ES, A). During the meeting, special attention was directed to the investigation capacities of the Czech Republic ALAC, which has specialized personnel working on communications and investigation. Hungary, despite not having developed these capacities in the ALAC, indicated they constantly discuss how to complement the investigative capacities in the ALAC with those of the national chapter.

- Established formal support mechanisms for collaboration with state authorities, usually state attorneys and oversight agencies, and usually in the form of 'memoranda of understanding' (CR, BiH, Hd, G, V). These formal collaboration mechanisms allow ALACs to present cases to authority for detailed investigation, and in some cases assist the investigation and indictment process throughout (G, Hd, V).

The fact that these agreements work, when they do, is already a considerable accomplishment, even though the State's capacity to investigate and sanction is often compromised. It also affords ALACs invaluable resources when they cannot directly investigate specific complaints.

Box 2. Litigation to access Public Information in El Salvador

The *Advocacy and Legal Assistance Center* in El Salvador was created by the national chapter of Transparency, the *Fundación Nacional para el Desarrollo* (Funde), in 2012. In addition to advising complainants in cases of corruption, the ALAC is known for filing requests to access public information and for legally challenging refusals to open information in order to test the national Access to Public Information Law, adopted in April 2011, along with the limited institutional capacity to make access to information a reality.

In just two years of operation, the ALAC has managed to set important precedents on access to information, forcing the publication of details of the costs of parliamentary group activities in the Legislative Assembly, the publication of detailed spending in various budget items, including travel expenses of the President, and more recently the precedent that Supreme Court emails are public.

Box 2. Litigation to access Public Information in El Salvador (continued)

The ALAC's achievements are remarkable for several reasons:

- They have sought and managed to achieve judicial precedents establishing criteria to expand what information is considered public, and why;
- They have made it possible to publish details of previously inaccessible budget information, and detailed grounds for requesting information from government agencies, which furthers transparency and strengthens citizen oversight; and
- They have obtained groundbreaking court decisions in an early stage of implementation and consolidation of the Salvadoran regime of access to information, broadening the perspective of what information the Salvadoran society can access in the medium term.

To bridge the legal support provided with the ALAC and the national chapter's *broader advocacy objectives*, Centers have:

- Developed an integral approach to legal action that considers strategic litigation of specific cases that can set precedent (BiH, CR, Hy, Hd, ES, A). Strategic litigation requires the commitment of considerable resources, the capacity for independent research and investigation, and a strong relationship with the judicial branch of government, all of which in turn require cultivation and specific skills. Despite its being resource intensive, it is a worthwhile effort. Strategic litigation can seek access to key public information, sanction of specific corruption-enabling conduct and adjustments in policy to ensure the provision of key public services.

  Practically all ALACs, with the exception of Venezuela, carry out strategic litigation to access public information. With the exception of Ireland, these capacities are concentrated in the ALAC given the technical skill and legal expertise needed—access to information litigation, support and advice is one of the substantive tasks of all ALACs. No specific 'good practice' associated with the access to information litigation was identified, but the report reflects the concern of making the strategy to access information and required capacities explicit in the objectives and theory of change of the ALACs at the global level, and the movement (see section 5).

- Used their case experience and broader expertise to lobby for the adoption of specific legislation related to cases when the opportunity arises, including whistleblower protection mechanisms (IE, CR) procurement (CR, Hy, BiH), access to information (Hy, BiH, ES), and the provision of specific public services (Health in IE, Hd, A; Education in Hy, Hd, A; and electoral transparency in CR, V). In the most successful cases, (IE, CR, BiH, Hd, A), the provisions proposed have been enacted.

During the meeting, the group underscored the achievements obtained in Ireland and the Czech Republic, where the recommendations and technical inputs from the ALAC were widely consulted and taken into account for recently passed reforms. New whistleblower protection legislation was passed in Ireland, which incorporated the experience and recommendations of the ALAC the past three years. In the Czech Republic, the legislative passed changes to the oversight system and monitoring mechanisms, and to the access to information regime, introducing specific proposals for verification and advertising criteria proposed by the national chapter.

Box 3. Whistleblower protection legislation in Ireland

TI Ireland opened a legal assistance service to denounce corruption in 2011, after four years of insisting on the need to establish rules to protect whistleblowing. After two years of operation, and as a result of the public attention generated by the corruption cases advised by TI Ireland, a whistleblowing protection bill was introduced in 2013. TI Ireland participated intently and extensively in the discussion of the bill.

The law to protect whistleblowers was finally approved in July 2014, and draws significantly from the experience of the Irish ALAC, and the claims it supported, which resulted in acts of intimidation and harassment of the whistleblowers.

As a result of the dialogue and support of TI Ireland, the law contains specific proposals for labor protection to whistleblowers in the public and private sectors, and to clearly formulate a list of authority obligations and omissions. Among other provisions, the law:

• Prohibits the criminalization of workers, and establishes criteria for determining who is a private enterprise "worker", including contractors and interns;
• Provides a clear, explicit and comprehensive list of administrative offenses that are subject to complaint; and
• Creates a tiered system, so whistleblowers can first report anonymously to their direct employers.

The law is not perfect, but it reflects the experience and recommendations of the Irish ALAC, strengthening the institutional capacity of the state to protect those who report and challenge corruption.

2.2. Good practices in stakeholder engagement and advocacy

Most good practices related to stakeholder engagement are not based on formal mechanisms or explicit criteria, and refer to the process through which ALACs and national chapters identify opportunities, map influence and gather support. To distinguish

between these two dimensions, this section explores how ALACs collaborate with authorities—strategy validated as good practice by the group in the Buenos Aires discussion. Box 5 at the end of section highlights the broad set of activities carried out by ALAC to promote effective advocacy broadly.

All participating ALAC are clear on the relevance of working with state authorities for the promotion of specialized legal assistance, and in some cases for the dissemination and sponsorship of their legal assistance services. The forms this collaboration takes, however, and their objectives, are different.

Cooperation for effective advocacy: engaging public officials

The most common form of cooperation with public officials is through formal and informal policy coalitions, which seek to identify allies for support of specific legislation and policy recommendations. These *coalitions* are diverse, as ALACs work a) with different government agencies; b) with different levels of government, especially when they use evidence from their work and cases at the local level to promote changes to legislation, transparency and accountability mechanisms; and c) with different branches of government, especially the legislative (parliament or congress), when seeking legal reforms. Usually, these coalitions respond to specific policy windows and advocacy opportunities.

Box 4. Changes to prevent corruption in medicine supply

The national chapter of Transparency International in Honduras, the *Asociación por una Sociedad más Justa* (Association for a More Just Society), opened the *Advocacy and Legal Advice Center* in February 2012. The Honduran ALAC has operated an open system for receiving complaints online and by phone since then, processing hundreds of complaints every year.

After identifying individual complaints associated with the health sector, the ALAC submitted 13 complaints before the state attorney's office, pointing to various crimes including incomplete and rigged medicine purchases, the acquisition of medicines in poor condition; drug theft, false and incomplete provision of services to diverse hospitals, and forgery. As a result of the complaints filed by the ALAC, a former health minister was indicted on charges of abuse of office and fraud. Although these crimes have been ruled on through conciliation agreement upon payment of 200,000 lempiras (bout 10 thousand dollars), the ALAC expressed its disagreement. In the processes derived from the original allegations, the *Special Prosecutor for Corruption* recovered stolen medications, and requested the indictment of all public officials involved. As a result of the process, the state attorney has issued indictments for 6 employees of the Central Medical Warehouse, who face accusations for as many as 22 offenses. In addition to the cases before the state attorney, the ALAC has promoted a broader advocacy agenda, to facilitate the work of authorities in charge of medicine supply, including.

Box 4. Changes to prevent corruption in medicine supply (continued)

- Brokering technical assistance from the Forensic Medicine attorney in Costa Rica, to verify the quality of medicines purchased.
- A new supply of medicines was acquired with support from the regional office of the UN.
- New control and verification systems were introduced to the Central Medial Warehouse, and they are still in operation one year after the intervention.

Formal collaboration mechanisms to facilitate legal action against corruption

The most relevant form of collaboration for empowering citizens against corruption and supporting specific complaints is the *formal* agreement to oversee cases brought to the attention of investigators, auditors and control agencies. The Czech Republic, Hungary, Guatemala, Honduras and Venezuela have specific agreements detailing the mechanisms to facilitate access to attorneys' and anti-corruption investigators.

The Guatemalan and Honduran ALAC have a varied set of agreements in place, including the anti-corruption commission (a special investigative unit empowered to indict over corruption cases), the supreme audit institution (part of the judiciary, in both cases), and the attorney general's office (in charge of all criminal investigations). While these formal agreements are important, facilitate achieving effective sanctions against corrupt officials and can relieve ALACs from investigation and research tasks, they have a set of challenges too. During our discussion, the group identified the following:

- Formal mechanisms often do not work as they should, attorneys do not indict, and investigators do not investigate. In those cases, the ALAC must consider whether it is worth it to maintain the agreement, scrap it or engage authorities forcefully to make it work. Although Guatemala expressed it has considered scrapping formal agreements, no firm decision has been made, and the ALAC is exploring new mechanisms to enable and strengthen existing collaboration agreements.

