“Engaging Citizens and their Organizations to Prevent Corruption in the Delivery of Public Services, for Achieving the MDGs: Building National Integrity Systems”

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I. Introduction

In the year 2000, under the aegis of the United Nations, 189 world leaders signed on to an ambitious set of development objectives known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs cover eight distinct areas of development, including poverty and hunger, universal education, gender equality, child health, maternal health, HIV/AIDS, environmental sustainability, and global partnership. The goals were to be met within a decade and a half, by 2015.

In evaluating the outcomes of the MDG initiative in 2010, it became evident that corruption and lack of accountability are serious impediments to progress. The MDGs’ experience to date raises important questions about the political drivers of development outcomes, and especially, about two interrelated issues: citizen and civil society participation, and the effects of corruption.

The goal of this paper is to think through how these two issues interact, and in particular, how citizen engagement may help to make public service delivery more effective, equitable, transparent, responsive, and citizen-centric. It is hoped that the lessons will be applicable not only to attaining the MDGs, but also helpful in development efforts beyond them.

The paper begins from the assumption that citizen and civil society engagement is essential to any successful effort to combat corruption. Without engaged citizen participation, state-led forms of accountability-holding will be much less effective: legislatures are less likely to investigate their peers in the executive branch if they are not being pushed by citizens; cronyism and mutual back-scratching in the civil service is less likely to be disrupted; officeholders will feel far less pressure to sally out beyond their bureaucratic bailiwicks to investigate alleged wrongdoing. In short, citizen engagement is essential to getting the state accountability machinery moving effectively.

A second and equally important role that citizens and civil society can play is that of information-provider. By virtue of its numerical superiority, the citizenry has more eyes and ears to the ground, with a capacity to collect information in ways that state officials cannot. This information-gathering function is essential to the accountability process, since the variety of sources and perspectives on state performance that citizens can provide complements and expands the reach of the accountability system.

Most importantly, citizens and civil society establish the normative framework within which the fight against corruption happens. Public norms determine the success of anti-corruption efforts by setting the boundaries between right and wrong, by signaling public expectations to officeholders, and by providing public support for efforts to constrain officeholders. Any functioning integrity system must be rooted in the broad field of public attitudes and expectations, and it is unlikely that the fight against corruption will succeed unless the public is behind it.

The empirical evidence for civil society’s role is quite robust, at both the micro and macro levels. At the micro level, this paper will offer a number of examples of successful programs whereby citizens were able to reduce wasteful spending and improve public outcomes through participation in, and monitoring of,
public works. Just as one illustration, randomized field experiments in Uganda illustrated that citizen report cards led to better health care usage, as well as significant gains – by as much as one third – on key indicators such as infant mortality (Bjorkman and Svensson 2009). These are gains that are well worth fighting for.

At the macro level, Figure 1 illustrates the clear correlation between the degree of civil society organization and corruption outcomes, using data from Grimes (2008). Higher levels of civil society organization are associated with cleaner government. Figure 2 illustrates a related phenomenon: the strong link between societal trust and corruption. It is difficult to ascertain the direction of causality, of course, but the larger point is that these things move together, and that with positive policy interventions, it may be possible to generate a positive and reinforcing cycle, essential to attaining growth outcomes.²

[Insert Figures 1 and 2 about here]

In light of these concrete micro and macro effects, citizen and civil society engagement is increasingly a core issue at the heart of anti-corruption programs. Many anti-corruption efforts have emphasized institutional or utilitarian approaches, focused either on putting in place the ‘correct’ institutional framework or following a carrots and sticks model relying on Benthamite arguments about increasing the costs and reducing the benefits of crime. Our goal here is not to negate the importance of either of these approaches, but rather to illustrate that they are incomplete by themselves.

An active civil society clearly plays a central role in making institutions effective, by ensuring that these institutions function as planned, that any deviation from appropriate institutional behavior is observed and corrected, and by providing a rich font of ideas for change if these institutions require updating. The cost-benefit approach to corruption can also be strengthened through civil society participation, which may increase the likelihood that wrongdoing will be detected, as well as by increasing the reputational costs society imposes on wrongdoers.

This consensus about civil society’s pervasive and all-encompassing role in integrity programs is increasingly at the heart of multilateral agencies’ corruption strategies. As Grimes (2008) notes, agencies as diverse as the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) have all pointed to the importance of civil society “as a key player in a meta-system of checks and balances in a polity.” Spending has followed this consensus, with aid outlays increasingly targeting civil society organizations.

But what recommendations can we offer to policymakers implementing these programs? How can policymakers better engage citizens and civil society in building national integrity systems? In light of the strong empirical evidence of civil society’s positive effects in the fight against corruption, as well as the emerging consensus within the development community about the importance of involving civil society in this fight, what can be done? This paper has two specific goals in this regard.
The first is to provide a clear justification for exactly how citizens and civil society organizations matter to the accountability process. Section II brings some clarity to the issue by conceptualizing and mapping the relation between four frequently used terms: citizen engagement, civil society, accountability, and national integrity systems. This section suggests a number of ways in which citizens and civil society may contribute positively to the accountability process, but it also raises some caveats about realistic expectations for the likely extent and impact of citizen participation, as well as the best ways of harnessing citizen participation in the integrity effort.

Having developed a realistic view of citizens’ and civil society’s potential contributions to anti-corruption efforts, the second goal of this paper is to provide specific recommendations that will enable policymakers to mobilize citizens to participate in national integrity systems. There are four specific objectives for citizen engagement: generating awareness of both corruption’s costs and the functioning of the national integrity system; increasing citizen ownership of anti-corruption policies; supporting coordination between citizens and other participants in the national integrity system; and improving the standardization of efforts in this regard. Section III provides a justification for each of these objectives as well as best practices from past experience. Section IV concludes with a summary of key recommendations.

II. Conceptualizing and Mapping the Relation between Citizen Engagement, Civil Society, Accountability and National Integrity Systems

II.A. Basic concepts

In order to avoid later confusion, we begin by quickly defining the meaning of the key concepts of interest: citizen, citizen engagement, civil society, accountability, integrity, and national integrity systems.

A citizen is, by the dictionary definition, merely “a legally recognized subject or national of a state or commonwealth” (New Oxford American Dictionary). But this minimalist definition fails to give a true impression of the much broader and more commonly espoused definition of a citizen as someone who has certain responsibilities, as well as rights, in the civil, political, and social realms (Marshall 1950). These rights together provide the justification and impetus for the citizen to become involved in the quotidian affairs of the state and, in democracies at least, to do so as a coequal participant in the affairs of state. Without such rights, citizen participation will be weak and insufficient to undergird true accountability.

In this context, citizen engagement is not seen as undue interference in the affairs of state, but rather as a constructive means of providing the state and its political leaders with powerful feedback about what is working, what is not, and why. Citizen engagement may ebb and flow with the salience of the issues that are in play at any given moment, as well as the pathways citizens find for expressing their interests. Further, citizens are motivated in different ways, leading to the expression of a multitude of interests, depending on the issue under discussion.
Civil society is one of the most important means of aggregating these interests and giving voice to the multiplicity of citizen demands and responses to the state. Civil society is the broader public arena “outside of the family, state and market where people associate to advance a common set of interests” (Heinrich 2004). The groups that advance these common interests (which, it should be noted, are ‘common’ to their group, and not necessarily ‘common’ to society as a whole) may include voluntary associations, community groups, trade unions, faith-based organizations, and non-governmental organizations, which can all be denominated civil society organizations.

Identifying civil society organizations may sometimes be an art, rather than a precise science, because at the edges these organizations sometimes may blur over into quasi-private sector or quasi-public sector organizations, advocating policies that would benefit private interests or providing goods such as health care that may be a responsibility of the state. And civil society organizations need not be oriented to the broader common weal to be considered parts of a civil society. Indeed, it is precisely the plural nature of the interests expressed by civil society that is believed to provide specific benefits, by generating the “conditions for strong, responsive, effective representative institutions” (Putnam 1993, 6). Responsive government is a government that is accountable in some way to its citizens, which begs the question: what then is accountability?

Accountability may be the thorniest of the concepts defined here. At its most simplistic, basic level, it refers to the responsiveness of government to the citizens it rules. This minimalist definition is problematic, however, because it frequently devolves into a discussion of mere bilateral principal-agent relationships, in which sanctions are imposed on the agent if it (the government) deviates from the interests of the principals (the citizenry). At the extreme, these sanctions against the government might include lost elections, a coup d’etat, or a change in regime. This view is problematic for a number of reasons, not least that an individual or government may be accountable without requiring as a necessary condition the application of sanctions or rewards. That is, the conduct of rulers may be driven by normative considerations that go beyond the mere possibility of being subject to sanctions for failing to heed popular demands, interests or norms (Philp 2009, 32; Schedler 1999).

This raises the essential contrast between “compliance-based” and “integrity-based” systems of accountability. The former are focused on the costs and benefits – sanctions and rewards – provided to rulers; the latter focuses on building trust and goes beyond mere rule accounting.

“Compliance-based systems,” in which sanctions and rewards are given in response to office-holders’ compliance with public rules, measured through “minute specification” of specific tasks or responsibilities, are problematic on several levels (Philp 2009, 38). One problem is that they put such emphasis on the costs and benefits of compliance that they deny any normative commitment by rulers to good conduct, assuming that officeholders will breach laws and norms unless they are strictly controlled. As a result, they do not permit citizens to rely on the good ‘character’ of political leaders to guide policy-making. In so doing, they eliminate discretion and originality in policymaking, replacing it with strict adherence to rules designed to
curtail behaviors that might be potentially harmful, even at the cost of decreased performance (Behn 2001).

Furthermore, accountability should be seen as much a process as it is a result (Fox 2006): that is, accountability cannot simply be about the means of punishing bad behavior, but instead must refer to the existence of processes by which officeholders’ behavior is gauged against some basic societal norms. In a compliance-based system, it may be difficult to establish ex ante what behaviors are considered acceptable without unnecessarily burdening officials with lengthy rules and regulations constraining behavior in any given task or situation. Compliance-based systems also place considerable weight on the public administration to meet the formal demands of compliance: tracking the rules they have been given, accounting for their behavior, and reporting their compliance. In so doing, compliance-based systems also put a heavy burden on civil society, which must find ways to monitor officeholders’ behavior, grade compliance, and if necessary, contemplate specific sanctions for specific misbehavior.

Philp recommends instead an “integrity approach,” which “looks at ways of building professional integrity (and public trust), for the exercise of which some discretion is inevitable. It recognizes that integrity cannot be motivated wholly by rules and incentives, since it is not just a case of manifesting the right behavior but also (by definition) requires that the agent has the appropriate dispositions and character and behaves appropriately because he or she has that degree of probity, rather than simply acting in a response to external incentives” (2009, 37).

