

ANTI-CORRUPTION HELPDESK

PROVIDING ON-DEMAND RESEARCH TO HELP FIGHT CORRUPTION

ANTI-CORRUPTION COALITIONS: EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS AND CAPACITY BUILDING

QUERY

Can you provide a brief analysis of at least three coalitions that are active in the EU in the area of anti-corruption, preferably with links to Eastern European countries? The analysis should also include: (i) some success stories in terms of lobbying for fighting against corruption where the coalition had to challenge government representatives; (ii) capacity building skills and training techniques of the members of the coalition (or the lead member).

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CAVEAT

There is very limited publicly available information regarding successful anti-corruption coalitions. There is also limited information on training techniques and skills employed by these organisations.

SUMMARY

Coalitions are considered to be an effective mechanism to achieve results in the fight against corruption. However, the literature highlights that there are no agreed-upon indicators to measure the success of a coalition. Existing studies show that their effectiveness and usefulness depend on a series of factors, such as the capacity of individual members, the capacity of the coalition per se, including its technical and managerial skills, and the outcomes/impact of the coalition's work.

Several Eastern European countries have operating anti-corruption coalitions, but for the great majority of them, there is insufficient evidence of their work and impact. Coalition 2000 in Bulgaria seems to be the most successful documented case in the region. While the coalition no longer exists, during its time, it managed to effectively build on the knowledge and expertise of its members to achieve important policy changes in the area of anti-corruption. In Poland, for more than a decade, the largest non-governmental organisations in the country have been working together to hold politicians to account with regard to their anti-corruption commitments. The coalition successfully put corruption on the election agenda, helping to make campaigns more competitive and transparent.

1 ANTI-CORRUPTION COALITIONS: CAN WE MEASURE SUCCESS?

Overview

Coalitions can be defined as “self-conscious, freely-organised, active and lasting alliances of elites, organisations, and citizens sharing partially overlapping political goals” (Kpundeh *in* World Bank 2008).

Coalitions may offer a strong platform for like-minded organisations or individuals to pursue common reform goals, leveraging the collective force of their members (World Bank 2008). Within this framework, coalitions may offer increased access to decision-makers, an opportunity to broaden public support, and increase visibility and credibility of the work conducted by coalition-members. They are also seen as an effective means to address a problem or amplify impact (Ayer and Bunn 2004).

However, very little is known about the real impact of these coalitions. The literature highlights that there are no agreed-upon indicators to measure the success of a coalition. They are complex organisations, and studies conducted so far have shown that their effectiveness and usefulness depend on a series of factors such as the capacity of an individual organisation to be a good coalition member, the capacity of the coalition *per se*, and the outcomes/impact of the coalition’s work.

In the absence of studies analysing the effectiveness of existing anti-corruption coalitions operating in Eastern European countries, this answer provides an overview of a framework that can contribute to measuring the success of coalitions, focusing on assessing the capacity of a coalition and the outcomes and impact of its work. The second section provides examples of anti-corruption coalitions, and an assessment of their achievements and main skills developed based on the framework presented. Last, is an overview of capacity building activities.

For more information regarding the process of building and managing coalitions, please refer to previous Helpdesk answers: *Mobilising broad anti-corruption coalitions* and *Building and managing coalitions* (available upon request).

Measuring the capacity of a coalition

There is little consensus on the characteristics that are likely to lead to a coalition’s success, but the capacity of a coalition is likely to influence its achievements. Research points to the following factors as instrumental (TCC Group 2011):

- Leadership capacity: coalitions that have a clear purpose and goal are most likely to succeed. In addition, the existence of a core leadership team and a transparent and clear decision-making process are considered important.
- Adaptive capacity: coalitions that have the capacity to monitor and adapt to the advocacy and policy environment have greater chances of realising their objectives. The ability to foster inter-member non-coalition cooperation and plan actions is also key.
- Management capacity: effective management of member participation, clear division of tasks and roles, record-keeping, and regular communication are also measures of a coalition’s capacity.
- Technical capacity: expertise and knowledge of the issues the coalition works on are essential. In addition, coalitions have to implement advocacy strategies, such as issue analysis, raising public awareness and lobbying. As such, campaigning and communication skills, advocacy skills, research and monitoring skills, among others, are fundamental.