- The formal agreement does not automatically create trust, and it does not eliminate the fear of retaliation from authority. ALACs must still consider on a case by case basis when to take a case to the relevant authority, when to represent on their own and when to delegate to investigative journalists, to ensure safety. This point was amply discussed by the group in Buenos Aires, during the session on means for collaboration. Since the existence of a collaboration agreement does not guarantee legal certainty nor security to ALAC staff, ALACs should discuss when and how to use the mechanism, and when it is more convenient not to. Honduras and Venezuela mentioned specific cases where it was decided not to take a case to authorities, and in Guatemala, the ALAC staff underscored the difficulty of tracking cases when using the mechanism.

Legal collaboration with authorities, especially with attorneys' offices, requires extraordinary legal expertise, and ALACs must be careful when committing to support an investigation.

Outreach, sponsorship and other specific partnerships

Other less common forms of collaboration include agreements for specific tasks: dissemination support of the 'phone' for receiving complaints (IE, CR, G), fiscal sponsorship of the services provided by the legal service (Hy, BiH), and the creation of agency-specific whistleblowing mechanisms (CR, Hd). As we have already mentioned, the group emphasized the need to adjust their internal procedure and prepare the ALAC to meet demand when it has widely advertised its services. During the discussion, the group also emphasized that, while difficult to achieve, these collaborative mechanisms are good alternatives to publicize the work of the ALAC, which can occupy a substantial amount of resources for costs associated with advertising and broad dissemination.

Box 5. Strategies for effective advocacy

Although the strategies used by the ALAC to advocate effectively do not include specific activities that can be classified as good practices, they do have their own characteristics. To act effectively beyond the scope of the spaces and formal cooperation agreements discussed above, ALACs usually:

- Discern between government agencies, levels of government and branches of government. They locate the relevant space for strategic intervention and engage stakeholders and decision makers with diversified strategies (using different strategies and approaches in different levels and branches). IE has worked at the national level with effective legislation reform proposals; CR, Hy, G, ES, Hd and A have worked at the national and local level, with a combination of stakeholder engagement, legal challenge and specific legal and policy recommendations.
- Broaden their research and analysis activities beyond cases, to look at the relevant laws, norms, policies and institutions around specific areas of concern. They develop expertise on the state of the legal framework, the state of the art, and international best practices, then formulate specific recommendations in actionable, succinct and direct briefs. (IE on whistleblower protection mechanisms, CR on political party financing, CR, BiH and ES on access to information, CR, Hy, Hd and V on procurement, Hd and A on local government financing).
- Have actual spaces for discussing case development, risks and opportunities. This allows them to identify opportunities for systemic reform with time, to prioritize activities and allocate resources effectively to craft clear messages, engage key stakeholders and draft varied content for different target audiences. Whether these spaces are *ad hoc* (IE, V), take place weekly (Hd, ES) or bi-weekly (BiH, G, A), the important variable is *there is a space for discussion and feedback, actual opportunities are addressed, and strategy is adjusted*.

Box 5. Strategies for effective advocacy (continued)

- Develop *advocacy coalitions* with partners outside government, including experts (IE, CR, Hd, A), the private sector (IE, CR, Hy), civic organizations (in all countries) and civil servants affected by corruption (CR, Hd, A). These coalitions have two distinct benefits: they strengthen the potential to influence decision makers to adopt the recommendations formulated ('there is strength in numbers'); they also serve to *complement* the expertise available in the ALAC, and allow ALAC staff to develop capacities on specific subject matter.
- Develop *policy coalitions* with key decision makers. Identify different allies and supporters across government agencies, levels and branches of government, and engage them in specific intervention strategies. IE achieved support for its proposed changes to the whistleblower protection law with this approach (at the national level) and CR has managed to push forward diverse legislation recommendations using these types of coalitions, including work to draft national policy. Hd has managed to seize an opportunity to close procurement loopholes in the provision of medicines and A has managed to get local 'citizen legislation' reforms passed. While not all countries have the same level of result, most countries with highly developed expertise have 1) a presence in the legislative, 2) allies in different parties and legislative committees, and 3) work with allies in the national and local governments. (CR, BiH, G, Hd, ES, A).
- Develop *media partnerships*, which make policy issues and specific recommendations visible. These partnerships often include 'tit for tat' exchanges between the ALAC and journalists, and in most cases result in a long term relationship that can be used strategically by the ALAC when it wants to make a specific issue salient (IE, Hd, ES, A, V). In addition, effective ALACs use these partnerships wisely, they discern and diversify the media and the message, with a full understanding of the fact that public awareness and visibility are not equivalent to influence, or leverage.
- During the discussion in Buenos Aires, ALACs also emphasized the relevance of networking, the necessary efforts to expand existing advocacy partnerships and the need to identify and mediate interests with officials and legislators. Working with legislators was presented as a particularly problematic issue, given the volatility of legislator support and the difficulty of making their interests visible.
- In addition, the group underscored how difficult it is to obtain 'critical distance', and the relevance of exploring and discussing opportunities, perceived interest, strategy and expected results clearly and explicitly, both within the ALAC and with the national chapter. This allows both entities to accompany processes together, but clearly identifying the risk confrontation by one of them poses to the engagement (and interests) of the other.
- ALACs fully understand that the probability of achieving short-term changes is limited, and they bet on the long term. While there are some good examples of systemic reform and they were discussed, most advocacy and intervention strategies have not worked. Leading winning advocacy coalitions is hard, even when the context is favorable and opportunities for transformation arise. But there is a cumulative effect on knowledge, visibility and the ability to influence. Most ALACs understand this and continue to engage strategically despite having limited prospects for immediate success.

2.3. Good practices in risk assessment and management

All ALACs and all national chapters assess risk. Not only because they are familiar with the global strategy documents and guidelines that underscore risk assessment, but because they develop strategic plans, they adjust periodically and they confront challenges and obstacles preventing them from achieving their goals. In the most basic formulation, this is risk: an obstacle to the realization of a defined objective, or the potential of facing failure.

From this perspective, the work of ALACs generates three different types of risk:

- Risk of failure, which is the potential that an expected legal action or advocacy result will not materialize.
- Risk of retaliation, which is the potential of state or private entities responding to ALAC sponsored actions with threats, political pressure or legal action; it can apply to citizens served or represented by the ALAC or by ALAC staff directly.
- Risk of violence, which is the potential that the response by third parties affected by ALAC sponsored actions will threaten the security and physical integrity of ALAC staff or citizens represented or assisted by the Center.

Although the assessment identified best practices for managing the risk of failure, the discussion in Buenos Aires focused on the risks of retaliation and violence. Support mechanisms to create security protocols were presented by the Secretariat's Security Manager, and some tools were presented and introduced to facilitate access to secure information technologies, which ALAC will discuss extensively with TI-S to the extent that they actually use them.

Ireland's presentation generated widespread concern in the group to improve the security of data sharing platforms, communications technologies and the database. The director of TI Ireland suggested using secure mail (Hushmail) and the Global Security Manager referred secure platform with various communication technologies and internet access firewalls (from the Tactical Tech collective). The use of safe technologies was acknowledged as best practice.

Similarly, the presentation of Honduras raised concerns about the importance of having explicit, written security protocols. After an extensive discussion of all the vulnerabilities detected in the various iterations of protocol reviews in Honduras, half the ALACs present emphasized the need to articulate and implement their own protocols in black and white.

Consequently, all ALACs expressed interest in the creation or adoption of security measures to ensure the integrity and privacy of all communications, including

encryption systems (IE, Hd); and securing and backing up your data and physical and electronic files (IE, Hd, V). And almost all ALACs expressed interest in developing their own protocols—the exception being the Czech Republic, where the risk profile is much lower.

When present, threats should be identified quickly and addressed explicitly, through the activation of security protocols and the adoption of ad hoc measures to ensure safety. Institutional spaces are important to identify threats, to chart a course of action to mitigate risk and to assess how threats evolve over time, as a case progresses. To manage and disable threats, protocols need to consider safety guidelines taking into account the different threats and risk levels (IE, Hd, V). Protocols are usually formulated before threats arise. They are adopted once a legal advice and complaints service is created, but they must be reviewed periodically, especially after security incidents.

To complement the protocols, and at the bequest of Honduras, the group discussed the relevance of spaces for discussion and feedback, where you can analyze threats and adjust activities to ensure the integrity of ALAC staff and its clients. These spaces are especially important to counter what the group called 'white power' in the discussion, through which ALACs receive veiled threats and begin to experience rejection of their requests and attempts to collaborate with authorities.

While the risks of threat and direct political pressure are 'standard' risks, which ALACs identify and managed through reliance on safety manuals, and based on some of the mitigation strategies discussed below, there are no precise indications to identify and manage white power. But it is a central area of concern for ALACs in Latin America and Hungary. The feedback from the meeting in Buenos Aires provides some suggestions to handle it:

- First, support staff and legal assistance should be able to promptly identify indirect pressure, when present; explore the context in which pressure occurs, and defend the actions and reputation of the organization, both symbolically and legally.
- Second, it is advisable to make the pressure visible, and counter it with the support of the national chapter, partner organizations, media and allied public officials.