A useful example is provided by Zook’s 2009 study of clean politics in Finland. Corruption is not unknown in Finland, “when it does happen, however, civic reaction is swift, negative, and uncompromising” (163). The trust-based, civil society-oriented Finnish system contrasts sharply with the more compliance-oriented Singaporean model, which relies much more on raising the costs of corruption than on the benefits of accountability. Zook concludes that the sticks-based Singaporean compliance model is expensive and inefficient, with large opportunity costs, especially when compared with the more integrity-oriented Finnish approach: “Fear is expensive and trust is cheap.”

Under such an integrity-based system, the focus is less on the specifics of the process, and more on the legitimacy of outcomes: office holders account for their behavior in office, but their behavior in office is assumed to flow from the desire to command popular legitimacy, rather than simply to avoid punishments for transgressing specific rules or parameters. Accountability, therefore, goes beyond strict compliance by individuals. Integrity systems assume that individuals in office will act honestly in the pursuit of the public good, that their judgment is more important than mere compliance with strict rules and regulations, and that if officeholders slip in their obligations to the public, they will be held accountable. As Philp notes, the key issue is not trust in the specific officeholder, but rather, our trust in the overall institutional framework which we believe will hold her accountable if for any reason her actions cross the limits of probity (Philp 2009, 41).

This last point is a vital one, and deserves further elucidation. Note that even if we are concerned with not creating an overly compliance-driven system that would unnecessarily constrain officeholders’ discretion, the institutional framework is
nonetheless crucial to providing the incentives for integrity. Institutions play a double role, both by providing the sanctions and rewards for officeholders, but more importantly, by guaranteeing citizens’ trust in government by reassuring citizens that any individual malfeasance will be uncovered and punished appropriately. Without well-functioning accountability institutions, the trust necessary to integrity-based accountability cannot be guaranteed. Civil society plays a key role in ascertaining how well accountability institutions are working, and keeping them in working order.

Which brings us to the final concept, national integrity systems. The term was coined by Transparency International, which defines it as “a holistic approach to analyse both the extent and causes of corruption in a particular country by looking at the system of checks and balances and institutional pillars that form a society, including the executive, legislature, judiciary, ombudsman, media, civil society and business sector” (Transparency International 2009, 27). The concept of a national integrity system is premised on the notion that no single institution has a monopoly on accountability: without integrated action by diverse institutions acting singly and in concert, accountability will be undermined, with pernicious effects on development, the rule of law, and the quality of life (Pope 2000, 35). No single institution is capable of ensuring accountability singlehandedly: each complements and constrains the others in a “web” of overlapping accountability relations marked by inter-dependence and combined effectiveness (Mainwaring 2003; Pope 2000).

In sum, the national integrity system approach is greatly concerned with the goal of curbing corruption, but emphasizes the interdependence between different forms of accountability and different accountability institutions, as well as the need to generate accountability without imposing “unwarranted costs or needless restrictions that might obstruct people from doing their jobs effectively. The quest for integrity ought not to render government dysfunctional” (Pope 2000, vii).

It should be clear by now that we are adopting here definitions that go beyond the bare minimum. This approach guarantees us greater analytical traction, and also helps to clarify the causal relation between the various concepts. To summarize: in an ideal world, citizens, defined as individuals with particular rights and responsibilities, are seen as engaging with the state via civil society, defined as an array of pluralistic organizations representing diverse and conflicting interests. Together, civil society can generate accountability of a specific sort that we label “integrity-based,” that goes beyond accounting alone and instead privileges officeholders’ integrity over mere compliance with strict rules and regulations. In order for this more complex form of accountability to function, however, civil society and citizens need to trust in the national integrity system to monitor and punish individual acts of bad conduct. Which leads to the question: how does the national integrity system enforce accountability, and what is the link between citizens and the national integrity system?

II.B. Citizens, national integrity systems and social accountability

The links between citizens and national integrity systems are multiple and multifaceted. Citizens may participate in national integrity systems in a number of guises, including as consumers in private markets requiring government regulation and supervision; as recipients of public benefits; as employees of publicly regulated companies; as members of professional associations or civic associations; as participants in political parties or movements; as voters; or as all of the above. Given
this multidimensionality of citizen participation, it is not surprising that academics studying accountability have spent considerable time and effort conceptualizing and defining the various forms of citizen participation.

Generally speaking, the literature distinguishes between three types of accountability – horizontal, vertical, and social – which mobilize citizens in distinct but often simultaneous ways. The three forms are artificial constructs, assuming a non-permeability between state and society that is of course belied by the fact that most civil servants go home at night to the lives of regular citizens and many citizens serve the state by teaching their children good behaviors and enforcing the laws.

To complicate matters, there is some conceptual uncertainty about the terms in the literature, which may lead to considerable and unnecessary confusion, given that they are all artificial constructs aimed at delineating various components of an accountability process that at its most effective is multidirectional, intricate and all-encompassing. Nonetheless, distinguishing between the three forms of accountability is conducive to understanding the specific role civil society can play in the creation and improvement of integrity systems. With this in mind, we plug ahead here with a basic description of the three types and their relationship to citizen engagement.

Horizontal accountability is perhaps the least citizen-oriented and most traditionally associated with checks and balances across different branches of government. In a series of seminal articles, O’Donnell (1998, 1999, 2003) describes horizontal accountability as the process by which state actors can be held accountable by other state actors. This is of course much easier if the institutional framework for accountability-holding is already established, with power divided between an executive branch, independent courts, and a non-subordinate legislature. Together with this basic framework may come additional accountability agencies that can oversee government, such as audit agencies, police, prosecutors, and ombudsmen.

The institutional design can have important effects in terms of which agencies hold which other agencies accountable, and how they do so. But the important point for our purposes here is that citizen involvement in horizontal accountability is rare. To some degree, this has two insuperable causes. The first is that horizontal accountability works because the agencies that control each other horizontally should be more or less political equals, with the capacity to exert influence on each other and demand responses when needed. The second is the assumption that the process of horizontal accountability demands legal authority and technical expertise, as well as the ability to deal with privileged information that may best be left in the hands of a small bureaucratic elite (Diamond and Morlino 2005). This elite can be divided across agencies, but the point is that it is still at the service of the larger state apparatus.

The concept of vertical accountability is muddier and more contested. At its most basic, it assumes that elected leaders are responsible downward to voters, who can exert an accountability response via their political mobilization and their participation in political processes such as elections. Vertical accountability goes beyond the vote alone, with political mobilization including acts as simple as writing letters to congressional representatives and acts as fraught as demonstrating publicly against government policy. In democracies, vertical accountability may also go beyond elected officials alone, with accountability running from voters to bureaucrats, oftentimes with intermediation through elected officials who play a crucial role in
transmitting citizen concerns to bureaucratic officials and demanding a response and/or a change in behavior from these officeholders. For vertical accountability to be effective, some degree of political competition and participation is essential. Such participation assumes the existence of basic civil and political rights, including the right to form civil society organizations, but must go further: citizens must also be engaged and knowledgeable about officeholders’ behavior and performance, as well as about the alternative policy possibilities that exist (Diamond and Morlino 2005).

These two basic forms of accountability – vertical and horizontal – leave out a critical third type of accountability, social accountability, which complements and makes effective the first two. Social accountability refers to the role of civil society in acting to ensure that government officials are accountable: “a non-electoral yet vertical mechanism…that rests on the actions of an array of citizens’ associations and movements and the media” (Peruzzotti and Smulovitz 2006, 10). Note that this definition includes both civil society and the media.

There are several ways social accountability can be brought to bear. At a most basic level – but one that is not explicitly recognized by many authors – society plays the fundamental role of establishing the normative environment within which the state conducts its business, decision-makers make their choices, and rule-setters establish the norms for good conduct. Again, accountability is not merely a result, but it is the process of defining, encapsulating and reevaluating the roles and responsibilities expected of officeholders. Civil society and the media have a vital role to play in debating and determining the basic standards against which officeholders will be judged, as well as judging that performance against these basic standards.

Social accountability also serves as the trigger for both horizontal and vertical accountability. By sheer numerical superiority, citizens are far better able to monitor the quotidian activities of public service delivery than the state itself. By participating in those services regularly, and transmitting their grievances and concerns, citizens serve as vital watchdogs or fire alarms about the state of public service delivery. When poor service delivery or malfeasance is uncovered, citizens, civil society organizations and the media may set off accountability processes within the state, goading state agencies into action (horizontal accountability).

Alarms set off by civil society or the media may similarly shape voter responses to scandal, or generate popular mobilization against particular practices (vertical accountability). Sometimes, these horizontal or vertical actions will result in few of the expected practical effects, such as electoral losses or effective checks and balances. But even in these cases, civil society and the media may nonetheless be effective in imposing reputational costs on officeholders, with public opprobrium, shunning, and disdain serving as a sanction. Such public demonstrations signal the limits of good conduct within society as a whole, and serve as a not-insignificant sanction and deterrent to all but the most ethically-challenged officeholders.

Citizens are also a valuable gauge of how well the accountability process is working in the aggregate. All too often, reformers rely on concrete legislative or institutional reforms that are wonderful in the abstract, but may be ineffective in practice. This can be the result of corruption, or it may simply reflect the incapacity of the state to make its commands effective, because of weak bureaucracy or limited
resources. Under these conditions, civil society can be an important source of feedback, informing the public sector that things are not working according to plan.

It should be clear by now that civil society can clearly assume important roles across all three forms of accountability, playing a role that even core government institutions often cannot. Civil society plays a unique role by establishing the basic normative baseline by which government actions are judged, by goading government institutions into action, by mobilizing citizens qua voters, by monitoring government performance and serving as watchdogs, and by imposing reputational sanctions. Although these functions often play out only in the background of formal accountability processes, they can be as important, and occasionally more important, than basic institutional accountability processes. And as the “integrity” framework insists, active civil society engagement can play a vital role in making accountability less a matter of compliance with rigid bureaucratic rules, and instead a habit ingrained within a deeper, more widely held normative framework.

The final point is that the three forms of accountability are overlapping and self-reinforcing, with horizontal accountability strengthened by social accountability, vertical improved by horizontal, and so forth and so on. Conversely, if accountability is weak in one direction, it may undermine accountability in the other directions. Fox (2006, 38) provides several examples: inadequate supervision by electoral courts may undermine elections and the ability of citizens to impose vertical accountability; agencies that fail to defend basic political rights may weaken the ability of citizens to effectively impose both social and vertical accountability. We could add others: weak civil society oversight of public service delivery may undermine the capacity of auditing agencies to hold peer agencies horizontally accountable; voter insouciance will undermine vertical accountability and may inadvertently strengthen specific actors against horizontal checks. In sum, all forms of accountability depend on each other, and as a result, even if one form of accountability is potentially strong, it may be undermined if the other forms are not equally powerful.

