REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
WORK PROGRAM 2018-2020

A.   INTRODUCTION

The Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia-Pacific's (ACI) objective as defined in the Strategic Principles and Operational Activities (2009) is to serve as a regional forum for supporting national and multilateral efforts to address and reduce corruption in Asia and the Pacific, primarily through the effective implementation of UNCAC. The ACI seeks to achieve this goal through capacity building based on peer-learning, mutual support and exchange of expertise, while taking into account the geographical and developmental diversity of its members[1]; demands on members' human and financial resources; and the need to provide value-added in view of the functions and roles of other multilateral anticorruption bodies.

This report summarizes implementation of the Work Program for 2018-2020 in the ACI's following key areas for 2018-2020:

(1)   Governance of the ACI
(2)   Regional Conference
(3)   Public Integrity Network
(4)   Business Integrity
(5)   Training, workshop, webinars
(6)   Reports, publications, and dissemination
(7)   Financing the ACI

B.   GOVERNANCE OF THE ANTICORRUPTION INITIATIVE

Between 2018 and 2020, the ACI held three Steering Group Meetings, two Public Integrity Meetings, one Business Integrity Meeting, one Regional Conference, one training, one workshop, three webinars; and produced one publication, one evaluation review, and launched the development of two reports.

Accession of New Member Countries

An important commitment in the Strategic Principles is the enhancing of the ACI's ownership by its members, particularly by its members playing a more prominent role in developing the strategies and activities, and in its operation. For the past years, several countries of the region have been participating as observers and have expressed interest or are exploring an opportunity to join ACI. The membership mechanism is such that the ACI Secretariat receives a formal request from a candidate country to join ACI, the request is forwarded to members for their endorsement. Once membership has been approved by members, the ACI Secretariat will advise the candidate country on the ACI members' acceptance and request to designate a national contact person with sufficient authority and capacity to oversee the implementation of its country's anti-corruption reforms and represent its country in the ACI's events and activities. The new member will be announced and welcomed at the next Steering Group meeting.

In 2019-2020, the ACI Secretariat engaged in a series of consultations with the members and potential countries that have expressed interest in becoming a member of the ACI. In 2020, the ACI members

---

[1] The 33 member countries and economies of the ACI are: Afghanistan; Australia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Cambodia; Cook Islands; Fiji; Georgia; Hongkong, China; India; Indonesia; Japan; Kazakhstan; Korea; Kyrgyz Republic; Macau, China; Malaysia; Mongolia; Nepal; Palau; Pakistan; Papua New Guinea; People's Republic of China; Philippines; Samoa; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Solomon Islands; Timor-Leste; Thailand; Vanuatu; and Viet Nam.

endorsed the joining of Azerbaijan and Georgia as new members expanding the ACI membership to 33 countries and economies.

23rd Steering Group Meeting (December 2019)

The 23rd Steering Group Meeting (23 SGM) was held on 5 December 2019 in Hanoi, Vietnam as part of the 10th Regional Conference on Preventing and Combating Corruption in Infrastructure Projects in Asia-Pacific. Sixty-five (65) participants composed of 30 participants from 16 out of the 31 members and of the ACI, advisory group, the ACI Secretariat, observer countries, and other organizations attended the 23 SGM.

The 23 SGM participants discussed the following topics[2]: 1) findings and recommendations from the external evaluation of the ACI; (2) status of the ACI's advisory group; (3) Integrity Review of Thailand; (4) reports on the third PIN and first BI meetings: (5) accession of the new ACI members; and (6) capacity development needs of the ACI members.

The highlights of the 23 SGM discussions are summarized below and more details are available in the 23 SGM Report[3]:

The **External Evaluation**[4] of the ACI found that it is (1) relevant, as its activities and outputs are helpful for member countries in their implementation of the UNCAC; (2) highly valued, as it is the only peer-learning network in Asia-Pacific; (3) complements rather than duplicates other anti-corruption initiatives and networks; and (4) effective in strengthening member countries' anti-corruption knowledge and capacity.