Finally, international pressure spaces designated by the Security Manager are important to counter threats and mitigate the risk of physical violence, when it exists, or damage to the reputation of the organization, where the government or powerful interests defame chapters national or persons within the organization and ALAC.

Box 6. Spaces for dialogue with police in Venezuela

Transparency Venezuela opened its Advocacy and Legal Advice Center in 2012, and it has since published several manuals to help citizens denounce corruption. The ALAC has collected complaints, made recommendations to address complaints, and established partnership agreements with sub-national authorities to deal with complaints.

One of the aspects of work prioritized by TI in Venezuela is police corruption, to address which a book was published in 2014 (see reference list in Annex II). In addition to publishing easily accessible materials to promote citizen complaints, the ALAC has advised specific claims and promoted direct dialogue with authorities.

In 2012 the ALAC received a complaint from a female head of household in a poor family in a state in north-central Venezuela. She accused officials of the Regional Police for threatening to arrest her son for possession of drugs, retention of property and for using 'stolen' identity documents if they were not paid a large sum of money—equivalent to five times the minimum wage at the time of the complaint. The whole family had been threatened and extorted by police, including through sexual harassment, and abuse had spread to more than 20 families in the region. The ALAC provided support to whistleblowers and helped substantiate their claims. It was able to partially record a meeting in which the mother delivered part of the payment required in the regional police headquarters.

The complaint was processed and presented to regional authorities, with whom a signed collaboration agreement had been signed. The agreement was signed with the state of Carabobo to open a space in which claims would be presented and discussed. Monthly meetings were held with police authorities to discuss complaints received, ongoing prevention efforts and other priorities.

After conducting a raid, police commanders discovered a network of police corruption operating from police headquarters, and they managed to apprehend several police officers involved, who are now serving prison sentences.

2.4. Good practices and strategies to diversify available funding

One of the most widely discussed issues on the last day of the meeting was alternative funding. Although the subject was not included on the agenda, it was incorporated in the diagnostic assessment, and we included open spaces for discussing specific proposals at the meeting, to allow ALAC to discuss what they considered priorities and to explore short term commitments. Form the mechanisms to diversify funding strategists mentioned in the assessment, three were picked up by discussion:

1. Public funding through tax mechanisms and partnerships with government agencies (Hy, G, Hd).
2. The horizontal incorporation of "legal services" in the institutional overhead (CR, Hd, A).
3. Mechanisms to raise funds directly from citizens (IR, CR, G, Hd, A).

Of these three mechanisms, the first two were validated as 'good practice' in the meeting; El Salvador identified the second as key, and committed to exploring it.

In addition to these three, other alternatives arose from the discussion, including:

4. Payment for consulting services related to services and expertise provided to help private entities or government agencies identify conflict of interest, and develop internal reporting mechanisms;
5. Cost recovery with the same scheme, which would represent no profit but would at least cover costing of human resources for advising public entities;
6. The recovery of a certain amount when assisting a complaint in a system that rewards the complainant or whistleblower (currently only available in Ireland, but interesting as an example for countries with similar schemes, and for future interventions);
7. Cost recovery for services provided to the community, and 'crowdfunding' for particular projects associated to a particular community or legal strategy;
8. Charging for support and advice when costing infrastructure projects (to participating private entities);
9. Charging for advisory services related to the formulation of *integrity pacts* (to private entities);
10. The creation of regional groups to administer anti-corruption funds (based on the new scheme of USAID, a proposal from El Salvador, which convened a similar consortium in the country, with the partnership of many organizations);
11. Taking infrastructure projects to financial markets to partly finance the design of control mechanisms and integrity safeguards;
12. Exploring financing mechanisms from the diaspora in different countries (with significant migrant communities—particularly relevant for Ireland, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras);
13. Exploring regional support by commercial consortia interested in developing integrity pacts to monitor corruption in the region (with links between Chile and Central America).

From this broad range of proposals, in addition to the horizontal incorporation of the cost of legal advice in all projects, the last two proposals were picked up as being of special interest: Ireland expressed particular interest in financing projects through the diaspora and Honduras through regional commercial consortia.

Section five contains some recommendations to deepen this exploration and provide useful information to the ALAC from the International Secretariat.

3. Proposals for future implementation: good practices identified by ALACs that have not been put in practice

In addition to the last two proposals of unexplored financing alternatives indicated above (12 and 13 above, diaspora financing and regional enterprise projects), several issues of interest to ALACs were presented and discussed throughout the meeting in Buenos Aires, which can be considered as 'good practices' to be implemented. The most salient impending good practice is the development of mechanisms to extensively document the work of ALACs, and make the most of internal discussion and feedback spaces. This discussion is summarized in text box 7, below. But other ideas were explored and highlighted. The proposals, in which all participating ALACs concur, include:

- To incorporate safety 'requirements' and conditions in the overhead of ALACs budgets, to meet risk management and security protocol needs. This 'horizontal' financing of security needs across projects is currently only carried out by Honduras, and not all projects include safety line item requirements.
- To explore technological innovation alternatives to disseminate information and encourage citizen participation. So far, processes exploring the development or adoption of new technologies to mobilize anticorruption strategies and bring citizens and authorities closer have not been explored. ALACs could play an important role finding the right technologies, by operating right at the intersection of these two issues.
- To create a space to discuss common challenges and, occasionally, solutions. Although there are spaces for discussion and global and regional collaboration, these spaces are not specific to ALACs, and legal assistance strategies or associated good practices are almost never discussed.
- To develop a strategy that fosters joint work between ALACs—not only in terms of feedback and learning, but in line with advocacy projects and regional monitoring—to take advantage of existing spaces and the current confluence in security and development policies in various countries of the region. Working together is feasible, but the ways and means to promote this work have to be explored from

the ALACs, in accordance to their capacities, common goals and proposed inter-vention strategies.

- To hire insurance collectively, to minimize costs and to share platforms and protocols.

Box 7. Notes on the importance of thorough documentation of ALAC activities

The diagnostic assessment developed before the meeting identified some practices associ-ated with the creation of formal and informal spaces for discussion (see section 2.2 above), and explored potential weaknesses in the monitoring and evaluation systems used by par-ticipating ALACs. Despite being aware of the terms and procedures used globally to conduct monitoring and evaluation, and despite having some support from TI-S, neither the national chapters nor the ALACs have implemented systems to extensively document the different components of their work, including counseling and legal assistance, strategic litigation, in-vestigation, collaboration with authorities and their varied advocacy strategies. Without documenting these processes, it is impossible to generate useful aggregate information to assess progress. And without assessing progress, without identifying clearly when and how opportunities are seized, it is impossible to evaluate results.

To complement the information contained in the assessment, during the last session of the Buenos Aires meeting we discussed existing feedback spaces. The facilitator emphasized the need to document and monitor intervention strategies, and participants shared their limited experiences documenting their work.

One of the first conclusions of the discussion was that the instruments used to consider re-sults, and the database for case management of the People Engagement Program, particu-larly, are not suitable for this purpose. They are very effective to help manage cases. But the assumptions underlying the theory of change of ALACs and its pathways to results have not been updated, and there is little clarity about what information is needed to monitor prog-ress.

Annual reports are very detailed and they contain rich quantitative and qualitative informa-tion. There are also independent evaluations of the work of some of the chapters and ALACs. However, despite what appear to be consolidated good practices (periodic evaluation of re-sults, with 'actionable' key indicators), there are surprisingly few cases where a specific insti-tutional space has been instituted to monitor progress explicitly, to adjust strategies and analyze long-term results (CR, BiH, Hd, A).

During the meeting, the national chapter in Guatemala presented its experience in creating learning and evaluation spaces, with the support of TI-S. In another case, in Hungary, there are several opportunities for feedback and learning, but they are not formally linked to the processes of monitoring and evaluation, making it difficult to retain the lessons identified in these spaces. In the discussion, ALAC staff underscored the relevance of enabling learning

Box 7. Notes on the importance of thorough documentation of ALAC activities (continued)

and feedback spaces given the short period of operation of the ALAC approach thus far (ten years in most cases), and the need to extensively document decision-making processes, from which otherwise little or no information is extracted. Implementing institutional learning strategies is key to achieve long-term alliances and results, and without them it is very difficult to achieve systemic changes and explore whether public policy interventions have had any impact over corruption.

The only way to ensure progress is to monitor consistently over many years. The changes we seek (capacity building, participation and empowerment of people, important legal precedents and the transformation of laws and institutions that regulate the provision of services) take years to develop. The life of specific projects will not do. The only way to ensure that the ALAC and national chapters identify results over considerable periods of time is creating the space for feedback and institutional learning, and developing strategies for sustained documentation over time.

This is especially relevant given the *very* long time required to adjudicate corruption cases, and strategic litigation related to integrity or access to information.

4. Commitments agreed to by ALACs, and proposals to monitor their progress

The discussion of ALAC representatives in Buenos Aires was rich and productive. The ALACs widely discussed their experiences and exchanged views on what makes a practice a 'good practice'. They collected specific information about activities that could be useful in their countries and they agreed to specific, practical commitments by identifying some practices they are willing to implement and mechanisms to move towards achieving their implementation. The summary on the next page incorporates the perspective and specific commitments of each ALAC.