II.C. Adopting realistic expectations regarding citizen engagement

We have now mapped out the key conceptual terrain and the many potential contributions citizens and civil society organizations can make to national integrity systems. Yet it is important to recognize that there are tensions associated with citizen engagement and civil society organizations’ participation in the political sphere, and that it would be unrealistic to expect too much from citizens in the struggle to prevent corruption. In this section, we discuss some of the key issues that may complicate citizen and civil society participation, in the hopes of painting a realistic picture of what can reasonably be expected from citizens and civil society groups.

Among the confounding issues in thinking through the role of civil society in fighting corruption are: citizens’ relationship with the media, the neutrality of civil society interests, the accountability of civil society, the role of the political regime in facilitating civil society participation, and the effectiveness of anomic civil society in broader anti-corruption mobilization. All of these issues are major concerns as we think about establishing integrity, and may significantly weaken the ability of citizens or civil society to ensure accountability. After discussing them, we turn to a discussion of the comparative effectiveness of civil society in different stages of the accountability process.
As noted in the previous section, the concept and practice of social accountability spills over into the media. The press is vital to publicizing allegations of corruption, divulging accountability institutions’ responses, and also to galvanizing civil society by circulating shared responses that reflect on societal norms about what behaviors by state actors are considered appropriate. Because of its many potential effects on citizen perceptions of both corruption and accountability processes by state agencies, the media plays a crucial but extremely delicate role in shaping the way in which corruption plays out in the public mind. As a result, it may significantly shape public perceptions of corruption, the possibilities for effective anti-corruption efforts, and the likelihood of civil society mobilization in all three of the accountability arenas.

But there are several problems with reliance on the media. First, in many countries, there is little or no tradition of independent media. This means that freedom of the press is a relative freedom, and further, that there is little tradition of independent investigative journalism. Even where freedoms are guaranteed, local media may lack essential training needed to investigate corruption effectively, suggesting that external funding agencies may effectively contribute to the anti-corruption effort by carrying out workshops aimed at increasing the skills and awareness of local journalists. A related problem is that in the absence of robust budgets, news organizations may choose to engage in “journalism about investigations,” reporting on what government agencies tell them the major stories are, rather than engaging in “investigative journalism” and proactively hunting down stories by themselves (Porto 2011). “Journalism about investigations” is much cheaper, but it does not guarantee that the press will be a force for accountability, and indeed, it raises the distinct possibility that the media will be manipulated to political ends.

Even in countries with high levels of rights protection, the fact that media outlets are usually profit-driven, and also are often affiliated with a particular political or ideological project, means that there is the potential for both ratings-driven coverage of scandal and also the political use of anti-corruption initiatives. Partly as a result, scandal coverage may suffer from two pathologies: exaggeration or attention deficit disorder. With regard to the first, extensive or recurring coverage may suggest that there is no way to eliminate corruption in the rotten political class, or that “everybody does it”, or that accountability institutions are hopelessly incompetent. It may also lead to the perception that coverage is politically driven, and therefore somehow suspect. In other words, excessive coverage may have the unintended consequence of diminishing public willingness to participate in the accountability process.

At the other extreme comes the media’s potential attention deficit disorder. There is a risk that media outlets may not be level-headed in their coverage, and in their pursuit of viewers or readers, will only focus on the most dramatic scandals, bouncing indiscriminately from one scandal to another, following the most salacious details. In so doing, they may completely ignore more mundane yet equally pernicious malfeasance that is less “scandalous,” or fail to report on less attention-grabbing, but nonetheless vital, efforts to impose accountability. They may also report only on scandals, failing to report on actual accountability processes and leaving the impression that impunity reigns. Both pathologies can have a depressing effect on
citizen participation, and can only be partly overcome with the availability of multiple, competing media sources and some civil society oversight of the media’s coverage.

The second issue is the neutrality of civil society itself. There is a tendency among many civil society advocates to imagine civil society as a heroic agglomeration of selfless individuals acting in the public interest. In fact, as Putnam (1993) himself points out, the plurality of interests involved in civil society is what gives it its dynamism, but it is a chaotic and often cacophonous mess of conflicting interests acting in multiple ways and often contradictory directions. It is seldom possible to divine a common direction of civil society interests, and in fact, civil society organizations are often acting far from selflessly. Indeed, civil society includes interest groups, labor unions, trade associations and other organizations that are truly self-serving. Civil society is not the private sector, but the distinction between “non-profit” interest groups and for-profit lobbying operations may be only a matter of degree, and should not be confused with neutrality or the pursuit of the common weal. It is worth remembering that even when they are not associated with the private sector, the interests of non-governmental organizations frequently include specific political interests, and their actions frequently include political activism in particular directions. Further, these actors are all competing for resources – including funding, skilled workers and technical support, as well as public and media attention – in ways that may not facilitate meaningful cooperation, much less coalescence around common goals.

A third and related concern is the accountability of civil society organizations themselves. The leaders of these organizations are often involved in their own political struggles to stay at the top of the organization, to finance it, and to keep it relevant. Not infrequently, this means that they may privilege their own individual interests against those of the broader organization, or of society at large (Fox 2006, 54). One paradoxical outcome can be a lack of transparency and accountability within the very organizations that may be calling for more accountability and transparency in government. While these problems can be overcome by social pressures aimed at maintaining the credibility of the organization, or by mutual oversight across various civil society organizations, the longevity of civil society organizations’ founders in office and their autonomy from the organization’s membership may be a troublesome and ultimately irresolvable issue that has important effects on civil society organizations’ ability to attract members and mobilize them to action.

A fourth concern is the effectiveness of civil society under distinct political regimes. As noted earlier, one of the primary assumptions about civil society effectiveness in guaranteeing accountability is that citizens have the basic guarantees that permit them to challenge government, spark action by horizontal accountability institutions, or hold officeholders accountable via the ballot box. Without basic civil and political rights of expression and assembly, citizens and civil society organizations are likely to have far less of an effect. This is not to say that they will have zero effect – smart political leaders everywhere are concerned about popular opinion, no matter how tight their hold on power. But it does suggest that the costs of mobilization will be such that effective controls on corruption by state officials may be far more tenuous than they would be if there were guarantees that all alleged wrongdoing could be exposed to the light of day without fear of state retribution.
against whistleblowers or other concerned citizens, or at an even more basic level, that the political space (freedom of speech, association, press, etc.) will be sharply constrained by the regime.

Related to this is the issue of civil society’s moral power. It is vital that accountability organizations in civil society follow their own dictates as stringently as they advocate others should, establishing strict standards for transparent and accountable behavior. Civil society’s power is ‘soft’: that is, it has no coercive physical power akin to the state’s, and thus must rely on its moral authority to generate change (Pope 2000, 129). Any breach of acceptable behavior by civil society will undermine this moral authority, demoralize supporters, and arm critics who wish to undermine anti-corruption efforts. The pluralism and multiplicity of civil society organizations means that there will sometimes be ethical breaches, but those organizations leading anti-corruption efforts will need to police themselves effectively to avoid this potentially devastating trap.

Finally, there is the question of the effectiveness of involving an anomic civil society in organized efforts against corruption. As noted in the previous section, citizens and civil society have a vital role to play in activating horizontal, vertical and social accountability over the long haul. But when we begin to think about specific anti-corruption campaigns or programs, there are a number of issues that complicate civil society participation. Which groups should be represented and how will they be chosen? To what extent does participation in anti-corruption campaigns draw on those organizations’ core competencies and abilities? How well do these organizations understand the tasks and objects of the campaign, and how committed are they?

The key issue here has to do with the commitment of civil society organizations to anti-corruption campaigns. With a few specific exceptions, fighting corruption is not usually the primary specialty of the vast majority of civil society organizations. This complicates their ability to make a continued and effective commitment to the accountability process: providing qualified staff, financing their participation, and acting in an informed manner. The paradox posed by permanent civil society participation in anti-corruption campaigns, advisory councils, or joint public-civil society agencies is that if they are involved in too routine and long-term a role, they may be captured by those they monitor, or they may lose credibility as objective outsiders. On the other hand, if they are involved in too short-term and temporary a role, their role may be simply unproductive, without generating lasting capacity or providing much other than a legitimizing presence.

These potential pitfalls suggest that citizen and civil society participation in fighting corruption is no panacea, and is subject to many of the foibles of civil society organizations’ participation in other fields of public policy. This is not to suggest, however, that civil society participation is in any way unproductive. As Figures 1 and 2 illustrate, there is strong empirical evidence to suggest that civil society organizations are associated with cleaner government and that trust in other citizens goes hand in hand with government integrity. But in crafting the mechanisms by which civil society is engaged in fighting corruption, it is vital to adopt a realistic view of the strengths of civil society participation as well as some of its weaknesses. With this in mind, we next briefly map these strengths and weaknesses with an eye to understanding where civil society may play the most effective roles.
II.D. The effective roles of civil society

Generally speaking, civil society is quite good at providing diffuse support for, and oversight of, state-society relations; it may be less effective when asked to play a permanent, institutionalized role. With these strengths and weaknesses in mind, we now turn to a quick depiction of how and where civil society fits into the process of holding officeholders accountable, before turning to specific practices for citizen engagement in the next section.

As we think about corruption specifically, the process of accountability-holding can be broken into three core stages of action:

1) Strategic planning and diagnosis of corrupt practices;
2) Monitoring and investigation of accusations of wrongdoing;
3) Sanction, or punishment of wrongdoing.

The national integrity system acts across all three stages, with certain institutions playing a more prominent role during specific stages. During the first stage, of strategic planning and diagnosis, for example, anti-corruption commissions, police and intelligence agencies may be deeply involved in evaluating what the core problems are, which tactics might most effectively address them, what policies are most effective, and which legislative or institutional changes are needed to close loopholes and improve the overall effectiveness of the system in combating malfeasance. Civil society can play a fundamental role in pushing for risk assessment analysis by officeholders, setting the normative baseline for evaluating to what extent government performance meets societal standards, conducting external evaluations of government performance, suggesting potential reforms, and even campaigning for specific changes that might make the national integrity system more effective.

The second stage, of monitoring public institutions and investigating alleged wrongdoing, is typically given over to audit agencies, police, and prosecutorial bodies. But citizens and civil society also play a role. Citizens may blow the whistle on specific problems of corruption in public services; the media may contribute significantly to uncovering wrongdoing and mapping the forms it takes. Perhaps most importantly, citizens can serve as valuable sources of information on officeholder behaviors, and particularly, of how closely these align with government promises, legal frameworks, popular expectations, or popular norms.

