Project summary

Corruption risks are high in most humanitarian environments, but are exacerbated under acute crisis conditions and where large amounts of aid are delivered in resource-poor environments with weak institutions and integrity systems. In such highly challenging emergency contexts, humanitarian actors find it more difficult to ensure that aid is delivered for its intended purpose. While over the last few years the humanitarian community has become more aware of the risks of corruption in humanitarian responses, the need to enhance the integrity of humanitarian operations is not yet mainstreamed in the humanitarian strategic policy agenda. Transparency International (TI) has engaged with a range of humanitarian stakeholders to demonstrate how corruption can severely and adversely affect the quality, accountability and effectiveness of humanitarian operations since 2005. TI Kenya, leader of TI’s Humanitarian Aid Integrity Network, has carried out multi-stakeholder research and engagement to develop and pilot innovative solutions to enhance integrity and accountability in humanitarian responses in Kenya.

Bringing together TI’s anti-corruption expertise with the humanitarian research and policy experience of Humanitarian Outcomes and of Groupe Urgence, Réhabilitation et Développement, the Action will generate evidence-based knowledge of corruption risks and practical solutions in diverse but complex humanitarian contexts. Based on country-specific research and comparative analysis of corruption risks in complex emergencies with reduced humanitarian space (Afghanistan, Somalia), countries affected by massive inflows of refugees (Lebanon), and countries affected by large-scale public health emergencies (Guinea), the project will share good practice and lessons learned and develop recommendations and principles to enhance the integrity of humanitarian operations through multi-stakeholder engagement at the national, regional and global level.

Stakeholders engagement

The four case studies are conducted with the participation of a National Stakeholders group representing different actors (Governments institutions, donors’ agencies, UN agencies, Red Cross, International and National NGOs) involved in the humanitarian responses in those different contexts. Members of the National Stakeholders’ groups will be providing inputs and guidance to define the scope and recommendations of the case studies and comments on the findings through consultation forums and inputs to the draft reports.

A global stakeholders group including Donors agencies (DFID and ECHO, INGO networks (START, CaLP, CHS Alliance, ALNAP), UNOCHA, the Red Cross Movement, the Southern NGO network, the Inter Agency Standing Committee and Academia) will also provide inputs on the four case studies as well as to the comparative document. It will also advise the project team on advocacy opportunities and the dissemination of the research’s recommendations and findings.
Guinea consultation workshop—Results and recommendations

On 9th September, TI and Groupe URD convened the second stakeholders consultative workshop in Conakry to share the findings and discuss emerging recommendations from the study on the integrity of the Ebola response conducted in Guinea (and a mirror visit to Sierra Leone). François Grunewald, the Executive Director of Groupe URD presented the main results of the study. The report highlights that certain factors specific to the context of the Ebola response have contributed to reduce a number of corruption risks:

- Most of the NFIs distributed were very specialized goods (protection gears, gloves, boots, etc.) that had no real market value
- No incentive for populations to be on the beneficiary lists due to stigmatisation’s risks
- Efficient micro-finance mechanisms that facilitated financial transfers to beneficiaries
- Most of the response concentrated within the hands of a limited number of specialised institutions and agencies due to the danger of the response.

Other factors contributed to increase the risks on the integrity of the response:

- Rapid injection of large amount of aid resources that have to spend quickly
- Countries with weak rule of law, oversight institutions and endemic corruption
- Gaps created by humanitarian aid channelled in substitution and with poor coordination with authorities (especially in Sierra Leone).
- Logistics and structural support prone to diversion and abuse
- Coordination between agencies affected by competition for donors’ resources
- Lack of access to certain geographical areas due to security risks for aid workers due to people’s perceptions and fears about the Ebola response.
- Challenges in providing information and communicating with populations
- Development poorly designed and potentially useless infrastructures
- Risks in the management of human resources in contexts where employment is scarce and incomes are low
- Political instrumentalisation of corruption allegations
- Important presence of pharmaceutical and medical companies conducting research on Ebola without sharing information with people or relevant National authorities.

The report is also highlighting a number of mechanisms in place to manage risks to the integrity of the response. This includes risks in finance, procurement, distribution and utilization of aid, equipments and transport, infrastructures, medical research and people’s perception of an “Ebola business.”

The stakeholders group also had a chance to revise and rate the recommendations in terms of their feasibility but also in terms of their potential impact on the integrity of the response.

Southern Somalia case study stakeholders workshop

On 29th August, TI and Humanitarian Outcomes convened a consultative workshop to discuss the findings and recommendations of the Southern Somalia case study. Representatives of Government, donors, UN, International and National NGOs discussed the key findings of the research that pointed that corruption is pervasive in Southern Somalia and related operations in Kenya. The group discussed the concerns raised by the study around the incentives, systems and structures in which humanitarian aid is taking place, as well as the extent of the measures necessary to address corruption risks comprehensively at individual and inter-agency levels. Stakeholders also provided inputs and rated emerging recommendations that will be revised and sent for final feedback at the end of September before the report is being finalised. It was also agreed that the executive summary will be translated into Somali language facilitate the dissemination of the study.
**Field research in Afghanistan and Lebanon.**

**Afghanistan:** Humanitarian Outcomes and PTRO conducted interviews at the Provincial level (Nangarhar, Herat and Badakhshan provinces) and in Kabul. The draft report is being finalised and will be shared with members of the National and Global advisory groups at the end of October ahead of the consultative workshop planned in Kabul on 21 November.

**Lebanon:** Following the stakeholders’ workshop conducted in May 2016, Groupe URD conducted the field research in the following locations (Beirut area, Tripoli and surroundings, Beqaa valley, Zahle and Tyr). A total of 74 interviews were conducted during the reporting period. The inception report was also finalised in the weeks following the workshop and disseminated to stakeholders. The team is now conducting a few additional interviews and drafting the final report to be shared for feedback before the second consultative workshop scheduled in Beirut on 10 November 2016.

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**Syrian refugee “settlement” in the Bekaa valley © Groupe URD**

**What is next?**

**Afghanistan and Lebanon case studies draft reports and stakeholders’ consultation workshops**

In November, stakeholders consultative workshops will be conducted in Beirut (10 November) and in Kabul (21 November) to discuss the key findings of the Lebanon and Afghanistan case studies and to discuss and agree on key recommendations to enhance integrity in aid operations in those countries.

**Speaking at ...**

- **Inter Agency Working Group Regional learning event, Nairobi (28 October):** Presentation and launch of the Southern Somalia case study
- **CHS Alliance Annual Meeting, Geneva (4 November):** Panel discussion “A transparent humanitarian aid system that listens, learns and acts” with DanChurchAid (DCA), Christian Aid and Ground Truth Towards
- **ASC AAP PSEA: Brown bag meeting, Geneva (7 November)** with members to discuss emerging recommendations from studies conducted by CREATE and LLA (Listen Learn and Act) project, implemented by DCA and Save the Children.

**Starting the comparative analysis**

In December, Transparency International, Groupe URD and Humanitarian Outcomes will meet for two days in Berlin to have a first discussion on the findings, main commonalities and differences emerging from the findings of the four case studies. This will form the basis of the comparative analysis and set a draft structure for the overview document that will be shared and discussed with members of the Global Advisory Group in the beginning of next year.