Measuring the outcome and impact of the coalition work

A report published by the TCC Group on coalitions (2011) stresses that the success of a coalition includes a number of interim achievements such as network development, skill building, and incremental gains in policy development. Against this backdrop, an evaluation of the work of a coalition should assess the extent to which the coalition has made progress on achieving its goals, for example, by accomplishing policy change, raising awareness of corruption in a given sector, establishing a good relationship with

government bodies and policy-makers, among others, as well as assessing the extent to which the coalition had improved its legitimacy and relevance (value proposition).

Within this framework, the TCC Group developed a list of indicators that can be used for evaluating the work of a coalition. Table 3 below summarises these indicators.

Table 3
Indicators for Evaluating Coalitions

Goal Destination	Value Proposition
• Policy adoption/Policy blocking	• Increased coalition capacity (e.g., clarity of vision; ability to manage/raise resources; better policy analysis; etc.)
• Increased visibility/knowledge of issue	• Increased visibility of coalition
• Better relationships with policymakers and allies and reduced enemies	• Increased membership
• Development of good research (increased data)	• Increased quality/prestige/engagement of membership
• Writing/testifying on effective policy	• Increased collaboration between coalition members outside the coalition
• Overcoming important "sticking" points in moving an agenda/policy	• Merging/strategic relationship with other coalitions
• Activation of broader constituency	• More rapid and organized ability to respond
• Increased public will	• Number of different "faces" that the coalition could credibly put forward to advance the issue

Source: TCC Group 2011

The next section uses the above described framework to analyse the capacity and achievements of two coalitions in Eastern Europe. Examples of other coalitions in the region are also provided.

2 EXAMPLES OF ANTI-CORRUPTION COALITIONS

There is still very little publicly available information or assessments on the work conducted by anti-corruption coalitions across the globe. Information on capacity building and training conducted to strengthen these coalitions is also very scarce. Using available information regarding the work of two anti-corruption coalitions in Eastern Europe, this section analyses the capacity of each of them as well as their main achievements and successes in advocating for anti-corruption reforms.

Coalition 2000 Bulgaria

Coalition 2000 was an anti-corruption coalition in Bulgaria formed in 1997 as a result of an initiative of

the Center for the Study of Democracy and a number of other Bulgarian NGOs with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The coalition was officially launched in 1998 and is one of the most well documented anti-corruption coalitions in the literature. The coalition no longer exists, but some of its projects and initiatives are still being carried out by former coalition members.

Capacity of the coalition

The success of a coalition depends to a great extent on its capacity to effectively articulate, plan, mobilise, and campaign/advocate for its ideals and goals. This requires great leadership, managerial and technical skills. The available information on the establishment and operation of Coalition 2000 shows a strong leadership capacity. The coalition had clear purpose and goals ("to enhance the awareness, adoption and practical implementation of democratic values such as transparency, trust and integrity"), and a pre-defined and transparent decision-making process.

The institutional structure of the coalition consisted of a policy forum, a steering committee and a secretariat. The policy forum consisted of approximately 50 members with representatives from civil society, the Bulgarian government and international organisations. The forum met once a year to review the work of the coalition as well as plan future activities. The forum was also responsible for the development of an Anti-Corruption Action Plan for Bulgaria and for ensuring consistency and consensus across the work of the coalition. It was also an important tool to reach out to different stakeholders, analyse relevant topics and define the direction the work of the coalition should take.

The steering committee was tasked with the coordination of activities and output of the coalition. The secretariat was responsible for the day to day operational management, logistical support and reporting. The Center for the Study of Democracy served as the secretariat. The fact that the centre was a well-structured and experienced organisation certainly contributed to the success of Coalition 2000.

Coalition 2000 also showed great adaptive, management and technical capacities. It received financial support from USAID as well as technical

support from other international organisations. The coalition also built partnerships with journalists and other organisations in the public and private sector to support thematic campaigns and projects. It was also flexible enough to adapt its objectives and goals to current events, taking advantage, for example, of governmental reforms or country-wide discussions to push for related anti-corruption issues.

While it is not clear what main methods were used, the coalition also invested in technical capacity building, particularly with regard to knowledge and expertise in their areas of work. Expert groups were formed around the different projects and initiatives. The coalition published several papers and guidelines that were used to support its advocacy efforts.

Measuring the outcome and impact of the coalition work: advocacy achievements

As mentioned, the success of a coalition is incremental, as are its interim achievements. Within this framework, assessing whether a coalition managed to achieve its goals can serve as an indicator of its success.