In the third stage, of punishment, the key agencies are administrative and judicial bodies, and their imposition of accountability via administrative or judicial trials. It is commonly assumed that citizens do not have much role in sanctioning behavior, given that they do not share the coercive power of the state apparatus. But here again, civil society plays a vital role for all the reasons mentioned earlier, providing the normative basis for punishment, overseeing the correct imposition of judicial sanctions, and publicizing the sanctions as a way of raising awareness about the effectiveness (or lack of effectiveness) of the accountability process. At the end of this stage, the process begins anew, with individual institutions within the integrity system re-evaluating their tactics and strategies in light of the perceived success or failure of that specific accountability process.
As Table 1 illustrates, the responsibilities of citizens and civil society organizations cross all three stages, with distinct roles and expected effects in each stage. While citizen participation is necessary in all three stages, citizen participation takes up very different guises in each stage, and requires distinct levels of citizen organization and cooperation. This distinction has important implications in terms of the effectiveness of citizens and civil society efforts to participate in the accountability process.

Within the first stage – strategic planning and diagnosis – individual citizens may find it hard to play an active role (except, perhaps, by providing ideas for reform). Single civil society organizations may be able to conduct risk assessments or measure government performance. At a high level of organization, cooperative movements of one or more civil society organizations may conduct advocacy campaigns, which require considerable organizational capacity. There is no need to explain the logic of the table in the other two stages, which is the same. The key point here is simply that citizens play specific roles in the different stages of the accountability process, depending on their degree of organization and mobilization.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

Having addressed upfront some of the limitations that citizens and civil society organizations face in the fight against corruption, we now turn to the positive role they can play, despite these potential shortcomings.

III. Mechanisms that civil society may use to address corruption

There are four core objectives that guide this project, within the workshop’s overall goal of “building a shared understanding of what citizen engagement institutions, approaches and tools can be adopted by countries to make public service delivery more effective, equitable, transparent, responsive and citizen-centric.” They can be summarized as:

1) **Awareness**: to create citizen awareness and an enabling environment…to prevent and fight corruption;

2) **Ownership**: to increase citizens’ ownership of anti-corruption policies;

3) **Coordination**: to support improved coordination mechanisms within a holistic framework in which the public sector, the private sector, organized civil society and the people in general promote and defend integrity;

4) **Standardization**: to introduce standardized implementation mechanisms and tools, including monitoring and oversight systems.

Before turning to each of these four objectives, it is worth noting that there are a number of basic country-specific factors that may help or hinder the fight against corruption. These include pre-existing state capacity, or the ability to effectively implement government decisions; the degree to which there are meaningful boundaries between public and private, and the degree of separation between state and
society; the level of violence and order; the existence of basic civil liberties and a free media; the availability of external support; and the more immediate political situation, such as the existence of a corruption scandal or other such crisis that might facilitate change (Johnston and Kpundeh 2004; Chêne 2010).

The existence of these diverse conditions mean that the fight against corruption will be distinct over time and across countries. For this reason, the discussion of the objectives laid out below is carried out in the most universal manner possible, but recognizing that country circumstances will vary enormously, and thus will require attention to context-specific challenges. With this important caveat in mind, let us proceed.

III.A. Creating Awareness

The goal of creating awareness has at least four core components. The first two relate to corruption specifically, while the second refer to facets of accountability. With regard to corruption, the first component is to raise awareness of corruption’s costs in a culturally appropriate fashion that illustrates that corruption can have a number of impacts on daily life in its economic, social and political realms. The second component is raising awareness of the specific costs of corruption in a particular community or state: how prevalent is it, what sorts of costs does it impose, and how does that particular nation or community compare with its peers elsewhere?

On the accountability awareness front, the two core issues are increasing awareness of citizens’ rights that permit accountability-holding and increasing awareness of the mechanisms that can be used to do so. The two accountability awareness tasks are interwoven, but the key to the first may be to emphasize that citizens have a right to clean and accountable government, that prominent public leaders in government or in civil society are supportive of those rights, and that with public participation, there are ways of effectively enforcing these rights. This leads into the second component, increasing awareness of the mechanisms that can be utilized to ensure accountability, both from the perspective of existing laws on the home front as well as best practices and legislative reforms that might be adopted from abroad.

Even in the abstract, the four components together illustrate that a key challenge in the awareness process is creating trust in the integrity system, at the same time that corruption within the larger society or state is brought to the forefront of citizen perceptions. That is, there is a tension between creating a supportive environment within which citizens will feel impelled to fight corruption, without so demonizing corruption as to make it seem pervasive and invincible.

This tension suggests that the task of expanding awareness requires careful fine-tuning. The core participants from civil society will need to instill a broad sense of trust and coherence, perhaps through coalitions that signal that they represent a broad consensus among civil society elites. They need to break any lingering taboos surrounding the discussion of corruption, or that suggest that corruption is a culturally-determined practice, common to that particular country (CIPE 2011). To be effective, they will also need reliable information on where exactly, and how exactly, to direct their campaigns: what are public perceptions (and misperceptions) about
corruption and accountability, how do they fit the actual national experience, and what is the best way to inform the public of the current situation?

International experience suggests that in the fight against corruption it may also be best to start small, with a focus on a particular state institution or process – such as pension payments, drivers’ licenses, or other forms of service delivery – in such a way as to enable incremental progress in addressing quotidian problems. This incremental approach is preferable to more ambitious objectives, such as eliminating all corruption or throwing out all corrupt politicians, that are most likely unrealistic and certainly unlikely to succeed in the short or medium term. Short-term successes are essential, if for no other reason than to help instill a sense of trust and mutual confidence in the goals of the program.

A corollary is that large-scale awareness campaigns, especially if given high-level political support, may backfire, leading to perceptions of the politicization of accountability processes, or the view that the problem is too big for any single citizen to handle. Large-scale media awareness campaigns are dangerous because they may exhaust public support and suggest that accountability institutions are weaker than they are (Kaufmann 2006, Shah 2007). Politicization is equally pernicious, and government-led anti-corruption efforts may in fact backfire, no matter how well-intentioned they are.

By way of example, Morris (2009) offers an comprehensive analysis of the anti-corruption campaign waged by Vicente Fox upon his election as President of Mexico (2000-2006). Demonstrating a commitment to his campaign promises of fighting corruption, in his first act as president, Fox appointed a committee “charged with developing and coordinating a broad-based anticorruption program,” aimed at producing “legal reforms designed to enhance the public’s access to information, creat[ing] a merit-based civil service, and develop[ing] programs in schools, universities, and businesses targeting Mexico’s pervasive culture of corruption” (Morris 2009, 4).

The campaign included a large awareness component, aimed at mobilizing civil society. Social pacts were signed between the government and civil society organizations, committing both sides to act honestly and commit to fighting corruption. Businesses were provided with ethics training, and in concert with business associations, the government created a certificate of ethical certification, and prizes for ethics.

The government hired social organizations to monitor government operations and compliance with international treaties on corruption. It expanded a program of so-called contralorías sociales, or social comptrollers, to audit large social programs and ensure that procurement programs complied with the law. Universities were brought in to conduct training workshops and research on corruption and accountability, and research contests and public symposia were organized to conduct and promote useful study of the subject. Newsletters and an anti-corruption toolkit were published to inform citizens about anti-corruption initiatives and means of fighting corruption (Morris 2009, 101-105).

In short, the government conducted a model public awareness campaign, putting together a wide range of initiatives in a very short period of time and reaching
out to all sectors of society. But by the end of his term in office, corruption accusations against Fox in the so-called Towelgate scandal, the lack of prosecutions against big officials believed to have participated in corrupt actions, and specific concerns about the superficial or politicized nature of the reforms had undermined not just the president, but also the reforms. Fox’s successor did little to give continuity to the anti-corruption program, and despite some lasting successes, such as a vaunted freedom of information law, much of the program withered on the vine. The result of this broad anti-corruption program was considerable institutional change, but at some cost in terms of public perceptions of corruption and of the nation’s capacity to combat it.

This example illustrates that no matter how well-intentioned the effort may be, heroic initiatives may be less effective in the long-term than more incremental programs that gradually build support across the entire society. It also points to the considerable risk that government leadership of anti-corruption programs may lead to politicization and disillusionment, pointing once again to the central role civil society can play, by contributing its perceived neutrality and a longer time horizon to the effort.

With this in mind, what methods, techniques and good practices are helpful in increasing awareness? Each of the four stages of the awareness package comes with its own most appropriate interventions, which can be grouped into “broad awareness” and “action awareness” efforts. The first category includes raising awareness of corruption’s costs and the rights of citizens in the abstract; the second aims to move from abstract awareness to concrete action, by making citizens aware of specific tools and mechanisms that they can use to fight corruption, as well as instilling confidence in the effectiveness of those tools.

**III.A.1. Broad awareness**

In generating broad awareness of corruption as an issue with costs to societies around the world, it is very important for civil society organizations to develop campaigns that are sensitive to local culture and local perceptions. Corruption is corruption no matter where it occurs, but the forms of corruption that raise the most concern in one country may be very different than those in other countries, depending on different local mores, differences in the perceived prevalence of certain patterns of corruption, or differences in the perceived costs and benefits of fighting specific forms in that country.

For these reasons, it may be helpful to first generate consensus on which issues are most locally salient, and then target awareness campaigns in such a way as to illustrate how the local situation differs from (or is similar to) the international experience. Once a basic diagnostic process has been completed, an extensive international literature is available that 1) demolishes the notion that corruption can be propitious for development; and 2) lays out in simple language the high costs of corruption to societies the world over. This literature is available, for example, from the UN’s “Your No Counts” website, which includes multimedia and print materials. Readily available literature such as this can be harnessed to the broad awareness objective relatively easily, and fashioned into media reports, newspaper stories, school programs, handouts, advertisements and the like. It may be useful to highlight other countries’ experiences first, so as to provide an implicit sense of how the local
problem compares, as well as hopeful lessons about how it might be effectively tackled. The key is to highlight the relationship between corruption, lower growth, higher inequality, weakened investment, poor public services, smaller business opportunities, higher local prices, and diminished public trust.

For those who work in the field of anti-corruption and accountability reforms, it may seem senseless to spend time and energy on publicizing the costs of corruption. After all, the costs of corruption are already very obvious to those who work in this field. But educating those who have only a fleeting awareness of its costs is nonetheless an essential step. Doing so may help to illustrate costs that citizens might not have considered before. Similarly, these awareness efforts might discuss in abstract terms how corruption takes place in its various manifestations, ranging from grand corruption through petty corruption, and begin a public debate about what actions are corrupt and how they damage local society. There are already a variety of such materials available -- free newspaper inserts created in Mauritius, comic strips in Finland, and musical performances, street performances and village forums in Thailand (Pope 2000, 43) – all aimed at making clear corruption’s costs to the population at large.