---

[2] 23 SGM Agenda is here: *https://events.development.asia/sites/default/files/course/2019/2019-steering-group-meeting-agenda-draft.pdf*
[3] 23 SGM Report is here:
https://events.development.asia/sites/default/files/course/2019/Report_SGM%20Vie.pdf
[4] External evaluation report -- *https://www.oecd.org/site/adboecdanti-corruptioninitiative/external-evaluation-final-report-27-december-2018.pdf*

The 23 SGM adopted a new governance arrangement, with the objective of adopting a new Work Programme and a revised Strategic Principles document in 2020, and to simplify both documents, upon consultation with members. Due to the exceptional circumstances that occurred in 2020, the consultation with member countries on the revision of the documents has not taken place. This issue will be addressed during the 2021-2023 mandate of the ACI.

Following the 22nd Steering Group's decision in 2017 to merge the Advisory and Steering Groups to simplify the ACI's governance, former members of the Advisory Group would now be invited to participate in Steering Group meetings as "partners", with an advisory role, with governments retaining member status and the exclusive competence to make decisions.

The Office of the Public Sector Development Commission in Thailand reported on the **Integrity Review of Thailand**, which started in 2016 as a country-scoping project supported by OECD under the ACI. The Review report[5] was launched in Bangkok and in Paris at the OECD Global Anti-Corruption & Integrity Forum in March 2018 by Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand Wissanu Krea-ngam. It was reported that the Integrity Review resulted in improved coordination on integrity policies among the designated institutions in Thailand, including the National Anti-Corruption Commission, the Public Sector Anti-Corruption Commission, and the Office of the Civil Service Commission, which exemplifies the whole-of-government approach on anti-corruption that Thailand is championing.

Steering Group members participated in a group discussion session to identify **capacity development needs** and to come up with a list of priority themes. The list of potential areas for capacity development activities including seminars and trainings are**:**

- Asset recovery
- Asset declaration
- Beneficial ownership
- Conflict of interest
- Political corruption
- Financial disclosure
- Investigation capacity building
- Integrity in customs and trade facilitation
- Audit for integrity
- Whistle-blower protection policy

- Integrity in education, health, natural resources management
- Integrity at the subnational level
- Integrity in civil services, code of conduct and ethics training
- Engaging civil society, media, youth in fight against corruption
- Anti-corruption public awareness raising and education
- Big data and Artificial Intelligence for Anti-corruption

---

[5] Integrity Review of Thailand -- *http://www.oecd.org/corruption-integrity/reports/oecd-integrity-review-of-thailand-9789264291928-en.html*
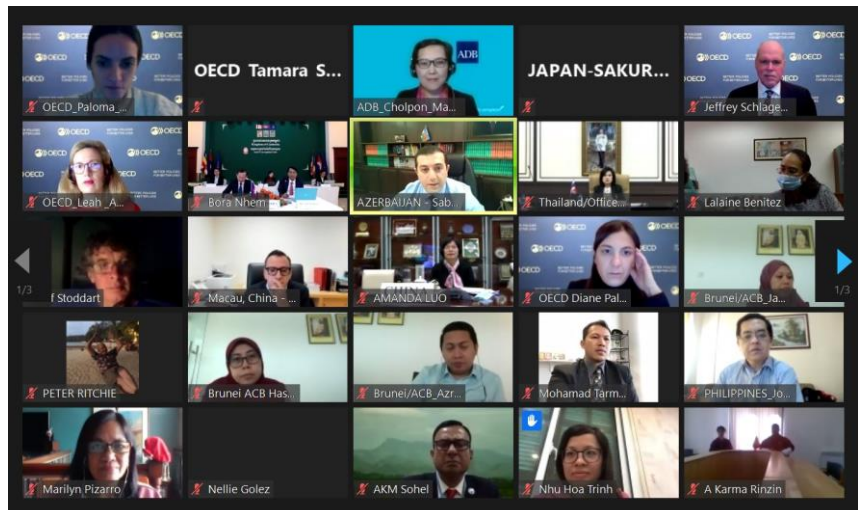
Group discussions among members resulted in the following list of capacity development priorities:

- Asset Declaration and Recovery
- Big Data and Artificial Intelligence for Anti-Corruption
- Investigative Capacity Building
- Investigation capacity building
- New Technologies
- Asset Recovery
- Integrity of the subnational level

- Engaging civil society
- Artificial intelligence
- Investigation and Prosecution capacity building
- Anti-corruption public awareness raising
- Concept/Country approach outline for drafting of laws as appropriate

24th Steering Group Meeting (December 2020)

A virtual 24th Steering Group Meeting (24 SGM) was held on 17 December 2020. More than 65 participants from 25 member countries and economies of the ACI, development partners, Secretariat, and observer countries, attended the 24 SGM.

The 24 SGM participants welcomed Azerbaijan and Georgia as the 32nd and 33rd members of the ACI, discussed the ACI's achievements in the implementation of the work program 2018-2020 and planned the ACI's Work Program for the next 3 years 2021-2023. Australia, Cook Islands, Kazakhstan, Nepal, People's Republic of China, and Thailand shared their country reports on the anticorruption achievements and American Bar Association Rule of Law, Transparency International, UNODC and UNDP updated on their knowledge sharing and capacity development activities. OECD's Jeffrey Schlagenhauf, Deputy Secretary-General opened the meeting and ADB's Lisa D. Kelaart-Courtney, Director of the Office of Anticorruption and Integrity provided closing remarks.

The 24 SGM marked the completion of ACI's work program 2018-2020 achievements and laid out plans for a three-year work program 2021-2023 in accordance with its strategic principles. It was reported that the objectives and capacity development activities of the ACI's work program 2018-2020 were implemented as planned within the three work streams: Public Integrity; Law Enforcement; and Business Integrity.

Governance goals of the ACI were implemented by expanding the membership to 33 members in 2020; merging of the steering and advisory groups to strengthen and simplify governance of the ACI; and holding of regular steering group meetings to pave the way for a stronger engagement and learning among members. The work of the ACI Secretariat was maintained and supported by ADB and OECD, and the ACI directory was regularly updated.

Capacity development activities were delivered through the conduct of steering group meetings, regional seminars and conferences, webinars, and knowledge sharing events. Between 2018 and 2020, the ACI conducted three steering group meetings, two PIN meetings, one BI meeting, one Regional Conference, one procurement training, one workshop, three webinars; and produced one publication, one evaluation review report, and launched two reports.

A draft proposal to set the framework of activities for the work program 2021-2023 was presented during the 24 SGM to ACI members. It was reported that the ACI will continue to be governed by the Steering Group members and will meet at least once a year. Capacity development activities under the three workstreams of the ACI: the PIN, LEN, and BI will be held back-to-back or separately. Hosting of the ACI events by members on a voluntary basis will be encouraged. The Secretariat will continue to dialogue and guide countries that are interested to observe or become members of the ACI. To facilitate communication among members, the Secretariat will continue to update the ACI list of designated focal points, provide organizational and logistical support to the ACI's events and activities, and share anticorruption knowledge and capacity development activities to implement the next three-year work program for 2021-2023.

C   REGIONAL CONFERENCE

10th Regional Conference on Preventing and Combating Corruption in Infrastructure Projects in Asia-Pacific (December 2019)

On 3-6 December 2019, the Government of Viet Nam and the ACI Secretariat jointly organized the 10th Regional Conference on Preventing and Combating Corruption in Infrastructure Projects in Asia-Pacific[6]. More than 140 delegates from 28 countries represented by experts and leaders from anti-corruption bodies, local and multinational companies and business organizations, civil society, and international organizations participated in the conference. Delegates exchanged ideas on corruption risks in infrastructure projects and discussed solutions to curb undue influence, strengthen risk management, and improve corruption prevention. H.E. Mr. Truong Hoa Binh, Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of Viet Nam and regional leaders presented the conclusions of the conference during the High-Level Segment held at the closing of the conference.