In summary, the Centers are most interested in four good practices, identified as useful and prioritized by participants: clinics for law student field practices; thorough documentation of ALAC processes, including investigation and advocacy strategies; the incorporation of risk management mechanisms and strategies; and the creation of mechanisms and procedures to systematize cases, and facilitate case management. In addition to these practices, three alternatives to improve funding were discussed—they have been discussed at the end of section two, above.

The first of the practices identified as useful is **collaboration with universities to create legal clinics,** which would bring students and interns closer to ALACs to help them with their advocacy strategies and legal assistance. The scheme, formally practiced in Argentina, was identified as useful and desirable in six of the seven participating countries, except for Venezuela, which prioritized other activities. Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador, in Latin America, and Hungary, Czech Republic and Ireland indicated interest in exploring and adopting a similar mechanism in their countries.

Five participating countries identified two other practices as desirable:

Documenting in detail the processes through which assistance support, investigation and advocacy are carried out. The issue, widely discussed in the last session of the meeting, was identified as useful in Guatemala, El Salvador, Argentina and Venezuela, in Latin America; as well as the Czech Republic, in Europe. In addition to these

countries, Honduras and Ireland have indicated they document their discussions and processes widely.

The adoption of specific risk management mechanisms was identified as a priority in five countries: Argentina, Guatemala, Venezuela, Hungary and Czech Republic. Honduras and Ireland already have detailed and strict protocols. The first four countries specifically mentioned mechanisms to identify risks and facilitate risk management. The Czech Republic mentioned the need to explore insurance schemes, which were introduced to the discussion by Ireland. Argentina, Guatemala and Venezuela proposed to adopt specific mechanisms and protocols (including regular meetings and written protocols, following the example of Honduras).

The fourth good practice identified as useful and priority is the **systematization of cases** and the subsequent creation of guidelines and manuals for ALAC staff. This systematization (creation of criteria and procedures for receiving and managing cases) is carried out formally in the Czech Republic and informally in Honduras (where trends are discussed weekly). Guatemala, Venezuela and Ireland expressed interest in further streamlining the systematization they do, and developing guidelines to filter and review cases.

Finally, three ALACs expressed interest in **alternative funding means**. Honduras expressed interest in exploring funding from large commercial corporations with operations in the region and an interest in fighting corruption (proposed by Chile); El Salvador expressed interest in integrating a legal assistance component to support the ALAC to all its financing projects. Ireland expressed interest in exploring how to procure funding from the diaspora.

Commitments assumed by ALAC on the EUROsociAL II workshop, July 2014

	Honduras	Guatemala
What 'good practices' are considered more valuable to your organization? (3 max)	1) Proposal to collect funds from multinational corporations working in the area, proposed by Chile (NP) (Carlos Hernández) 2) Incorporate legal clinics and internships in collaboration with Universities. (Carlos Hernández) 3) Mobilize the ALAC to 'find' the claimant on the streets, and among vulnerable groups. (Ludim Ayala) 4) Strengthen work with local government through collaboration agreements with clear regulations. (Ludim Ayala)	1) Improve the analysis of risks associated with the current processes, and security conditions for ALAC staff. (Oscar Vázquez) 2) Strengthen monitoring and evaluation of the organization with process documentation and decision-making processes. (Oscar Vázquez) 3) Systematize cases, and improve information safeguards (David Gaitán) 4) To explore alternatives to collaborate with Law Students (Legal Clinics) (David Gaitán)
Which of these three practices are you willing to implement?	All four, with the same degree of priority	Two priorities: 1) Improve risk analysis and 2) create mechanisms for legal clinic and internships in the ALAC.
Commitments: What will each ALAC director or coordinator do to implement the identified good practices?	Funding from multinationals: Contact Alberto Precht in Chile, analyze the model and explore alternatives for regional contact. Anti Corruption Clinics in agreement with national Universities. Explore the conversation model in Argentina, and make a short-term plan. Find claimants. Elaborate a work plan and strategies to go to and support institutions that provide services to possible claimants. Local work with collaboration agreements. Select a municipality and foster a pilot agreement, geared towards anticorruption claims support.	Creation of institutional spaces to evaluate and manage risks. Preliminary meetings with the team will be held in order to begin work. Anti corruption clinics in agreement with Universities. The ALAC coordinator will make a proposition for student profiles for those interested in carrying out professional internships with the institution, to be sent to the dean.

Commitments assumed by ALAC on the EUROsociAL II workshop, July 2014 (continued)

	El Salvador	Venezuela
What 'good practices' are considered more valuable to your organization? (3 max)	1) Funding security needs with an item on the institutional overhead (Rubio) 2) Explore the creation of conventions with Universities for legal clinics and 'internships' (Rubio) 3) Document processes, to make the daily dynamics an ALAC faces visible	1) Systematize cases, to develop a list of 'solutions to recurring cases' and standardize answers and attention processes (NP) 2) Document decision-making processes, to register the used criteria and to justify decisions made in each process 3) Improve risk mitigation and institutionalize meetings to evaluate cases and strategies to tend to risks and threats
Which of these three practices are you willing to implement?	Mainly, funding security needs as a component to all projects.	All three, with the same degree of priority.
Commitments: What will each ALAC director or coordinator do to implement the identified good practices?	Horizontal itemization of funding for 'security' in every project of the Organization: Establish new guidelines so that every project may consider it, make a budget and security plans.	Systematization and documentation. To systematize cases and document processes, a line of actions in ALAC plans and strategies will be created. This is an internal measure that requires no institutional support. The creation of institutional spaces to evaluate and handle risks. The proposal will be presented at a meeting with the Director, in order to broaden reflection and to explore how to institutionalize these spaces.

Commitments assumed by ALAC on the EUROsociAL II workshop, July 2014 (continued)

	Argentina	Hungary	Czech Republic	Irlanda
What 'good practices' are considered more valuable to your organization? (3 max)	1) Adoption of specific security protocols for managing cases 2) Work with investigative journalists 3) Develop monitoring processes as an input for their impact actions	1) Systematize risks that may be tackled by case type, to improve institutional responses and reactions. 2) Formalize voluntary work with Universities through formal collaboration agreements, as in the experience of Argentina. 3) Document impact processes 4) Adopt and adapt the 'user manual' of Czech Republic, to facilitate claimant access.	1) Document impact processes 2) Risk-mitigation strategies – specifically insurance mentioned by John Devitt, from Ireland. 3) Formalize and improve cooperation with Universities.	1) Systematize cases, and integrate databases as part of the work of ALAC. 2) Establish filters to tend to cases. 3) Explore alternatives for ALAC funding from the Diaspora. 4) Explore the creation of agreements with Universities for legal clinics and 'internships'.
Which of these three practices are you willing to implement?	First of all, the adoption of security protocols. Second, to explore alternatives of work with investigative journalists to support cases.	Priorities will be developed with a 'user's manual', to standardize reaction mechanisms.	All three, on the same degree of priority. In the case of insurance, it will be necessary to afford them.	All four, with the same degree of priority
Commitments: What will each ALAC director or coordinator do to implement the identified good practices?	Protocols: 1) Call for a team meeting, 2) make a formal analysis of the aforementioned protocols and its implementation and 3) develop a protocol for Argentina based on the context and needs of the organization. Investigative journalists: To establish contact with some allied journalists and incorporate collaboration activities with journalists to the work plan.	In both cases, a discussion with the national chapter team will be held, and a template will be made for case attention, type of case, and a proposal for 'manual' to send to possible claimants.	For all three things, a discussion with the national chapter team will be held to find out what can be implemented.	ALAC Honduras will be consulted to analyze how they have worked each of these issues.

In addition to practices identified by several countries, at least one country prioritized the following: Honduras emphasized the practice of going out to find complainants submitted by Argentina, with the prospect of working with certain vulnerable groups in their anti-corruption strategy (in the making), and the creation of new mechanisms for formal cooperation with municipal authorities. Argentina emphasized approaching investigative journalists to support cases, or broaden their capacities to investigate acts of corruption, a practice that has not been put in practice there yet.

The technical support staff from TI-Secretariat also mentioned some priorities. The regional Latin America and Europe coordinators emphasized the need to create more spaces for horizontal feedback, and improve the means of dialogue and communication throughout the movement. The security manager agreed to review the manuals in order to help ALACs identify and manage risks, and made available a set of tools to the group in order to ensure greater security and information confidentiality, at the request of the representative of Ireland.

The director of the People Engagement Program (PEP) underscored four issues: 1) foster more effective ways to interact, provide feedback and learn horizontally; 2) strengthen case data and communication security; 3) explore options to collaborate with universities and 4) assist national chapters in documenting decision-making processes, extracting lessons, and in the creation of spaces to process learning.

Representatives from countries that have not created an ALAC but are in the process of constituting one also identified practices of interest to them.

Brazil emphasized the creation of security protocols from the very beginning due to the importance they attribute to assisting legal processes, extensive complaint process documentation and identifying allies and partners to expand the scope of the ALAC, when formed.