Such basic educational efforts may be helpful to creating a constituency of citizens that may not be active in the anti-corruption effort, but at the very least perceive that the supposed gains from corruption and informality – whether these are “cheaper” public services, quicker service, or less government “interference” – are insufficient to justify the enormous costs of corruption. Efforts to generate self-awareness may not create a wellspring of support for anti-corruption organizations, but it may lessen the number of citizens who are willing to contemplate engaging in bribery themselves, or to condone the practice of corruption when they witness it. To break myths about the “convenience” of corruption, or its prevalence (“everybody does it”), it will be useful to bring in real-life examples of its costs in terms of foregone public spending, not to mention the pathologies associated with corruption, such as weakened trust, weak institutions, organized crime, money laundering, and so forth.

Together with generating broad awareness of corruption should come some effort to generate broad awareness of citizen rights and responsibilities in guaranteeing responsible and responsive government. Especially – but not exclusively – in new or transitioning democracies, citizens may be unaware of their rights, much less of the institutions that have been created to uphold those rights, such as anti-corruption agencies or prosecutorial offices. Media and publicity campaigns may help to expand public awareness of these rights and instruments, but they will need to be locally-targeted, with clear reference to extant institutions operating in that particular country.

Integrity systems vary enormously, and while many rights are similar across nations, the institutional framework for defense of those rights is unique to each country. In some countries, formal state institutions may be the core actors in accountability processes – public prosecutors, for example. In other countries, legal accountability may be so weakened as to suggest that prosecution will have no effect, leading civil society to prefer anonymous denunciation and ‘name and shame’ techniques that highlight where the core problems in the bureaucracy lie and attempt to goad public agencies into corrective action.
In sum, any media campaign aimed at increasing awareness of rights will need to carefully map out the integrity system to ensure that the lessons that are being propagated accurately reflect local laws, institutional capacities and the day-to-day functioning of the integrity system in that particular country.

### III.A.2. Action awareness

Lest indignation give way to resignation, ‘broad awareness’ efforts should be followed in short order by ‘action awareness’ measures aimed at providing guidance about what the core issues of corruption are in the local situation, and how best to fight them. Action awareness takes place in three steps: assessment of corruption and accountability processes in that particular locale; dissemination of these studies; followed in close order by efforts to educate the public about specific mechanisms to enable citizen action.

#### a. Corruption assessment

A vast array of instruments can be used to evaluate the core issues of corruption in a specific country and suggest how the local experience contrasts with that elsewhere. International surveys of corruption perceptions or expert opinion, such as those carried out by Transparency International or Global Integrity, are a high-profile gauge of how the nation compares to its peers, and not infrequently garner substantial press coverage which helps to raise the profile of corruption on the public agenda.

Perhaps more useful in sensitive political situations, and useful in targeting actions by organizations on the ground, however, will be more locally-driven data that get at the extent, form, and causes of local corruption. With regard to extent, the objective is to understand how prevalent corruption is in the society. Who pays bribes? How often? In what contexts and under what conditions? Analysis of the forms of corruption attempt to map its occurrence: is grand corruption less pervasive than petty corruption, or vice versa? Does corruption tend to begin with the political process, or is it more prevalent in bureaucratic service provision? Is it tied to particular bureaucracies more than others? Finally, analysis of the causes should include the cultural and institutional supports for corruption, as well as the functioning of the integrity system in holding officeholders accountable.

There are a number of local instruments that permit analysis of the extent, form, and causes of local corruption (sometimes in tandem). All will be useful in obtaining this general data, as well as establishing a baseline for later comparison aimed at measuring the effects of reforms. Measures might include public expenditure tracking surveys (PETS) aimed at uncovering how much public money is transferred away from core policy objectives (to licit or illicit ends) between the central government and the final destination (citizens). The findings are sometimes sufficient to shock citizens and government into action: in one of the first PETS surveys undertaken, for example, in Uganda in 1996, “on average 87% of non-wage education funds were captured by local officials for purposes unrelated to their intended use” (Reinikka 2001).

Data might also include crime victimization surveys, such as the International Crime Victimization Survey or national equivalents, which aim to measure the
prevalence of certain crimes – including corrupt activities – over time. Similarly, some surveys (such as the Latin American Political Opinion Project - LAPOP and Transparency International’s Global Corruption Barometer) ask questions that attempt to measure the prevalence of bribe requests, bribe payments, and bribes witnessed by individual citizens. These are useful to measure how far perceptions of corruption are from the actual prevalence of participation in corruption in that particular country. It is often the case that these perceptions are in fact worse than the actual results, which can be a hopeful starting point for the awareness effort.

It may also be useful to measure community tolerance for different forms of corruption, to ascertain what forms of corruption are condemned by virtually all citizens, and which are more tolerated (in Heidenheimer’s words, which corruption is black, or condemned by most citizens, and which is white, or tolerated; Heidenheimer 2002). Similarly, surveys of the public can ascertain which forms of corruption are seen as most damaging, and which are seen as petty crimes, in that particular nation.

Corruption risk assessments, which aim to identify weaknesses which may permit corruption to potentially occur, without necessarily observing actual corruption, can also be helpful in finding danger zones. Risk is usually defined in these assessments as the product of the likelihood of corruption (that is, the amount of discretion available to officeholders as compared to the amount of oversight) and the potential impact (or size) of such corruption. Such assessments can be undertaken at various levels of analysis, ranging from broad (comparing institutions within government) to narrow (analyzing specific procurement processes).

b. Accountability assessment

Alongside these measures of actual and potential corruption, however, it may also be useful to conduct assessments of accountability institutions themselves, including performance benchmarks. These might include report cards on specific bureaucracies and deeper analyses, seeking to understand the key de jure legislation that governs bureaucratic choices as well as the de facto rules which are followed.

It might include cross-national comparison of specific indices, such as where the country stands in terms of freedom of information laws or measures of journalistic freedom. It might include audits of the national integrity system: what is the relationship between the number of accusations and the number of convictions? How many of those who are accused actually face criminal punishment? Where is the system failing? It might also look at local-level data on accountability: for example are local schools accountable to parents, and if so, what are the implications for school performance?

Assessments of accountability institutions might also include institutional assessments of both corruption and accountability. What institutions are most prone to corruption? What institutions have been targets of recent corruption scandals? Where has money been diverted, as shown by PETS? On the accountability side, similar questions may be analyzed. What do recent corruption scandals illustrate about the performance of accountability institutions? How does the accountability process function, passing through the sequential stages of monitoring, investigation, prosecution, and conviction? What role do determined bureaucracies play? What are
the strengths and weaknesses of specific bureaucracies? How well are they working together with other bureaucracies? Where are accountability processes falling short?

c. Enhancing awareness of accountability mechanisms

Finally, efforts to enhance action awareness should provide awareness of the tools of how to fight corruption. These might include both prospective and retrospective tools.

Retrospectively, having identified actual corruption, the question to answer for the public is how can civil society best fight it at home? Here, there are two core objectives. The first is to provide citizens with ready-made answers to practical questions: How do I blow the whistle on corrupt practices? Who do I call? What will they ask of me? What will they do with the information I provide? Will I be safe? What is the record of accountability institutions? Not all of the answers may be satisfactory: it may be that under some legal codes, citizens will not be permitted to remain anonymous, and retribution is always a possibility. Under such situations, can the media or civil society accept anonymous complaints? Are there ways that civil society can protect the anonymity of citizens?

Citizens may have other questions aimed at probing for information and gauging the likely effect of their efforts: What happens after I call? How long does it take? What are success rates in fighting corruption? It may be that accountability institutions have never been successful in seeing a politician convicted (as in Brazilian democracy, which saw no definitive convictions of a sitting federal congressman in its first 25 years prior to 2010). Under such cases, is there nonetheless a good reason to denounce wrongdoing?

These are questions that local civil society can answer, and answer with far greater authority than government or international organizations are able, with an eye to retrospective accountability as well as prospective reform. But it is very important to provide answers, no matter how weak or discouraging they may seem, because communities often have little idea of how to move forward when corruption is uncovered.

By way of example, in the previously mentioned randomized experiment on community monitoring of health service provision in the Ugandan countryside, researchers found the monitoring highly effective in reducing the misuse of resources, while in a similar study in India, monitoring had little effect. One of the likely explanations according to researchers is that the Indian monitoring, unlike that in Uganda, failed to provide training on what to do if the community turned up evidence of misused resources (Björkman and Svensson 2009; Banerjee et al. 2010).

Civil society organizations may occasionally need to go beyond simply providing answers, and actually assist in providing legal aid to victims or whistleblowers. This may mean nothing more than serving as a bridge to pro bono lawyers or human rights organizations. But it sometimes will mean mobilizing coalitions to serve as a protective shield against retribution and to pressure judicial institutions to proceed effectively against corrupt officeholders.
A key prospective objective is to provide ways for citizens to become involved in fighting corruption, beyond collecting evidence or making accusations of corruption in specific cases. What kinds of reforms are needed to strengthen the national integrity system? What sorts of political action are needed to push reform? How can civil society communicate these needs to voters and politicians? What mechanisms can citizens use to propose legislation and have it approved? How can individual citizens become involved?

A second prospective tool is to provide examples of what has been done to successfully fight corruption elsewhere. What are the best practices that have been used in other countries that can be applied locally? Networks of information are widely available, such as the online library of corruption literature collected by national agencies like Brazil’s Controladoria Geral da União (CGU),\textsuperscript{12} the World Bank,\textsuperscript{13} and private researchers such as the Internet Center for Corruption Research;\textsuperscript{14} the Anti-Corruption Research News (ACRN), a newsletter of best practices, and the GATEway inventory of assessment tools, both published by Transparency International\textsuperscript{15}; or the U4 Anti-Corruption Research Centre’s collection of expert answers on specific corruption themes.\textsuperscript{16} With careful adaptation, these best practices may help citizens and civil society organizations to plan a sequence of tactics that best responds to the local situation.

Before turning to the next objective, a final word on awareness. Much has been made of the need to increase awareness of both the corruption situation and the potential accountability remedies. But fighting corruption is a long-term endeavor, and one that requires constant effort. As noted earlier, the awareness effort faces a constant tension between the need to increase trust across citizens, even while highlighting the broken trust that is corruption.

In light of this tension, it is worth reiterating that the best strategic approach may be to mobilize gradually, in specific areas or specific themes, in such a manner as to accumulate victories that can be used to build further support. As the Mexican case illustrated, wide-scale national mobilization all too often leads to disillusionment, which may set back anticorruption efforts by delegitimizing them or leading to general resignation about the likelihood that anything can ever be done to effectively address the problem. Furthermore, it is important to publicize success, to let citizens see that while gains may be slow, there are nonetheless many other fellow citizens working to improve the situation.