The following meetings were held as part of the 10th Regional Conference:

- **Third Public Integrity Network Meeting,** to explore solutions to curb undue influence, strengthen risk management, and improve corruption prevention;

---

[6] The10th Regional Conference Report on Preventing and Combating Corruption in Infrastructure Projects in Asia-Pacific -- *https://events.development.asia/learning-events/10th-regional-conference-preventing-and-combating-corruption-infrastructure-projects*

- **First Business Integrity Meeting,** to explore corruption risks in infrastructure projects, along with the anti-bribery compliance climate in the region;
- **23rd Steering Group Meeting,** to discuss the results of the BI and PIN meetings, the ACI's evaluation report, plans of the ACI, members capacity development needs, and other matters; and
- **High-Level Segment,** to present the conclusions of the conference and share views on a holistic approach to address corruption in infrastructure, combining prevention, law enforcement, and business integrity perspectives.

D.   PUBLIC INTEGRITY NETWORK

Second Public Integrity Network Meeting on Preventing Corruption in Public Procurement (November 2018)

On 8 November 2018, the Second Public Integrity Meeting (PIN) on Preventing Corruption in Public Sector[7] was held in Astana, Kazakhstan. About 50 participants from over 20 countries shared the achievements and challenges in promoting anti-corruption in procurement, presented effective tools to fight corruption, corruption risks in public procurement, and discussed use of technologies in corruption prevention, anti-corruption agencies' and civil society roles in preventing integrity violations during procurement[8]. The State Secretary of Kazakhstan delivered opening remarks and the State Agency of Kazakhstan for Civil Services Affairs and Anti-Corruption hosted the PIN meeting together with the ACI Secretariat.

---

[7] The Agenda of the Second PIN Meeting on Preventing Corruption in Public Sector -- *https://events.development.asia/sites/default/files/course/2018/Agenda_Astana%20PIN%20%26%20Training.pdf*
[8] The Second PIN meeting materials and presentations -- *https://events.development.asia/learning-events/training-and-public-integrity-network-meeting-preventing-corruption-public*

Third Public Integrity Network Meeting on Preventing Corruption in Infrastructure Projects (December 2019)

The Third Public Integrity Network Meeting on Preventing Corruption in Infrastructure Projects was held on 4-6 December 2020 in Hanoi, Viet Nam and focused on topics such as undue influence in public investments; integrity policies to mitigate corruption in infrastructure projects; and risk management, audit, data analytics for corruption prevention[9]. Country examples and cases from Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, People's Republic of China, Cook Islands, Georgia, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal, Thailand, and Viet Nam further enriched the discussions and exchange of good practices. The meeting was attended by over 100 participants from 25 countries composed of experts and leaders from government institutions, anti-corruption bodies, private sector, civil society organizations, and international organizations.

E.   BUSINESS INTEGRITY

First Business Integrity Meeting (December 2019)

The inaugural Business Integrity (BI) Meeting held on 3 December 2019 focused on business integrity in infrastructure projects and was attended by over 140 participants from 28 countries. The participants included experts and leaders from anti-corruption bodies, local and multinational companies and business organisations, civil society, and international organizations. The objective was to foster an

---

[9] The Third PIN Meeting Report --
https://events.development.asia/sites/default/files/course/2019/Report%20on%20Public%20Integrity%20Network%20Meeting.pdf

exchange of views and the sharing of experience on risks, challenges, and best practices in the area of business integrity, through panel and group discussions. The main findings and messages were as follows: business integrity should rely on strong, harmonised legislation, supported by enforcement; companies can play an active role in promoting business integrity; market incentives are essential to change behaviours; solutions should involve and ensure dialogue between all stakeholders, public institutions, the private sector and civil society; and linkages between business integrity and responsible business conduct are essential[10].