Chile emphasized the creation of inter-institutional agreements, to facilitate the job of investigating and sanctioning authorities, and the development of investigation capacities, including partnerships with investigative journalists, to be able to assist and support complaints once the ALAC is opened. They also proposed a gradual implementation strategy, and managing expectations when opening the ALAC, to avoid disappointment when confronted with the reality of long and tortuous process in anticorruption processes.

Meanwhile, **Peru** highlighted the need to clearly define the target audience for the various activities of the ALACs, their interest in comprehensive and detailed documentation of processes, progress and setbacks in the creation and early implementation of the ALAC, and the creation of mobile ALAC strategies, and developing alliances to look for cases of interest to the chapter—which Argentina already undertakes and Honduras seeks to adopt.

Four months after the discussion in Buenos Aires, the beginning of 2015 represents a good opportunity to assess what has been done to follow up on the commitments, to explore whether security protocols were introduced in the countries that did not have them, and what progress has been made in exploring alternatives to create legal assistance centers and public interest litigation clinics in collaboration with universities. For the other three practices of interest—documentation, case systematization to create guidelines for providing attention and financing alternatives—it is most likely necessary to introduce minor changes first, that would eventually support their adoption and clarify how ALACs can seek support in the implementation of these practices.

Box 8. Key lessons learned

Play 'the long game'. Develop strategy and plan activities with a long-term perspective, building coalitions for future opportunities. Accumulate expertise, evidence and allies even if no prospects for short-term transformation exist, this will make it easier to take advantage of them when the opportunity arises. Playing the long game is difficult when the ALAC and / or national chapters operate based on projects, but it can be done concurrently with the discussion and implementation of project-specific objectives and activities.

Legal and substantive expertise is one of the cornerstones of successful interventions. Identify your strengths, your needs and develop a plan to develop or complement the skills you need, whether through the national chapter, external support or through partnerships.

Partnerships are the other cornerstone of successful interventions. Whether for legal support or broader advocacy, partnerships reduce costs, complement ALAC skills and resources, and facilitate a broad range of objectives, three most saliently:

- partnerships with other organizations and social movements allow ALACs to reach out to and develop trust with vulnerable and marginalized groups;
- partnerships with public officials can supplement ALAC research and investigation capacities, they can also support outreach and financing activities;
- partnerships with public officials are necessary to achieve systemic reforms—without the cooperation and co-ownership of stakeholders who make decisions and can incorporate proposed changes to the rules and institutions in place, it is impossible to change these.

Create diverse institutional feedback spaces. Make them formal, and involve different managers. Spaces to plan and develop strategy; to undertake case management with enough feedback to identify risk, threats and opportunities; to monitor case and advocacy progress assess results, and adjust; and to ensure the rich discussions are accounted for to promote institutional learning. Without these spaces, organizations can neither identify opportunities, adjust to changes in context nor learn from their mistakes, and achievements.

Box 8. Key lessons learned (continued)

Create and develop external feedback loops to assess the goals, results and shortfalls in your partnerships—all your partnerships: with civic organizations, State authorities and media.

Diversify funding creatively. Be bold, and explore different alternatives: incorporate a cross-sectional 'legal services fee' to support legal assistance and strategic litigation, explore direct funding from citizens, and groups you work with, as well as fiscal support from different levels of government.

Document your learning. The only way of ensuring institutional growth in the medium and long term is to record experience, lessons and results, to make them intelligible to everyone in the institution. Without an institutional record, learning is haphazard and frail.

The following recommendations include specific proposals to promote the implementation of good practices in each chapter, between chapters and with the support of the International Secretariat and other technical assistance agencies.

5. General and specific recommendations to strengthen the ALACs work in Latin America

Four sets of recommendations were produced from the assessment of the ALACs work, the rich discussion in Buenos Aires and the feedback provided by ALAC staff to the presentation of specific practices during the discussion. These recommendations are intended to allow ALACs to strengthen their capacities. Two sets of recommendations are directed to ALACs: general recommendations (intended for all ALACs) and specific recommendations (for specific ALACs). Two more are directed to support bodies that have the potential for strengthening ALACs capacities through technical assistance and specific inputs: program and regional managers in the Secretariat, and donors interested in strengthening the work of the ALAC directly and indirectly. The recommendations for the latter two groups are linked to the needs of the ALAC and the general and specific recommendations to strengthen their capacities.

5.1. General recommendations to ALACs

The first set of recommendations is for ALACs as a group, and they seek to make the most of the expressed interest in creating spaces for collaboration with authorities, for horizontal learning between ALACs, and to adopt some of the widely discussed good practices.

1. **Documenting processes.** All ALACs expressed interest in improving the way the document their decision-making, research and advocacy processes. Documentation is crucial for monitoring and evaluation of activities, processes and strategies in place, but it is not carried out systematically in any country. This is a missed opportunity not only because it prevents the ALACs from having useful, accessible information to adjust their strategies, exchange experiences between ALACs and support new centers, but also because it dims the extraordinary results the scheme has produced in almost all countries. Before creating spaces to disseminate good practices, and to discuss experiences and lessons, it is necessary to have useful, accessible and detailed information about the decision-making,

research and investigation processes, legal assistance and advocacy strategies. This information will be produced when ALACs document their processes consistently.

To move forward on this front, we recommend ALACs explore and incorporate methodologies to document their internal processes, adopt at least a couple of new documenting practices for their 2015 activities and discuss with other ALACs and TI-S how they are documenting the work they do, what they are documenting (activities, meetings, results of stakeholder engagement, et al.), what are the challenges of documenting their processes are and how they have overcome these challenges. This process may be supported by TI-S' regional and support programs, to the extent to which they can add content and systematize some specific recommendations and methods to document the experience of ALACs, and create feedback opportunities to spur discussion between ALACs learning to document their work.

In any case, it is essential that this documentation is internal, that it is used for the discussion and learning process within the organization (and not for the delivery of reports associated with projects, for example), and that it is adapted in a reflexive manner, to consider and asses the results of documenting processes over the next two years. This single set of activities would allow ALACs to strengthen their capacities, better identify opportunities for research and advocacy, and strengthen their cooperation with authorities, where it exists.

2. **Strengthen spaces and mechanisms of collaboration with authorities** where they already exist and create them where they do not. One of the central objectives of the ALAC, to investigate and sanction acts of corruption, necessarily requires the cooperation of State authorities. This collaboration may or may not occur, and where it exists, it can be formal or not, but the consulted ALACs' experience has shown that when formal agreements for collaboration, investigation and initiating administrative procedures exist, achieving a sanction is much more likely. Furthermore, these agreements complement ALACs capacities, they strengthen them in the medium term, and they help maintain channels of communication open, which is paramount to be able to take advantage of advocacy opportunities when they appear.

The discussion in Buenos Aires made it very clear that is not easy to make cooperation agreements work properly, but even when ALACs' patience and cooperation are put to the test, in the medium term, it is better to have a formal collaboration mechanism than not to have it.

In any case, it is necessary to complement the strategy to foster spaces and mechanisms for collaboration with three different sets of activities: 1) the results of the collaboration must be documented in order to have concrete evidence of the mistakes

when adjustments or changes to the mechanism are proposed; 2) it is important to diversify the type of public authorities and officials with which agreements are established, and with whom contact is established under each agreement; and 3) we must seek to create partnerships with public officials who support the work of the ALAC and that can be potential allies—this requires constant context analysis and mapping of partners in the ALAC and chapter.

3. **Strengthen the work with administrative control authorities**, especially the comptroller, internal control agencies and the supreme audit institution. This recommendation is partly derived from the previous point: it is important to diversify who the ALAC works with, and internal and external control organs tend to be important allies for various reasons: because they are part of global communities of practice where the utility of collaborating with civil society is emphasized, their technical research and analytical capabilities are relatively good, and they tend to be more developed than those of prosecutors or instances of ad hoc research. Furthermore, the internal and external control agency staff is usually civil service personnel who maintain their position in the medium and long term.

   Guatemala's experience suggests how difficult it is to keep the collaboration going and make it productive, but this is worth doing. Although the experience of the ALACs in the region is limited (dating back five, six years), in the medium and long term, partnerships with various government officials will allow ALACs to investigate more cases, and to lead them in a more effective way through the formal investigation and sanction processes.

4. **Carry out and implement the proposed schemes to complement capacities**, especially the creation of legal clinics and formal collaboration agreements with universities. Every ALAC expressed interest in this good practice, and it is clear why: it makes students with highly developed analytical skills and legal expertise available to the ALAC, while it helps widely disseminate its vision and mission. Although there are different collaboration schemes, the most basic incorporates legal fellows and practitioners to work in the ALAC.

   There is no impediment to explore and adopt agreements similar to the one in Argentina in all countries by the end of 2015. The ALACs could move quickly towards realization of these efforts and establish a space to discuss alternatives and collaboration mechanisms before the end of the year. Once a mechanism like this one is put in place, processes and lessons from the collaboration with universities and students can be documented, so that ALACs in other countries with limited resources can benefit.