\textbf{III.B. Increasing Ownership}

To consider how best to increase civil society ownership of anti-corruption efforts, it is vital to first consider how citizens and civil society organizations can best participate in anti-corruption programs. Four core forms of civil society participation in the accountability process are key: 1) oversight of government and officeholders; 2) planning and prioritization of anti-corruption programs; 3) data collection and civic education; and 4) public advocacy and public campaigns. Participation in each will likely increase civil society ownership of anti-corruption efforts, and indeed, civil society is particularly well-suited to participating in these four priorities, albeit sometimes in conjunction with other actors, including both international and national government institutions.
III.B.1. Oversight of government and officeholders

Citizens have a key role to play in integrity-holding by patrolling government actions and the conduct of officeholders. Provided with enough information, and with solid rights protections, citizens can effectively exercise their right to enforce accountability. By doing so, they increase the likelihood that wrongdoing will be caught, and may increase the likelihood that government accountability institutions will act against wrongdoers. Although it is an uncertain sequence, this may contribute to a positive and self-reinforcing cycle, whereby citizen efforts lead to accountability, encouraging the expansion of citizen oversight of officeholders under other circumstances.

There is a large literature that discusses oversight from the perspective of ‘fire alarms’ and ‘police patrols,’ inspired by the pathbreaking work of McCubbins and Schwartz (1984). These authors argue that oversight safeguards can operate in at least two ways, each with their own degree of effectiveness. Analyzing the US Congress, they argued that it was able to monitor the actions of the large Executive branch via ‘police patrols,’ whereby bureaucratic agencies created by Congress ‘patrol’ the executive. But police patrols by the legislative bureaucracy were considered far less effective and more costly than ‘fire alarms,’ whereby citizens and interest groups keep a looser watch over issues that concern them directly, raising an alarm if things are not going as they think they should.

This framework – originally created for thinking about how to monitor bureaucratic performance – is nonetheless particularly useful as we think through how civil society can be brought into the fight against corruption. In the context of national integrity systems, fire alarms often point to issues that police patrols might not be aware of, relieving government oversight agencies to focus on issues of precise ‘compliance’ while citizens focus on the broader and more important question of ‘integrity.’

One reason that citizen fire alarms are more effective ‘integrity’ enforcers than police patrol ‘compliance’-driven institutions has to do with the multiplicity of opinions and interests citizens hold. Citizens may focus on issues that go beyond the mere availability of services, also analyzing the quality of service provision and the process by which services are provided. They may be able to use a variety of frames simultaneously, measuring not just the technical qualities of compliance with national law, as an oversight bureaucracy would, but also the adherence to ideal normative standards common to that country. Even at a technical level, they may be able to simultaneously measure and judge compliance across a range of legislation, including not just state and national laws, but also international conventions.

Civil society organizations may also be able to produce their own reports on the implementation of international agreements such as the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), the African Union Convention against Corruption or the Inter American Convention against Corruption, in ways that complement government reports in an independent fashion.

Finally, citizens may be able to monitor officeholders in ways that state institutions cannot, noting, for example, when an officeholder’s lifestyle – or the lifestyle of his family members – does not seem commensurate with a civil servant.
salary. The multiplicity of approaches adopted by citizens, in other words, means a variety of perceptions of, and approaches to, accountability that goes far beyond what state bureaucracies are capable of.

The task of increasing ownership in the field of oversight is difficult, in part because the triggers for citizen participation are so diverse. It may be that the participating citizen is an ethical zealot, who finds any degree of corruption intolerable. More likely, many citizens will be motivated by personal interests: “I want to open a business, and this petty bureaucrat is causing me headaches” or “My mother needs heart medicine, and this pharmacist is charging me extra, alleging that he needs the money to circumvent a supply shortage.” Some citizens may even be driven to participate because they are enraged that they paid a bribe, but that it had little or no effect!

Given the diverse motivations for citizen participation, and the likelihood that some citizens will be dissuaded from doing anything if the apparent costs of setting off the fire alarm are too high, it is important for accountability-seekers to reduce the perceived costs and increase the perceived benefits of participation by citizens.

On the cost side, in order to function adequately, and to engage citizens who may be reticent about participating, the fire alarm model of citizen participation requires that basic rights be respected and that mechanisms be created to facilitate participation. With regard to rights, it is essential that citizens have the right to raise concerns and allegations responsibly without fear of either legal retaliation or extralegal retribution. To do so effectively, there must be guarantees of access to information, as well as of freedom of speech and assembly.

In order for civil society organizations to play an effective role in anti-corruption efforts, they too must have basic civil protections, and the public and international organizations must push for adequate political space for them to operate. This includes laws already mentioned, guaranteeing the rights of expression and association. It also means creating laws that permit formation of non-governmental entities, and do not unduly regulate or tax such organizations: “these [regulations] should be clearly understood, accessible, consistent with international norms, and not needlessly restrictive or cumbersome. Public officials handling any accreditation procedures should clearly understand that the law must be applied even-handedly, without broad discretionary powers. In this context, any requirement to register is best served where decisions are made by a court or other independent body” (Pope 2000). But these laws and rights alone may not be sufficient to permit effective oversight: the government itself will need to have strong records management rules that permit effective public access to data, and there should be oversight of data handling. Participation will be further strengthened if there are rules permitting citizens to seek legal redress to ensure service delivery and there is guaranteed legal standing for civil society organizations to act as representatives in policymaking institutions (Chêne 2008; Goetz and Jenkins 2001).

There must also be clear laws that effectively criminalize behaviors that are considered unacceptable by society at large. That is, laws that ensure that if unethical behavior is reported, accountability agencies acting in good faith will be able to use local legislation to effectively prosecute. It is thus no surprise that most long-term anti-corruption programs include either the creation of, or the amendment of, the
legislation that governs civil service regulations, financial disclosure, public procurement, political party financing, money-laundering, and freedom of information (Morris 2009). The first five effectively set the limits on reasonable behaviors while the sixth enables effective oversight. At the level of civil servants, laws on public administrative procedures are needed to determine the correct processes and remedies or sanctions applicable in case of violations and public regulations are needed to govern public services and their provision.

Mechanisms that make the fire alarm model less costly to use come in many guises, some managed by the public bureaucracy and others by civil society organizations. State-run mechanisms include citizen hotlines, such as the central telephone number used by the Indian national police to receive anonymous tips, or ombuds offices within each state ministry that receive complaints from the end users of public services, or that permit lower-ranking civil servants to report on their superiors. Anonymity may be a central issue: although it can lead to irresponsible accusations, the effectiveness of the fire alarm model relies on the pluralism of the demands that are raised to public scrutiny. If citizens have to register their personal information – as many countries still require – the potential for retribution or unwanted meddling may prevent them from doing so.

Civil society organizations can provide cost-reducing mechanisms as well, either in an ad hoc manner, by protecting whistleblowers and collecting and anonymously forwarding credible information to the media and state institutions, or more rigorously, for example, by setting up hotlines that can receive complaints and air them as a way of diagnosing corruption prevalence. One of the more ingenious recent examples of this is the Indian website ipaidabribe.com, which accepts completely anonymous reports of bribe-paying, not with the goal of punishing particular individuals, but rather, with the goal of mapping where wrongdoing is taking place. The website compiles this data and places it online by sector and city, enabling both citizens and governments to evaluate the types of problems citizens are having with specific public services. The doubly blind process – in which neither the allegedly corrupt official nor the accuser is named – helps ensure that the legal and reputational costs are low, even as the service permits corrective state attention to the corruption ‘hotspots,’ services or sectors that are reported to be most susceptible to corruption.

Civil society may be uniquely positioned to sponsor events such as public meetings or hearings that enable citizens to express their concerns directly to officeholders, or to encourage officeholders to more publicly share information. Given their ‘soft’ power of moral suasion, civil society organizations may be able to publicly encourage officeholders to engage in acts they might otherwise resist, including submitting to internal and external audits, share information with community councils or civic observatories, or participate in public meetings. Civil society organizations of course have no formal coercive power to compel governments to participate in such activities, but their ‘soft’ power of moral reputation and public support means that officeholders will often prefer to participate, rather than risk public opprobrium.

The instruments civil society can use to accomplish this oversight merit further discussion. Civil society may participate in audits and inspections of service provision, analyzing administrative and financial aspects of government programs
from a number of perspectives: compliance with regulations and legislation, as well as suggesting procedural changes that might lessen the chances for corruption. As noted earlier, civic observatories enable citizens from different backgrounds and specialties to analyze specific services or services in a given region, and to communicate their findings both to the public and the government. Episodic public meetings with officeholders may enable regular feedback between service providers, civil servants, and service users. Some combination of the three instruments may be possible as well: Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), for example, is currently engaged in a project to oversee climate change programs, involving multiple donors and multiple projects. As part of this approach, TIB will evaluate potential policy gaps and risks, risks in enforcement, accompany policies and rules, monitor operations, and oversee nongovernmental organizations that are receiving aid.19

The key here, though, is that civil society organizations will probably not be asked to participate in all of these functions, and may have to ‘use its elbows’ to find a place at the table. To get information, access to civil servants, and accompany bureaucratic processes up close, organizations may need to rely on allies in the government, partners in the private sector, citizen mobilization, and even the support of international organizations.

International organizations can help to reduce the costs of monitoring as well, especially if their participation is seen as politically neutral and not as interference in local affairs. Cross-national comparative surveys of corruption may help local civil society to better analyze where their local problems lie. International treaties may provide a useful set of commitments that pledge the government to follow certain behaviors. International organizations may draw on local civil society to monitor this compliance, but at the same time, provide high-level support if local governments are reticent to comply or actively move to repress local whistleblowing organizations.

We have discussed how the costs of oversight can be reduced so as to encourage civil society engagement in monitoring. With regard to increasing the benefits of engaging in oversight, much will depend on how effectively the system appears to function. No matter how unrealistic it may be, citizens who report on alleged corruption may desire immediate satisfaction, such as the sacking of an offending civil servant or changes to the bureaucratic procedures that govern a particular service. In most bureaucracies, with their top-down organization and lengthy administrative processes, such outcomes probably cannot be accomplished in such a way as to satisfy citizens in the short-run. But both governments and civil society organizations can increase the perceived benefits of participation through quick messages of appreciation as well as more measured reports on the overall effects of their oversight (e.g., “In the past year we have received more than 300 reports from concerned citizens, which have resulted in the dismissal of seven functionaries…”). They may also publicize their efforts via the media, which will not necessarily lead to the same individuals participating in future oversight, but may encourage others to follow in their footsteps, by suggesting that there is nothing to be lost, and perhaps much to be gained, from playing a role.