In the case of Coalition 2000, the literature highlights several occasions when the coalition successfully intervened in a reform process, managing to positively influence the government's decisions. The coalition was also successful in raising public awareness of corruption in a number of areas, increasing understanding of corruption (by publishing reports and conducting assessments, including the corruption monitoring system, organising discussion roundtables and events), establishing better relationship with members of the government, as well as activating a broader constituency by constantly publishing on key topics and organising public campaigns.

There are two projects that exemplify the above-mentioned achievements. The first is related to the adoption of anti-corruption education in Bulgarian secondary schools. In 2004, the coalition's corruption monitoring assessment pointed to significant corruption within higher and secondary institutions in Bulgaria. The fact was corroborated by frequent media articles on the issue. In addition, the government was planning an education reform for

that year, and international organisations were also heavily focused on supporting the education sector in the country.

The coalition took advantage of the momentum and put together a group of experts to discuss and suggest how to best introduce anti-corruption education in Bulgarian schools in a way that students would better understand the role and functions of the public sector in the country, while also becoming better informed and active citizens in the future.

The coalition organised a series of events and discussions with the government and also sought to widen its partnerships to include key stakeholders such as students, parents, teachers and other civil society organisations.

As part of its advocacy efforts, Coalition 2000 in cooperation with partner NGOs from all over the country, developed and tested a set of instruments for instruction (textbooks, online teaching and study materials, manuals, teaching programmes), both for university and secondary school level. This approach helped to demonstrate to the public administration the relevance and importance of introducing anti-corruption concepts to the school curricula.

The coalition successfully influenced the government, which, towards the end of 2004, introduced anti-corruption classes in the official curricula of Bulgarian secondary schools. The coalition continued to play a key role in shaping and implementing the project. The materials and guides produced by the coalition were adopted by the government and used in schools¹. The coalition also supported the training of teachers. Later, anti-corruption was introduced as a subject in some higher education courses, including in pedagogy courses.

For more information on the introduction of anti-corruption education in Bulgarian schools, please see [ODI's case study](#) and the [IACC workshop report](#).

¹ [The Corruption in 100 Answers manual](#) was offered to school teachers to facilitate the teaching of an elective course on anti-corruption, introduced by the Ministry of Science and Education in the autumn of 2004. Two [online manuals](#) were also developed: a manual on anti-corruption and citizenship for students from the 9th to the 12th grade, developed by the Paidea Foundation, and a manual for assisting the teaching of anti-corruption in secondary schools, developed by the association Elisaveta Klark and Penka Kasabova.

The second project resulted in the establishment of local ombudsmen throughout the country. Between 2003 and 2004, the coalition ran a small grants project to support the work and the development of local civil society groups.

The project's goal was to increase transparency and accountability of local authorities, particularly with regard to the delivery of services, public procurement processes and privatisation. Building on several of these local initiatives and taking advantage of the social pressure environment created by them, the coalition started a campaign for the establishment of local ombudsman offices.

Local ombudsman offices were created by the government and still play an instrumental role in facilitating awareness raising, providing training and education, as well as collecting and disseminating key public information.

For more information please see ERCAS report: [A Diagnosis of Corruption in Bulgaria](#).

Anti-Corruption Coalition of NGOs (AKOP) – Poland

In 2003, the Anti-corruption Coalition of Non-governmental Organisations (Antykorupcyjna Koalicja Organizacji Pozarządowych: AKOP) was created as the result of a successful campaign initiated in 2001 by four Polish non-governmental organisations: Stefan Batory Foundation, the Foundation for Social Communications, the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights and the Polish branch of Transparency International (the latter is now closed).

The campaign targeted candidates to the Polish parliament and consisted of collecting signatures from citizens demanding clear and concrete proposals from candidates and political parties regarding anti-corruption measures. The petition called on candidates to clearly state what they would do during their mandate to fight corruption.

Building on the success of the initiative, the involved organisations decided to formally establish a coalition that would be responsible for monitoring candidates and political parties' anti-corruption promises.

The coalition still operates and currently has seven members. In addition to monitoring anti-corruption promises, the coalition regularly publishes monitoring reports, organises events to discuss findings and engages in policy/decision-making processes related to anti-corruption.

Capacity of the coalition

There is very little information on how the coalition operates, making it difficult to assess its capacity with regard to leadership, management and adaptation, among others. Available resources relate the success of the coalition with the capacity enjoyed by each of the member organisations. When the coalition was formed, the organisations involved were already strong, with great experience and knowledge on governance and anti-corruption issues, on research, and on advocacy and campaigning. It is, however, not clear whether additional training and capacity building has been provided to members.