5. **Identify and take advantage of the opportunities more effectively.** In every country that participated in the Buenos Aires dialogue there are successful experiences of cases that led to sanctions, of cases that yielded greater openness through

precedent-setting court decisions, and even of advocacy cases to promote legal reforms or specific institutional mechanisms to curb corruption—with a few exceptions, where advocacy is very difficult. In all these cases, the ALACs seized an existing opportunity for advocacy not directly derived from their activities.

To strengthen the ALACs impact and direct their efforts towards transforming structural and systemic constraints in each country, it is necessary to identify opportunities more effectively and seize them. To do so, three things are required:

- institutionalized discussion and feedback spaces, which can be used to discuss juncture, and to adjust the ALACs and national chapters' strategies;
- information and key evidence that can be used when opportunities arise, which stems in part from the successful documentation of previous processes (see recommendation 1); and
- readily available capacities to adjust during implementation and devote time and human resources to advocacy tasks that require them in order to seize opportunity.

In every ALAC that participated in this assessment there are spaces for discussion and feedback, but they are *ad hoc*. Only in a couple of cases, the spaces are institutionalized, and in none of the cases is the discussion accompanied by documenting processes and consistent monitoring. ALACs have persevered and led effective advocacy strategies due to their outstanding leadership and the high technical quality of their analysis. They will surely continue to advocate effectively, but they will be able to do more to the extent to which they develop institutional spaces for discussion and feedback, to review strategies and adjust their activities. Especially if they have monitoring mechanisms enabling them to identify lessons and opportunities

6. **Integrate access to information to the discussions on ALACs work globally**. Access to information is relatively new in the world and systems of access to information tend to be contentious. Legal assistance to access public information is key when opening governments to scrutiny, and the ALACs in Europe and America have worked to provide legal advice to those seeking access to public records and to directly litigate public information.

But this area of work has not been formally integrated into the thinking behind the objectives of the ALAC approach globally, and it is not clearly articulated with the rest of the objectives and activities of the ALACs and national chapters. Consequently, there is little clarity about how access to information is promoted through legal strategies, and why it matters to advance the goals of the Transparency movement (how can it strengthen, for example, strategies and activities to curb impunity).

While it is important for the movement to develop this theory of change, it is clear that a great deal of experience and knowledge is already fully developed in the work of the ALACs, who can do a lot to move this pending conversation forward.

7. **Explore financing alternatives**. One of the most extensive and rich discussions of the Buenos Aires dialogue was on financing alternatives. It is important to explore new schemes (we could start with the three outlined in section 4, above), incorporate them into the ALACs' work and extract lessons from what works, and how.

5.2. Specific recommendations to ALACs

We incorporate here three types of recommendations for ALACs who participated in the technical assistance strategy: recommendations to strengthen what they already do well, recommendations to incorporate practices in which they showed interest and recommendations to generate knowledge and information that can be useful for other ALACs.

To *reinforce what they already do well*, ALACs are encouraged to:

8. In Ireland and Honduras, where there is very good work on **risk management and in developing security protocols, we recommend systematizing their experience and updating protocols periodically**. Begin documenting processes and experiences with a discussion on what has worked and what hasn't in risk management, and exploring how security can be strengthened, especially around information technology.

9. In Honduras, Guatemala and Venezuela, where there are collaboration agreements in place, it would be useful to **extend the collaboration to new entities and to establish dialogue with a broader range of public officials**. The ALACs would also do well to begin documenting why and how collaboration agreements fail, when they do, and develop and strategy to reinforce them as necessary in the next two years–this is already being done, mostly in Honduras where a broad collaboration agreement has just been signed.

10. In El Salvador, where the ALAC carries out litigation to access public information work, it would be opportune to document and account for the experience thus far, to reinforce stakeholder engagement and collaboration with authorities, and explore the possibility of **signing formal cooperation agreements** just like the ones they already have to monitor public infrastructure and social development spending, extending these agreements to enable investigation of corruption cases and fostering access to information.

11. In Argentina, we recommend taking on **systematization, documentation and feedback activities** within the organization. These activities can reinforce the strategy of 'looking for cases' in communities and existing partnerships with marginalized groups, especially to illustrate these groups' vulnerability, and extract lessons from working with them on promoting legal and litigation assistance strategies.

12. In the Czech Republic, where there is **good advocacy work, systematization and where guidelines for receiving and processing cases have already been developed, it would be useful to document these processes**, extracting lessons and discussing these lessons with the various ALAC teams (there are two offices in the country) and the staff dedicated to communication and advocacy activities, in order to strengthen future strategies.

To *incorporate the practices that interested the ALACs*, action can be taken immediately in all cases. Especially where the practice already exists in other countries:

13. To establish collaboration agreements with universities, there has to be a conversation with *Poder Ciudadano* in Argentina, to undertake exploratory meetings with universities in each country, and trace a plan to develop cooperation schemes before the end of 2015.

14. To improve risk management, protocols and documents can be requested from TI-S, Honduras and Ireland, and specific protocols for each country can be developed and implemented in the next six months.

15. To systematize cases and develop attention and procedure guidelines, we recommend a conversation with the Czech Republic, Ireland and Honduras, to explore their "manuals" and analyze how they have catalogued cases and established criteria for processing claims.

In one of the cases, *documentation*, there are no practical experiences in the ALACs that participated in the discussion. But alternative approaches to documenting the legal assistance and advocacy work should be explored, including the creation of spaces for discussion and monitoring. These alternatives can be discussed with partner organizations that already have such systems, donors and cooperation agencies.

To *make the experience and useful knowledge on best practices available to other ALACs, we recommend:*

16. In Argentina: document their experience of engaging marginalized groups and work with universities. In the latter case, it would be useful to have a case study with challenges, lessons and steps that can be helpful for ALACs interested in creating

legal clinics and cooperation agreements with universities. This work can be supported from TI-S or performed independently.

17. In Honduras: document their experience in the creation and promotion of collaboration agreements with authorities to account for lessons that can help other ALACs in the region drive agreements, avoid mistakes and adopt good practices on dialogue and drafting institutional mechanisms for cooperation.

18. In Venezuela: document and expand available information in their documents and reports on spaces for police dialogue, where concerns and recommendations are addressed, to promote informal monitoring and bring communities closer to one of the most meaningful and riskier public functions in the region—policing.

19. In Ireland: generate useful and accessible information on their security protocols, technologies used for data and communication security and their procedures for handling and processing of cases in the first moment of contact, and make them available to the movement.

5.3. Recommendations for the International Secretariat

In all cases, the actions we recommend TI-S undertakes to support ALACs consider the needs identified during the assessment, and reinforce the specific and general recommendations made to ALACs in sections 5.1 and 5.2 above:

1. The theory of change of the movement and the people engagement program should explore and incorporate the role litigation plays in promoting transparency and improved conditions to access information, and the role that ALACs play in developing skills for that litigation, specifically.

2. It is essential to update and develop existing materials to guide for the work of ALACs, which have been left behind by the needs and the work of the ALACs in the recent past, including protocols, security and risk management mechanisms. A good first step would be to update the ALACs' theory of change, to disseminate the experiences, good practices and lessons here collected and to incorporate the best systematization practices discussed in Buenos Aires—from Ireland, the Czech Republic and Honduras—in easy to access reference materials. A second step, which is essential in the short or medium term, is to update the materials available to ALACs to incorporate security protocols and risk management strategies, which currently are not distributed among all ALACs.

3. It is necessary to develop knowledge and foster dialogue and learning exchanges between ALACs to promote the adoption of strategies that have not yet been

directly supported: collaboration agreements with universities, work with investigative journalists and strategies to document decision-making process, including research, legal assistance and advocacy. Although these support tasks correspond to the People Engagement Program (PEP), proposals to generate knowledge, discuss collaboration mechanisms and the creation of spaces for regional discussion are already being developed by the Latin America Regional Program. The programs should coordinate their efforts and avoid duplication, to generate information and educational content that is useful and timely.

4. It is important to review the ALAC database to understand what it is used for and promote its adoption by every *Center*. It would be great to assess whether the database is useful to monitor results and evaluate the impact of interventions. If not, adjustments must be made, to maintain this as a case management system, complemented by other documentation, monitoring, feedback and learning mechanisms.

5. Finally, it is essential to systematize the financing alternatives implemented in different countries and explore how they can be implemented throughout the movement. Nobody is in a better position to do this than the support staff of the Secretariat.

5.4. Recommendations for agencies and organizations that provide technical support to ALACs

From the perspective of donors, aid and international agencies, there is a limited set of specific recommendations made on the basis of the extensive experience and lessons gathered by this report.

1. **Support the creation and implementation of strategies to manage risk,** including risks to the security of ALAC staff and citizens supported by them. While there have been important steps forward in many countries, not all ALACs have written protocols, there are also few spaces, formal or informal, to discuss and feedback ALAC strategies for risk management, and fostering this dialogue could help ALACs develop more effective strategies.

2. **Strengthen capacities**. There is plenty of room to maneuver to strengthen the ALACs' capacities in the region. We recommend focusing on three areas:
   • documentation, monitoring and evaluation strategies;
   • knowledge and guidelines to develop collaboration agreements with authorities;
   • support agreements with universities to promote the creation of legal clinics and include student fellowships and trainee participation in ALAC strategies.