F.   TRAINING, WORKSHOP, WEBINARS

Training on Preventing Corruption in Public Procurement (November 2018)

On 6-8 November 2018, about 50 participants from over 20 countries learned how to prevent and detect corruption in public procurement in a two-day training program organized in Astana, Kazakhstan by ADB in cooperation with OECD and UNDP Regional Hub in Bangkok. Through lectures, workshops, presentation of real-life cases, and team exercises, the training elaborated on the general principles of corruption-free procurement, how to address integrity risks during procurement process, and improve the capacity to detect and prevent corruption in various stages of the procurement cycle.

Capacity Building Workshop in the framework of the Integrity Review of Thailand: Strengthening Public Ethics (May 2019)
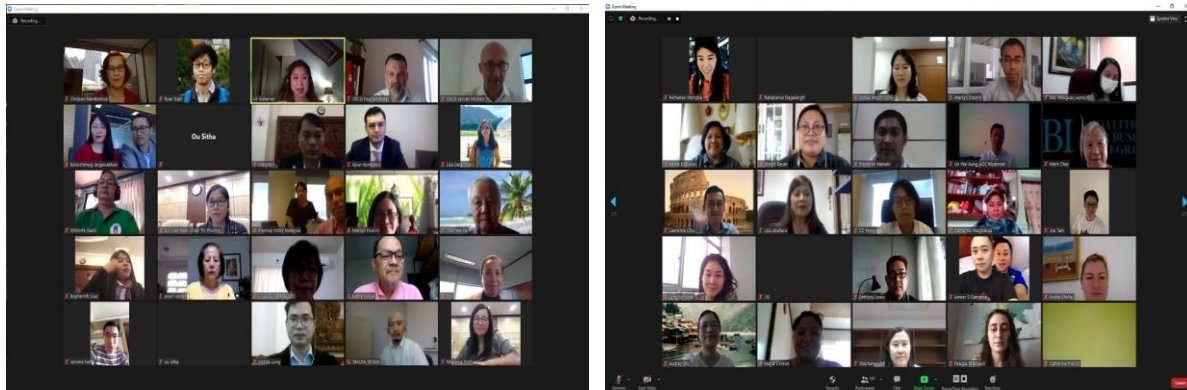
More than 70 public officials from Indonesia, Malaysia, Bangladesh, the Cook Islands, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Thailand participated in the Capacity Building Workshop in the framework of the Integrity Review of Thailand: Strengthening Public Ethics in Bangkok to exchange experiences on how to manage conflicts of interest, resolve ethical dilemmas and nurture an open organizational culture.

Webinar on Safeguarding Integrity in the COVID-19 Response and Recovery (July 2020)

More than 130 participants from the member countries and economies of the ACI, observer countries, advisory group, Philippine Commission on Audit, OECD, and ADB joined the webinar held on 28 July 2020. The speakers presented the recommendations from the recently published OECD policy papers on how governments and development partners should ensure that responses and efforts towards recovery from the crisis are effective and not undermined by corruption and bribery. The following countries participated the webinar. Australia; Armenia; Azerbaijan; Cambodia; Georgia; Hongkong,

---

[10] The first Business Integrity Meeting Report --
https://events.development.asia/sites/default/files/course/2019/Report%20on%20Business%20Integrity%20Meeting.pdf

China; Indonesia; Kazakhstan; Korea; Kyrgyz Republic; Macau, China; Malaysia; Mongolia; Myanmar; Nepal; Pakistan; Philippines; Solomon Islands; Thailand; Vanuatu; and Viet Nam.

Webinar on the Impact of Covid-19 on the Work of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Agencies (September 2020)

The webinar was organized jointly with the OECD's Anticorruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ACN) to identify and analyse corruption-related challenges posed by Covid-19 emergency measures, as well as their impact on the detection, investigation, prosecution and adjudication of corruption. The ACN Secretariat and ACI Secretariat presented the preliminary findings of the regional surveys to of law enforcement practitioners and discussed and exchanged information on measures taken by national authorities and potential good practices in both regions. Distinguished speakers from Malaysia, Thailand, Viet Nam, Romania, and Lithuania presented on COVID-19 related-corruption detection and investigation.