Another factor that is considered to have contributed to the success of the coalition is related to its very clear and narrow purpose and objectives. AKOP has set itself the goal of checking how politicians elected in the parliamentary elections fulfil their election promises on tackling corruption and work towards raising the standards of public life.

Measuring the outcome and impact of the coalition work: achievements

Realising that Polish politicians and political parties were doing very little to improve the country's anti-corruption framework, the group of NGOs developed an initiative that would raise public awareness of corruption, mobilise citizens, and demand change from the country's politicians and what is expected from them.

To achieve that, the group made use of a range of advocacy and citizen mobilisation tools, including petitions, constructive engagement with political parties and candidates through a consultation process, participation in public hearings, organisation of debates and publication of reports and articles on the issue.

For example, during the 2001-2005 election cycle, the coalition sent a questionnaire to political parties

enquiring about their anti-corruption agenda once in government. The questionnaire included questions such as: what will you do with respect to the reduction of corruption if you govern? What will you do with respect to the reduction of corruption if you are in opposition? How will you proceed with your members who violate the law? How will you act if your members are in a situation of a conflict of interest? (AKOP website)

The coalition received responses from 16 electoral committees, and their responses were then discussed at a conference organised by the coalition. The coalition also published a brochure with all commitments made by the political parties, and every year it organises events with politicians to discuss the achievements made. By the end of the term, a group of experts made a final assessment of the commitments. This approach has been repeated in subsequent elections (in 2005, 2007 and 2012).

While the results of the promises successfully kept are mixed, a series of achievements were seen to be as a result of the coalition's work in subsequent elections. For instance, political parties and politicians were encouraged/felt obliged to produce clear anti-corruption programmes, explain to voters why and how the programme will be implemented, as well as account for their fulfilment. The initiative has therefore also contributed to raising competition and transparency in elections.

The coalition was also successful in raising the awareness of voters as well as introducing anti-corruption as a key topic during elections. The media actively covered political parties' anti-corruption agenda and the coalitions' reports regarding their implementation.

Moreover, the coalition has played an important role in establishing true civic oversight by holding politicians to account.

More information is available at the Institute of Public Affairs' [report](#).

Other examples

NGO Coalition for a Clean Parliament - Romania

In 2004, 12 Romanian non-governmental

organisations led by the Romanian Academic Society created the Coalition for a Clean Parliament (CCP) with the aim of raising awareness regarding the quality of candidates to elected offices in the country.

The coalition started by establishing criteria to assess whether a candidate was fit or unfit for occupying public office, including whether they had been already accused of corruption or conflicts of interests on the basis of published verifiable evidence. These criteria were then discussed with the main political parties in the country and used to assess registered candidates. With the results of the assessment, the coalition put together a "black list" containing all candidates who met some or all of the criteria and were therefore considered unfit.

The black list was sent to the political parties which were asked to analyse each case and decide whether to withdraw or maintain the candidate or submit appeals. After the consultation, the coalition published flyers containing the final black list of candidates. This gained significant visibility and media coverage. Almost half of the candidates listed were either dropped from the ballot or not elected. The other half of the candidates on the list were elected to parliament.

More information is available on the [Romanian Academic Society website](#).

Anti-Corruption Alliance – Moldova

The Anti-corruption Alliance is a coalition of non-governmental organisations in Moldova with the mission to prevent and fight corruption through influencing public policies, informing the public, promoting governance transparency as well as the consolidation of the alliance's members.

The coalition has been involved in several campaigns and has contributed to shaping policy-making in the country. Recently, the coalition submitted specific recommendation to improve draft laws being proposed by the government in the areas of education, health care, elections and the judiciary. The coalition has also successfully conducted campaigns on interests and asset declaration.

More information is available at [Anti-Corruption Alliance website](#).

3 CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

Overview

As mentioned previously, the success of a coalition depends to a great extent on its technical capacity. In addition to management and leadership skills, NGO coalitions working to influence government decisions also need advocacy, communication and resource-mobilisation skills. In fact, both the literature and the examples analysed above show that the capacity of each member organisation seems to be essential to ensuring an effective coalition.

Against this backdrop, the establishment of coalitions or alliances has been used as a means to address capacity issues of individual organisations. By bringing together the strengths, skills and resources of different organisations, coalitions create a stronger force for change (Water Aid no year). As such, an appropriate diverse membership offers opportunities to learn and build capacity within each of the member organisations without the requirement of greater investment in training.