III.B.2. Planning and prioritization of anti-corruption programs

One of the best ways of engaging citizens in any public plan is by allowing them to offer an opinion and shape its objectives and priorities. In doing so, they may
develop an ownership role derived from having been a part of the process of selecting key priorities and policy goals. In so doing, they will also contribute to better informing these policy goals and providing them with greater public support. Citizens and civil society organizations play a key role by informing both national and internationally sponsored programs with their knowledge of local norms and values, as well as of the *de facto* functioning of local legislation and institutions.

Such participation can take place at a variety of levels, ranging from the mass public through elite representation. Mass publics are hard to integrate effectively, but they can be involved in shaping anti-corruption programs, for example, by being asked to participate in public opinion surveys of their concerns with corruption in a particular state or country. A number of anti-corruption initiatives around the world begin with such surveys, aimed at diagnosing the paths of corruption and accountability before elaborating an initial plan.

Elites, oftentimes the representatives or leaders of civil society organizations, may be asked to participate in national commissions or as external ombudspersons in defining long-term priorities. Like agencies in many countries, Brazil’s Federal Comptroller’s Office (CGU), for example, has an advisory council composed of a number of civil society representatives, including representatives of the accountability organizations Transparência Brasil and Instituto Ethos. These representatives are asked to participate in regular meetings of the council, and to suggest projects and policies that would improve transparency and the fight against corruption. Similarly, many countries have included civil society representatives in their delegations at meetings to discuss the implementation international treaties such as the UN Convention Against Corruption.

Both mass and elite participation in this manner can be quite effective in ensuring some degree of civil society voice in government actions. But they may not be sufficient to guarantee effective long-term civil society engagement, they tend to be ad hoc, they may not be truly representative, and they are potentially easily co-opted by the government of the day.

One of the more innovative experiments in policy-making in recent years has tried to ameliorate some of these problems through ongoing participatory planning. Experiences with participatory planning began with municipal budgeting processes, such as the one employed over the past 15 years in the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre, whereby local communities are organized to discuss their spending priorities, then use the established priorities to adopt long-term plans for budget expenditures in the community. More recent exemplars beyond budgeting alone to include the People’s Planning Campaign in Kerala; popular participation in Mexican electoral and freedom of information systems; and local government codes and laws in the Philippines and Bolivia (Isunza Vera and Gurza Lavalle 2010). All share an emphasis on citizen engagement to ensure greater accountability and responsiveness of public policies.

Common to all of these efforts is the desire to bring citizens into local political processes as a means of ensuring greater accountability and effectiveness. In most cases, citizens are asked to help establish long-term objectives, then meet regularly to discuss how these objectives are being met. There is good evidence from Brazil, for example, that participatory budgeting has helped increase expenditures on the poor, as well as boost public participation in the political process.
This procedure has been the subject of much academic discussion, which highlights its ability to empower citizens, increase public scrutiny, and generally improve participation. Of course, participatory budgeting is a state-run process, reliant on the good will and oversight of politicians. It also suffers from a number of flaws, including the fact that it is time-consuming and does not necessarily involve new citizens (i.e., those who were not already involved; Nylen 2002).

These caveats notwithstanding, the use of participatory mechanisms may be a means of guaranteeing greater citizen participation and engagement, and would not necessarily need to be overseen by government, but might successfully draw on local civil society coalitions for leadership. The experience of the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) organization in India offers a good example of such a bottom-up mechanism of popular participation: the MKSS began participatory auditing of local spending in Rajasthan, publishing parallel accounts of government spending that contradicted the official results). They pushed for release of public expenditure data and over time were able to change the local government act to include local citizens in regular auditing of development programs (Chêne 2008). As Goetz and Jenkins (2001) note, in this and other cases citizens broke away from the typical ‘vertical’ channels of accountability, and “insinuated themselves” into previously closed ‘horizontal’ accountability functions such as state auditing and administrative review. The outcome was useful both to performance outcomes as well as to participation.

Participatory planning in the field of anti-corruption efforts might follow a strategic sequence:

i) Establish priorities: Recognizing the fact that both time and resources are limited, participatory planning would attempt to elaborate and rank order key priorities and objectives, including the appropriate targets for action. Given what we know about patterns of corruption in our country, what precisely is our immediate focus? Federal, state or municipal corruption? Corruption in procurement, law enforcement, or service-provision? Are we aiming to increase public awareness, change legislation, or punish specific wrongdoing?

ii) Strategy and tactics: With the key priorities established, the participatory process would determine the overall strategy for the anti-corruption program, followed by the specific tactics to be utilized. Strategy refers to a plan of action aimed at achieving a grand objective; tactics refer to the best means of achieving specific ends toward that objective. If the grand objective is to reduce corruption in municipal procurement, the strategy might be to reduce the incentives for corruption; the tactics could include a major civic education effort, instigating prosecutorial action, and the creation of a whistleblowers’ hotline.

iii) Reappraisal and reevaluation: The essential final step is to re-evaluate the effects of the anti-corruption efforts regularly, with an eye to realigning the program’s core priorities to take into account both successes and failures: for example, we believe that problems of corruption in municipal procurement have been significantly ameliorated, so perhaps we should move on to the next item on our list of priorities. At the same time, it will
be useful to reappraise the effectiveness of the key tactics and strategy, with an eye to improving both ongoing efforts in municipal procurement, as well as in new areas.

Citizen involvement via participatory councils can be very effective in all three of these stages, although it may have the greatest effect during the first and third stages, given the likelihood that citizens will collectively be quite aware of the problems, gaps, and danger zones in specific policy arenas. Furthermore, citizens may not be as well acquainted with the comparative international experience with particular tactics and strategies, much less the local legal framework within which these tactics are introduced. For this reason, while public consultation may help keep the public engaged during the second stage, it may be less productive than during the first and third stages, even as it has the potential to generate useful and creative ideas of new tactics.

Obviously, citizen engagement is a time-consuming process, most effective in small arenas (municipal government) or specific policy areas (service delivery). For this reason, nationally oriented civil society organizations and national and international state actors may see little reason to engage in such activities. However, participation sums over time and space, and civil society participation in local level anti-corruption efforts has the potential to rise up to the national level, whether through the creation of new coalitions and organizations, or through mass mobilization. For this reason, even nationally oriented organizations may consider it wise to sponsor and support local efforts in this direction.

III.B.3. Data collection and civic education

The twin tasks of collecting data and educating the public about how to tackle corruption are essential to generating citizen ownership of the accountability process. They help by informing the public in making educated judgments about the prevalence of corruption in the country, the forms of corruption, and the likely success of given accountability strategies. They also contribute to ensuring citizen buy-in to the larger anti-corruption agenda.

It is commonly assumed that it may be difficult to enhance citizen engagement in carrying out these two tasks. Both tasks require both a high level of expertise and a degree of engagement in the anti-corruption field that are not widely shared among the population as a whole. Furthermore, they require resources, time and dedication that cannot be widely shared, given the scarcity of all three. Thus it is not surprising that responsibility for these tasks tends to be housed in either government agencies or civil society organizations.

These potential difficulties having been noted, it is worth recognizing that citizens have been engaged in data collection via a variety of efforts, including public expenditure tracking and citizen monitoring of public service delivery. Recent work in Indonesia, for example, shows how local communities can play a significant role in monitoring construction projects to evaluate whether spending is in line with the reported data (Olken 2007). Community participation of this sort enables users to give grassroots feedback that may be far more effective than ‘top-down’ approaches, and may also empower local citizens in other areas (but it must be noted that community monitoring only had a significant effect when combined with announcement of a
government audit, and also showed that citizen participation worked best when citizens had a strong stake in the outcomes).

Citizen engagement may also be encouraged by the regular and transparent release of public data. The costs of civil society engagement in data collection can be significantly reduced through passage of appropriate freedom of information laws, combined with public vigilance about how governments are complying with them. With data made publicly available by government and public sector agencies, preferably using the internet, it becomes significantly easier for civil society to monitor data provision, as well as to sort through it for relevant information that is useful for both assessment and oversight.

Foreign actors are often able to pressure government for access to data and bureaucratic procedures in ways that domestic actors cannot. While the involvement of foreigners can be used as a political cudgel by national governments who rail against foreign interference, and thus may imply serious risks, the existence of multilateral treaties such as the UN Convention against Corruption can be a powerful source of leverage. Civil society can use the existence of such treaties, and their acceptance by a majority of national governments, to pressure for effective implementation of their provisions.

Two examples illustrate how this foreign influence can be usefully leveraged by local civil society to improve access to data and better accountability outcomes. Indonesia Corruption Watch (ICW), for example, was able to analyze compliance with UNCAC provisions, offering an alternative to the official government compliance report, using the international treaty to press for change, and pressing for specific changes to guarantee better adherence to the treaty in future.

When civil society is unable to act in this way, foreign organizations may be able to encourage local government cooperation by providing neutral and unbiased analysis of how legislation could be changed to meet international standards. For example, Transparency International worked with local civil society organizations in the Middle East to analyze their national compliance with the UNCAC standards, publishing a series of country reports. By working in this way, Transparency was able to obtain good local information about UNCAC implementation in these countries, while publishing under the Transparency label provided an umbrella of credibility, legitimacy and protection for local civil society organizations. The existence of a global Coalition of Civil Society Friends of UNCAC, established in 2006 and composed of more than 50 prominent international organizations, provides ready-made opportunities for such international networks to provide local civil society organizations with international protection and assistance.

Civil society participation in training and education requires resources that civil society organizations may not always have available. However, given the central importance of credibility in this arena, this may be an arena in which government and international agencies might fruitfully support civil society, recognizing that only non-political, technically proficient agencies will have the capacity to train and transmit lessons in a manner that is perceived as neutral and unbiased.

Civil society organizations clearly have a variety of roles in this field, ranging from rather basic training programs for interested citizens, through technical training
for officeholders in specific agencies, and the provision of legal and advisory services to whistleblowers and the public at large. In all of these roles, civil society organizations may play a dual role of training and information-gathering, obtaining information from the trainees on their experience in the “field” and aggregating it into more effective integrity-enhancing tactics, while simultaneously imparting lessons on best practices.

III.B.4. Public advocacy and public campaigns

Public advocacy is the effort to publicize and obtain support for anti-corruption strategies, such as the need to develop an ethical society and a responsive government. Public campaigns are efforts to make citizens aware and mobilize society to change behaviors, laws and/or policies, including by monitoring officeholders, reporting wrongdoing, and changing specific laws. Both advocacy and campaigns will only work well if they benefit from citizen engagement. Simultaneously, however, participation in advocacy and campaigns may generate conditions for lasting citizen engagement in the future.

Public advocacy of anti-corruption strategies is one of the strongest contributions that civil society organizations can make to national integrity systems. By illustrating the costs of corruption, its specific locations, and the tools available to combat it, civil society organizations contribute significantly to a goal described earlier, generating awareness, at the same time that they may cause citizens to feel ownership of anti-corruption policies.