3. **Support the ALACs engagement of authorities.** From the perspective of interna-tional organizations and aid agencies, intervention strategies can be explored to foster and protect ALAC engagement of authorities, affording ALACs a place in de-cision making processes, prioritizing joint strategies and creating incentives for col-laboration.

4. **Support the creation of formal cooperation agreements to investigate and sanction acts of corruption**. In addition to indirect support, aid agencies can also foster formal, concrete collaboration mechanisms. This dimension can be incorpo-rated into bilateral and multilateral cooperation strategies for curbing corruption, or through specific projects from donors who are not cooperation partners.

Support the creation of **informal collaboration spaces** in which the concerns and preoccupations of ALACs and partner organization can be addressed, especially with police and local authorities. In addition to supporting a formal collaboration, it would be desirable to broaden the alternatives and opportunities for collaboration to pro-mote community participation in dialogues with authority, especially where these spaces do not already exist. The creation of discussion round tables with local police, such as those created by Transparency Venezuela, and the promotion of similar con-sultation spaces can also be incorporated in existing cooperation strategies.

Addenda I. Methodology

This report is based on two inputs: a diagnostic assessment that used depth interviews and an extensive review of available literature, reports and planning documents on the work of ALACS, and a facilitated discussion where preliminary findings were presented, and feedback from participating ALACs was collected. The specialist hired by CEDDET crafted the first assessment on challenges and good practice, formulated an agenda for discussion among peers that enable to build capacities, and assisted the meeting, which was carried out on the third week of July 2014.

The **assessment** gathered the impressions, opinions and experience of those who co-ordinate legal advice in ALACs, executive directors, regional coordinators and support personnel of the International Transparency Secretariat. The researcher wrote a ques-tionnaire to explore the topics of interest, challenges, good practices and lessons of the support activities to claimants and victims of corruption (see below), and carried out thirteen in-depth interviews to ALAC *staff* based on a questionnaire designed by the researcher, with feedback from support personnel of the Secretariat (TI-S) and CEDDET foundation. The report also incorporates open interviews with two coordina-tors form *People Engagement Program* (PEP), the TI-S Security Manager, and the coordi-nator of the *Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning* (MEL) program.

In addition to the qualitative information distilled from the interviews, the researcher used strategy documents, plans, projects and result reports provided for their analysis by six out of the nine interviewed ALAC. TI-S personnel made available for the re-searcher 1) two formal external evaluation reports of ALAC carried out in 2011 and 2013, with information relevant to European ALAC who participated in technical as-sistance; 2) documents of the 2015 Strategy of Transparency International and the implementation plan for such strategy, articulated by the Assembly of the movement in 2010 with a scope to 2015; and 3) a set of *indicators* used by ALACs to evaluate short and long term results. Additionally, the ALAC from Czech Republic, El Salvador, Hondu-ras, and Venezuela facilitated result reports for 2013.

The assessment analyzed the information available to map the most relevant issues and themes to the staff working in the Centers, and to identify their achievements, and

degree of interest in the topics and objectives proposed by the technical assistance. ALAC *staff* interviews sought to identify good practice linked to the operational challenges they currently face, with specific questions linked to risk management, strategies of collaboration with authorities and group work with vulnerable populations

The assessment gathered and systematized the challenges of ALACs and organized good practices in three sets: good practice in providing specialized legal advice, good practice related to collaboration with authorities, and impact; and good practice in identifying and managing risks. Two additional sections cover topics of interest for the ALACs group: the work with research journalists, carried out by almost every *Center*, in diverse manners, and the construction of monitoring and assessment instruments, an emerging but relevant topic to guide future ALAC activities. The analysis of these themes was included in the assessment and discussed at length in the Buenos Aires meeting.

The **facilitated discussion** brokered between ALAC Europe and Latin America took place on July 16-18 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, with the participation of three *Centers* from Europe, Czech Republic, Hungary, and Ireland (Bosnia Herzegovina participated in the assessment, but did not join the discussion); and five *Centers* in Latin America, in Argentina, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Venezuela.

We were joined by coordinators from the national chapters in Brazil, Chile and Peru with an interest to open an ALAC in these countries on the short term, *International Transparency* Secretariat regional coordinators from Europe and Latin America, and Secretariat support managers to citizen participation and security.

The discussion was built on a broadly consulted agenda among the team in charge of technical assistance, and it privileged the discussion among peers on a structure built on presentation. The discussion was brokered with proposals specific to gathering experience, inputs, lessons and challenges, and was organized in five panels: 1) lessons and challenges on collaboration with authorities; 2) lessons and challenges related to impact and efforts to transform regulations and institutions; 3) good practice in risk analysis and management; 4) work with research journalists and 5) documenting, monitoring and evaluating strategies of ALAC work. Adding to the efforts for feedback to the findings of the assessment and establishing a fruitful dialogue among peers, the ALAC assumed clear commitments during the discussion at the instance of CEDDET.

This report presents a summary of the assessment and organizes information to account for the challenges, good practices and lessons learned, in a succinct, comparative way, on the basis of the themes discussed and feedback provided during the meeting in July, 2014.

1. Questionnaire used for initial assessment interviews

The project to develop a learning and horizontal exchange platform on the work of the Advocacy and Legal Advice Centers (ALACs) seeks to draw lessons from the work of European and American ALACs and strengthen their institutional capacity to engage vulnerable population groups, support citizen anti-corruption efforts and lead effective advocacy and transformation strategies on security and access to justice. The first tool to develop this platform is a comparative assessment of institutional and context-related challenges, lessons and milestones achieved thus far. We will carry out interviews with key staff in different countries, using the following set of questions as guidelines, with a focus on three primary areas of concern:

1. Institutional development and consolidation of the Center
2. Risk assessment and security strategies
3. Stakeholder engagement, collaboration and advocacy

Questions related to institutional development and consolidation of the Center

1) How long has the Advocacy and Legal Advice Center been in operation? How is it structured and staffed? What different types of work does it do, and what are its priorities? How does the Center relate to the rest of the Programs in the organization?

2) Is the center funded for all aspects of its work? What are its sources of income? How is prospective and financial planning for the Center's operations carried out? What kind of branding and audience outreach have you carried out?

3) What have been the most salient obstacles and challenges in the growth and institutional development of the Center? What have been the most salient operational challenges? How have these challenges been met?

4) Does the Center have performance standards? How does it assess client / user satisfaction? How does it assess results, outcomes and impact? Please share with us what you do to monitor and assess the results of the Center, and the three most important lessons from its operation.

Questions related to risk assessment and security strategies

5) Does the Center work on issues related to corruption in security forces, and policing? Does it have an interest in this work?

6) Does the Center work directly with people or groups in conditions of vulnerability?

Does the Center have a working definition of 'vulnerability'? How did it develop this definition?

7) Do any of the following factors prevent access to the Center from target users? Fear of retaliation, lack of trust, lack of resources to personally reach the Center and/or collect the evidence.

8) Is there a gender imbalance in access to the services provided by the Center? Do men and women file complaints at about the same ratio? Are women more exposed to risks when filing a complaint or reporting a corruption case?

9) Have you and / or the staff in the center had any formal training on assessing risk and developing a security protocol for protection of its staff and its users? Do you have the need / interest in receiving training on the subject?

10) How does the Center process cases? Does the Center have a protocol to assess risk? How does the center assess risk when opening a case?

11) What type of victims does the Center usually work with? Do Center users include marginalized people or communities, migrants and / or refugees?

12) How does the center develop security plans and strategies? Does it consider users / clients in these plans and strategies, or are they only for Center staff?

13) What have been the most salient obstacles and challenges related to the security of Center staff? How have these challenges been met?

14) What have you learned from thinking about and operationalizing security for the Center?

Questions related to advocacy and stakeholder engagement

15) What types of advocacy activities and strategies does the Center undertake?

16) Does the Center use cases for advocacy? How does the Center transform 'documentation' of cases into evidence? And how does the Center use this evidence?

17) Does the Center, by itself or through the National Chapter, have a relationship with media outlets and journalists? How does the Center articulate media and dissemination strategies?

18) How does the Center define and plan its stakeholder engagement strategies? How does it define its advocacy strategies?

19) What kind of relationship and collaboration does the Center have with different authorities? What drives these relationships? And what have been the major challenges stemming from them?

20) What have you learned from your collaborative work with and contestation of authorities? What have you learned from the Center's advocacy efforts?

21) Please share with us the most successful advocacy, policy and transformation achievements the Center has had in its history, and the factors driving these results.

2 Agenda for the meeting in Buenos Aires

On July 16 through the 18, 2014, The *EUROsociAL Programme*, and the CEDDET Foundation will facilitate a meeting for a group of experienced Advocacy and Legal Advice Centers from Latin America and Europe. This meeting is one of the elements of technical assistance stemming from EUROsociAL's program on *Transparency and the fight against Corruption* in the region.