While the literature regarding capacity building for coalitions is scarce, training techniques used for individual NGOs are also relevant to support the development of coalitions' capacities. In any case, effective and meaningful capacity building initiatives require a good understanding of the coalition/member organisations' needs as well as of the context in which they operate (Upadhyay 2012).

There are several independent organisations offering training and toolkits to non-governmental organisations to support their advocacy work. Whereas the content of training courses and workshops are very context specific, the examples provided below offer a general overview of what areas are usually covered and the techniques used. Links to existing toolkits and guidelines are also provided.

Training examples

Advocacy involves "delivering evidence-based recommendations to decision makers, stakeholders and/or those who influence them. Advocacy is a

means of seeking change in governance, attitudes, power, social relations and institutional functions" (UNICEF 2010). Successful advocacy depends on a wide range of factors, including credibility of the organisation, skills of staff, access to financial resources, ability to build strategic partnerships and good planning (UNICEF 2010).

It may also involve a series of activities that require specific skills, such as research and publications, lobbying and negotiations, social mobilisation, campaigns, communications and media work, and the organisation of events, among others. Within this framework, there are several tools and techniques developed to support NGOs to effectively plan their advocacy strategy as well as build the necessary skills to successfully influence decision making.

Advocacy planning tools and techniques

An effective advocacy strategy requires understanding a series of issues that are context specific. Coalitions and organisations can be trained on how to best design an advocacy plan, including the various steps that should be taken, such as: (i) definition of the objective; (ii) understanding of the political context; (iii) identification of target audiences; (iv) development of a strategy; (v) analysis of internal capacity (skills and resources); (vi) monitoring, evaluation and learning (Water Aid no year).

For instance, the Democracy Center developed a tool to facilitate the design of advocacy plans ([Advocacy Strategy Planning Worksheet](#)), which contain a series of questions that can help organisations in defining the problem they want to tackle, the changes they want to seek, their target audience, potential advocacy partners, their message and timeline of actions and the resources needed.

Specific tools to help in each of the steps of the plan, such as stakeholder analysis, target analysis and political context analysis, are also available. Nash et al. (2006) published a [guide](#) containing an overview of a series of tools that have been designed to map political context. The tools selected by the authors cover various dimensions of political context, with some of them focusing on the mapping of power, others on the mapping of institutions, and others on state-society relations, political system, political culture and international integration, for example.

In Albania, the NGO [Partners Albania](#) offers coalition building and advocacy training. Among others, training on how to build an effective advocacy strategy (including tools to identify the relevant issues, target audience, build alliances and mobilise constituencies; and gain public support), developing facilitation, negotiation and conflict management skills, as well as improving internal and external communications (including a set of techniques for effective communication) are offered.

Lobbying tools and techniques

Lobbying is understood as the process of trying to directly influence decision makers, such as politicians and members of the government. It can be done through face-to-face meetings, letters, open meetings/public hearings, delivery of petitions and research reports, among others.

Lobbying training thus usually involves the development of communication and negotiation skills of lobbyists, how to behave during lobbying meetings, how to write letters or approach politicians, among others. Training on lobbying ethics is also instrumental to ensure transparency and fairness throughout the process.

For instance, the Change Agency, a not-for-profit organisation supporting effective community action, offers guidelines to improve coalitions' advocacy skills such as [tips and resources for lobbyists](#) (resources include, for example, guidance on how to get politicians' attention, how to write a letter to a politician and a lobbying workshop, among others).

Other tips and resources on how to lobby effectively are available in the Water Aid [Advocacy Source Book](#).

Public campaigning

Public campaigning usually involves activities aimed at engaging the public and mobilising visible support for the organisations' position/advocacy goals. It may involve petitions, online campaigns, demonstrations and other events. Communication skills and strategic use of research evidence for backing up the organisation's statements and recommendations is essential. Other technical training courses on how to

use specific software, social media and other resources can also make the campaign more effective.

Communications and media work

Effective communication and use of the media are instrumental for raising public awareness of the issues being advocated by the coalition, gaining public support and ultimately changing public attitudes and behaviour.

Communication training can cover a wide range of topics, such as how to write good press releases, how to make contact with journalists and media outlets, how to present information and research findings in an accessible language, how to target the message accordingly depending on the audience, dissemination strategies, public speaking training, how to develop user-friendly websites, produce and edit videos, among others.

Tips and resources are available at the [Water Aid Advocacy Source Book](#) and at the [INTRAC Advocacy and Campaigning Course Toolkit](#).

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