Webinar on Leveraging open source intelligence, whistleblower protection and reporting, and investigative journalism to combat corruption in times of crisis (December 2020)

The webinar provided a virtual learning experience for sharing good practices and innovative solutions among network members in a crisis context, focusing on the three themes of open source intelligence (OSINT), whistle-blower protection and reporting, and the role of investigative journalism in combatting corruption. The panelists discussed the benefits and disadvantages of using OSINT in corruption investigations, standards on whistle-blower protection, and challenges to investigative journalism in the crisis context of Covid-19, among other topics. The event was joined by law enforcement representatives from over 20 countries.

In May 2020, ACI Secretariat participated in **the Anticorruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia's (ACN) 25th Steering Group Meeting** to coordinate ACI and ACN capacity development activities and learn on the piloting of the ACN monitoring based on performance indicators, ACN's Law Enforcement Network and the sectorial work.

ACI Secretariat shared its anti-corruption efforts to prevent and mitigate risks of integrity violations in COVID-19 projects at the **16th Meeting of the ASEAN Parties Against Corruption** (ASEAN-PAC) attended by more than 50 participants of the event. The presentation focused on ADB's commitment to assist developing member countries combat the COVID-19 pandemic and OECD's recommended policy measures to avoid corruption and bribery in the COVID-19 response and recovery.

The OECD also presented the work of the ACI to combat corruption in the context of COVID-19 to the **APEC Anti-Corruption and Transparency Working Group** (ACTWG) in October 2020.

ACI members were invited to participate in **UNODC's webinar on Digitalization Against Corruption: Role of Data Analytics in Preventing Corruption and Fraud in Southeast Asia** held in November 2020 and brought together globally-renowned speakers from civil society, government, and the private sector to look at ways in which data analytics can contribute to transparency and good governance in the context of Southeast Asia.

G.   REPORTS, PUBLICATIONS AND DISSEMINATION

The following reports were prepared and/or published under the ACI: (1) External Evaluation Report in (2018); (2) Integrity Review of Thailand (2019); (3) conference and regional meetings reports (2018-2020); (4) newsletter (2019); and (5) surveys (2020).

In 2020, ACI Secretariat launched a stocktaking of the anticorruption regional networks and programs, and a capacity development needs of the ACI members. The reports to be completed and shared in the first quarter of 2021, were initiated following the recommendations of the External Evaluation Report and to contribute to the development of the ACI Work Program 2021-2023.

In 2020, the ACI Secretariat collected and shared with the ACI members a list of publications and online trainings developed and designed by international development organizations on topics relating to corruption prevention and monitoring, ethics, corruption risk assessment, anti-money laundering and, financing terrorism, cyber fraud, and due diligence.

ACI Secretariat regularly shared information relating to the ACI's activities and events through email communications, newsletter and ACI's webpage on OECD and ADB's Knowledge Events platforms.

H.   FINANCING OF THE ANTICORRUPTION INITIATIVE

The Government of Kazakhstan hosted and shared the cost of the Second PIN meeting and Training on Preventing Corruption in Public Procurement. The Government of Viet Nam hosted and shared the cost of the 10th Regional Conference including the Third PIN Meeting, First BI meeting, and 23rd Steering Group Meeting.

The Work Program 2018 – 2020 capacity development activities, events, reports, and publications were financed by ADB, OECD, and UNDP. The ACI Secretariat is partly funded by ADB and OECD, however, sustainable, long-term funding of Secretariat staff time is required to ensure that the Secretariat can continue to deliver capacity building and technical assistance activities to meet ACI members' needs.

This report was prepared by the Anti-Corruption Initiative for Asia-Pacific Secretariat. For more details, please visit the website: www.oecd.org/corruption/asiapacific and https://events.development.asia/learning-events/anti-corruption-initiative-asia-pacific