The overarching goal of the meeting is to strengthen the capacities in the Advocacy and Legal Advice Centers (henceforth ALACs) to process corruption claims, to establish effective collaboration with State authorities, drive advocacy strategies to transform the oversight and accountability systems in each country, and incorporate proven monitoring and evaluation tools in their day to day work. The meeting will create a space for discussion and feedback leading to the exchange of good practices and lessons learned between ALACs, with the support and facilitation of CEDDET Foundation and the *Transparency International* (henceforth TI) Secretariat. On these bases, CEDDET Foundation seeks to promote more effective and secure conditions leading to citizen demand against corruption in key sectors in Latin America, and to strengthen the capacity of ALACs in the region to drive strategic changes in the norms and institutions for addressing and preventing corruption.

The specific objectives of the meeting include:

1) To identify, document and discuss good practices relating to:
    1. Promoting, filing and managing citizen complaints;
    2. the creation of risk assessment and security protocols when processing citizen complaints;
    3. the crafting of long term relationships with authorities, media and independent journalists, to enable collaboration, strategic advocacy campaigns and case resolution;
    4. leading intervention strategies to address the systemic problems underlying corruption, including strategic litigation, legal reforms and the adoption of policies and specific institutional mechanisms

2) Develop specific capacities in participating ALACs to
    1. Identify risk factors and develop security protocols, plans and strategies;
    2. Promote and process cases linked to security institutions and social programs aimed at vulnerable population groups;
    3. Identify and seize collaboration opportunities when relating to media and investigative journalists
    4. Propose and steer successful strategies to change oversight and corruption related norms, institutions and practices

3) Strengthen the dialogue and horizontal exchange of experience and lessons between ALACs.

4) Improve the security conditions of citizens filing corruption related complaints and ALAC staff

5) Strengthen the collaboration with judicial authorities, whistleblowing protection agencies, audit institutions and other oversight bodies.

The proposed agenda for discussion is based on a diagnostic assessment commissioned by CEDDET Foundation to an expert who has interviewed participating ALAC staff. The document identifies key areas of interest to ALACs, good practices, lessons from the field and specific recommendations to strengthen ALAC capacities. The findings of this assessment will be presented on the first day. Then five discussion panels will be set up to discuss key themes in more detail, allowing the ALACs responsible for good practices and lessons to speak to what they have learned, and enabling a direct dialogue.

These panels will follow a facilitated discussion methodology, with an appointed facilitator making a short presentation of the topic under discussion, and asking specific questions from participating ALAC representatives to trigger a dialogue. ALACS for each panel have been selected based on their experience, areas of strength and good practices identified by the assessment. After two rounds of discussion by ALACs addressing questions, facilitators will open the floor to engage all participants in a broader discussion.

The **five discussion panels** for the meeting, at this stage, are:

1. *Lessons from managing anticorruption claims: collaboration with authorities and long term strategies to address the challenges of fielding highly specialized legal support.* Facilitated by Jorge Romero León.
   Countries presenting in Panel: Ireland, Hungary, Argentina, Venezuela, El Salvador

2. *The challenges of effective collaboration and advocacy against corruption. Strategies for moving from the defense of cases to systemic reform.* Facilitated by Jacopo Gamba
   Countries presenting in Panel: Czech Republic, Argentina, Guatemala and El Salvador

3. *Good practices in risk analysis and the creation of spaces to discuss security plans and protocols.* Facilitated by Luciana Torchiaro.
   Countries presenting in Panel: Ireland, Honduras

4. *Why work with investigative journalists—and how to go about it. Lessons and challenges*. Facilitated by Mariya Gorbanova
   Countries presenting in Panel: Ireland, Honduras, Guatemala and Venezuela

5. *Good practice in the creation of spaces for institutional learning and feedback. How do ALACs document and monitor stakeholder engagement and advocacy? How do we assess results?* Facilitated by Jorge Romero León
   Countries presenting in Panel: Honduras, Argentina, Guatemala, Czech Republic and Hungary

In addition to the thematic discussion sessions, which are the core of the meeting, the proposed agenda considers two spaces:

Sessions to discuss the support ALACs can receive in topics related to security, risk analysis, people engagement, monitoring and evaluation; with specific questions to address in group discussion, and space to get ALACs response, reaction and feedback.

Short presentations by ALACs of country context and their work. These presentations will allow ALACs to present on their own terms, independently of the questions we ask them to address in the facilitated discussions. The expert facilitating the meeting believes this space is important to give ALACs space for presenting what they want, and for all participants to become more familiar with each country context. Because the presentations are independent from thematic discussions, we will allot spaces by lottery, and group presentations in four spaces throughout the meeting.

Given the importance of monitoring the results of the discussion, a Fundación CEDDET expert will facilitate a session on 'next steps' at the end of the meeting, to round up discussion, identify key items that can be followed up, specific action points, commitments and monitoring mechanisms. These will be incorporated in the meeting report that will expound and complement the assessment prepared for the meeting.

Addenda II. Bibliography – References and support documents used in the diagnostic assessment

II.1. Reference documents prepared by the International Secretariat and cooperation agencies, consulted in the preparation of diagnosis. The name at the end of the reference is the name under which the documents are available for consultation through request to CEDDET foundation.

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II.2. Center specific reference documents made available to researcher for the diagnostic assessment consultation. The name at the end of the reference is the name under which the documents are available for consultation through request to CEDDET foundation.

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Hy, 2013.   English Summary of Hungary ALAC reports 2012 and 2013. ASD6-Hungary-ALACSummaryAchievements-ENG-2013.docx

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V, 2014.   Manual to report acts of corruption, Venezuela, 2014. ASD8-VENEZUELA-ManualCorrupcion-2014.pdf

V, 2014b   Manual to report police corruption, Venezuela, 2014. ASD8b-VENEZUELA-ManualCorrupcionPolicial-2014.pdf

Addenda III. Directory of ALACs that participated in the Buenos Aires Meeting

Hungary Advocacy and Legal Advice Center
Merj Tenni!
Falk Miksa utca 30 - Budapest 1055
Coordinator: Aliz Szloboda
Email:aliz.szloboda@transparency.hu
Email: jogsegely@transparency.hu
Phone: Sólo en línea
Website: http://www.transparency.hu/

Czech Republic Advocacy and Legal Advice Center
Právní poradna Transparency International - Česká republika
Sokolovská 143 - 180 00 Praha 8
Coordinator: Petr Leyer
Email: poradna@transparency.cz
Phone: 00420 773 284 385
Website: http://www.transparency.cz/,
http://www.transparency.cz/legal-advice-centre/

Ireland Advocacy and Legal Advice Center
Transparency International (Ireland) '- Speak Up' helpline
The Capel Building - Dublin 7
Coordinator: Susheela Math
Email: helpline@transparency.ie
Phone: 1800 844 866
Website: www.speakup.ie

Argentina Advocacy and Legal Advice Center
Fundación Poder Ciudadano
Piedras 547 - Ciudad de Buenos Aires (CP 1070)
Coordinator: German Emanuele
Email: coordinador@centroalac.org.ar
Phone: 0800-222-2684
Website: http://poderciudadano.org/denuncia/

El Salvador Advocacy and Legal Advice Center
Fundación Nacional para el Desarrollo - FUNDE
Calle Arturo Ambrogi # 411, entre 103 y 105 Avenida Norte
Col. Escalón, San Salvador - El Salvador
Coordinator: Roberto Burgos
Email: roberto.burgos@funde.org
Phone: (503) 2209-5300
Website: http://www.funde.org/categories/alac-el-salvador

Guatemala Advocacy and Legal Advice Center
Acción Ciudadana
Avenida Reforma 12-01 zona 10 Edificio Reforma Montufar, nivel 17
Ciudad de Guatemala
Coordinator: David Gaitan
Email: davidgaitan@accionciudadana.org.gt
Email: alac@accionciudadana.org.gt
Phone: 1801 8111011
Website: http://www.accionciudadana.org.gt/denuncias/

Centro de Asistencia Legal Anticorrupción en Honduras
Asociación para una Sociedad más Justa
Residencial El Trapiche, Segunda etapa, bloque B, casa #25 - Tegucigalpa, FM
Coordinator: Ludim Ayala
Email: layala.asj@gmail.com
Email: info@alachonduras.com
Phone: 2235 2063 / 2235 2231
Website: http://alachonduras.com/

Centro de Asistencia Legal Anticorrupción en Venezuela
Transparencia Venezuela
Av. Andrés Eloy Blanco. Edif. Cámara de Comercio de Caracas. Piso 2. Ofic. 2-15
Los Caobos – Caracas - Venezuela
Coordinator: Gregorio Riera
Email: gregorioriera@gmail.com
Email: info@alacvenezuela.org
Phone: 0212-312-26-29 / 0412-312-26-29 / 0416-612-26-29/ 0414-312-26-29
Website: http://www.alacvenezuela.org, http://transparencia.org.ve/denuncia/

More information at: http://www.transparency.org/getinvolved/report

EUROsociAL is a regional cooperation programme between the European Union and Latin America for the promotion of social cohesion through support for national public policies and the strengthening of the institutions that put them into practice. EUROsociAL aims to promote a European-Latin American dialogue about public policies surrounding social cohesion. Its aim is to contribute to reform and implementation processes in ten key areas of public policy in certain thematic areas selected for their potential impact on social cohesion. The instrument provided is that of institutional cooperation or peer-to-peer learning: the exchange of experiences and technical advising between European and Latin American public institutions.

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