Public campaigns go a step further, giving individuals specific reasons to mobilize and goals to mobilize around. Mobilization occurs for a number of reasons, ranging from external and often unplanned causes such as scandal, to well-planned and coherent movements by civil society coalitions.

Sometimes mobilization is triggered by scandal or crisis, as when a leading politician is found to have engaged in corrupt practices and the public races to the street to “throw the bums out.” The classic example is the 1973 scandal surrounding Hong Kong’s police chief, which led to such widespread revulsion that society and government institutions banded together to create the renowned Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), which has been an inspiration to many anti-corruption reformers worldwide. But all too often scandal does not have the expected effects: scandal-driven mobilization is frequently blamed on the opportunism of opposition parties and thus may lead to heightened politicization, which in turn sows doubts about the charges against incumbents, and may lead to discouragement and a feeling that citizens were mobilized on behalf of narrow political interests. Still other scandals go to waste, with entrenched interests using delay and dilution to slow or water down proposed reforms.

A second form of mobilization arises out of comprehensive, nationwide anti-corruption campaigns. Unfortunately, especially if they are led by the government of the day – as they often must be, since government may be the only actor able to coordinate such a widespread effort – such large-scale campaigns may generate unrealistic or unfulfilled expectations. They may be perceived to have been politicized, or they may simply exhaust public energies without leading to much long-run progress (as in the previously mentioned case of Mexico).
A third form of mobilization may be a far more effective way of building citizen engagement in the anti-corruption process over the long-haul: through narrowly targeted campaigns for specific laws or reforms that would reach beyond a single individual politician and reshape the entire political system. Many countries’ constitutions include legal mechanisms that permit the public to initiate specific reform proposals, provided they can gather enough signatures on a petition. In Brazil, for example, an article of the Constitution permits “popular initiatives”: if 1% of the voting population sign on to a petition, it is submitted as a proposal to Congress. The strength of popular support tends to lead to high visibility and subsequent congressional approval: citizens signal their desire for change rather dramatically via the petition and in the face of such widespread popular support, few politicians dare buck the reformist wave. In 1999, the initiative was used to increase the penalties for vote buying; in 2010, a similar coalition of civil society organizations pushed to pass a law barring candidates who have been convicted of any crime in an appeals court from running for office.

Public campaigns mobilized around such narrowly defined legislative proposals, targeted at changing well-specified behaviors across the entire class of politicians or officeholders (without regard to party or incumbency), can be very effective in accomplishing three useful objectives. First, changing specific laws and institutional structures. Second, generating citizen engagement by illustrating that with enough effort and preparation, it may be possible to change the system for the better. Third, creating narrow yet highly tangible success stories that illustrate the potential for change, in the process bringing new citizens into the anti-corruption effort, while deepening the ties across networks of civil society organizations.

There is considerable evidence that anti-corruption efforts that focus on specific tasks, rather than large-scale awareness raising, tend to be most effective over the long-run. A 2004 study by the Open Society Foundation in South Eastern Europe, for example, found that while large scale anti-corruption programs succeeded in “raising demand for reform, they seem to have failed in creating a self sustaining constituency over longer period of time.” The study found that the best means of generating success was to provide direct benefits to a well defined constituency. By choosing to target specific legislation or specific practices, it may be possible to create coalitions for reform that are dynamic, effective, and lasting (Chêne and Dell, 2008).

To facilitate this task, where possible, it will be helpful to reach out not just to civil society, but also to the private sector, which frequently has considerable experience with public sector corruption, and may be a powerful source of resources and pro-reform interests. Furthermore, while the private sector is often a source of corruption rents, it is not always a willing participant in the corruption game. Sometimes businesses are “forced” to resort to corruption to survive in marketplaces marked by heavy-handed government regulation or opaque regulations. In such an environment, businesses may welcome the chance to band together with civil society to push for specific reforms, whether these are voluntary good practice standards within the business community, which help to communicate appropriate behaviors, or changes in the regulatory framework applied by the state, which may diminish the opportunities for corruption. Either of these may be sufficient to help businesses to
reject corrupt advances by officeholders (CIPE 2011), and in so doing, may be a powerful motivation for the private sector to join in the anti-corruption effort.

The distinction made here between comprehensive, nationwide anti-corruption campaigns and smaller, more narrowly defined anti-corruption campaigns may be a slightly artificial one. The best anti-corruption campaigns fit somewhere between the two: they may build from small success to small success, in an incremental fashion, all while maintaining a broad coalition of shifting interests over the long haul. Reformers must walk a middle road between overly ambitious reforms that set public expectations so high that they are sure to be dashed, and piecemeal, uncoordinated reforms with no “owners” who will see them through implementation and consolidation (Pope 2000, xxi).

To build a coalition capable of finding this middle ground, supporters within the country and abroad will do well to engage in the aforementioned assessment and awareness efforts, to ensure that the public is aware that fighting corruption is a long slog, to provide support and protection to local activists and organizations, and to engage international organizations to ensure their serious commitment to fighting corruption. Having noted many potential risks of public campaigns, however, it is important to recognize that at their best, civil society organizations can play a role that no government can, of continuously advocating and pushing for ongoing, non-political, anti-corruption measures that benefit all of society. Further, civil society organizations can mobilize the public to specific ends, again in ways that governments cannot, and with a more credible claim to political neutrality.

III.C. Improved Coordination

Coordinating civil society efforts is perhaps the most difficult of the four objectives discussed here. This is the case in part because the very virtues that make civil society such a vital force in the integrity effort – its pluralism, the diversity of perspectives, and the impermanence of its interests – combine to make it very difficult to mobilize over the long-term, much less to give direction to these efforts.

There are at least two basic models for civil society coordination of national integrity efforts: national movements and sectoral movements. National movements face the more obvious coordination problem, but may be able to generate more lasting change; while sectoral movements may be able to overcome serious collective action problems, but run the risk of having only small-bore effects.

The national movement model generally relies on regularly convened meetings of civil society to suggest and to accompany needed governance reforms that might improve the national integrity system. There are a number of examples of this national movement model, including Bulgaria’s Coalition 2000, the Philippines’ Transparency and Accountability Network, the South African National Anti-Corruption Forum, the Korean Citizens’ Coalition for Anti-Corruption Legislation, and many of the Transparency national country chapters’ efforts to implement the national integrity system approach (for further details on each, see Chêne 2010; on Korea, see Yoon 2009).

Together they share a number of positive qualities, including a laudable breadth of participation from across society, as well as broad goals, generally
determined through consultations across key actors from the public and private sectors, as well as civil society representatives. Many of these national movements follow a common script, with study of citizen perceptions, consultation on the key priorities and suggested responses to core problems, development of a national action plan, dissemination of that plan throughout society, and the subsequent monitoring of the government response. By engaging in a lengthy consultative process, this approach aspires to engage key actors and build political will and momentum for reform.

The problem with the national movement model is one that frequently plagues civil society, of how to marry representativeness with effectiveness. If all of civil society is represented in its heterogeneous diversity, it may be difficult to achieve any consensus at all, much less to make effective policy recommendations. Participants may differ in their willingness to contribute, or in their perceptions of the pace and urgency of change. They may not be equally committed to long-term efforts to fight corruption, especially as initial gains are realized. They may differ on how stridently to contest current evidence of corruption, as opposed to focusing their energy and resources on longer-term institutional reforms that make no reference to current scandals.

Coordination of the discussions and the creation of formal structures required for collaboration is complex, and may lead to perceptions that despite the collaborative spirit of discussions, decisions are being made by a non-deliberative or non-representative leadership. There is a related collective action problem, of how to spark citizen participation without central leadership: too often, the leaders of such movements are perceived as being either politically driven or in some way coopted by the government, as the government may often be the only actor with the resources needed to bring together such a diverse coalition.25

The second model addresses some of these problems by adopting a smaller scale of organization, aimed at achieving smaller-bore ‘sectoral’ changes. These might include narrower civil society working groups to suggest changes that improve specific legislation (e.g., the creation of freedom of information laws or the reform of legal procedures on money laundering). They might include groups targeted at assessing and reforming specific areas of government, with an eye to creating the conditions for the emergence of “islands of integrity” within the government bureaucracy (Pope 2000).

The narrower sectoral model has many exemplars, with both long and short-term objectives. Short-term, specific sectoral objectives are exemplified by the two Brazilian public initiatives described in the previous section, which were coordinated jointly by a handful of civil society organizations – including anti-corruption groups, as well as religious organizations and the bar association – without any pretension of representing all of civil society. They sought to garner public support to change specific laws – on vote-buying and candidate probity – but did not attempt to incorporate the opinions of all of civil society in their campaign. Having set the terms of the debate, this coalition worked hard to convince citizens of the virtue of its course. Once the public initiative succeeded, the coalition disbanded, although many of the organizations continue to interact in other arenas.
Longer term sectoral campaigns are also possible, as in the case of the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI), an initiative announced by British Prime Minister Tony Blair in conjunction with the World Bank in 2002. The goal of EITI is to set standards for extractive industries “through the verification and full publication of company payments and government revenues from oil, gas and mining.” Countries may sign up to be evaluated for EITI compliance status: EITI then engages in independent assessment of the country’s performance and what measures are needed to strengthen it. EITI is composed of a coalition of diverse representatives both from the industry itself, as well as from civil society and international organizations. Because it sets and monitors global standards, EITI is a long-term initiative, which requires continued funding, an executive secretariat, and regular meetings of its members.

Sectoral campaigns may be easier to coordinate and organize than national campaigns, especially because they do not require input from as broad a range of actors. Further, sectoral campaigns need not end after a single objective has been attained. Indeed, sectoral campaigns may permit the gradual evolution of a core coalition chosen for its member qualities -- integrity, shared objectives, and shared values. The objectives or membership of this core coalition can later be expanded if needed, but without the risks to any of those member qualities that might occur if a dissenting organization were included from the outset.

But although effectiveness is enhanced by sectoral campaigns, not all measures are likely to be consensual across society, which may weaken citizen commitment to implementation or the wider credibility of these efforts. They may be captured or weakened by specific actors, or lose vigor as they age. The initial conditions which led to their creation may disappear, realigning interests and shifting objectives. And ultimately, sectoral campaigns will likely have fewer proponents in society as a whole, which will also mean less citizen engagement to ensure oversight and continued reform.

How can coordination of anti-corruption efforts, whether national or sectoral, be improved and strengthened? There are four important lessons from recent experience and the literature on coalition-building (Johnston and Kpundeh 2004, USAID 2005, Chêne 2010).

First, specialization can be a boon. As noted above, sectoral campaigns may be far easier to organize and more effective at the margin than national anti-corruption campaigns. But even within larger national campaigns, specialization on a specific topic – for example, via creation of working groups on the judiciary, on electoral finance, etc. -- helps to guarantee a clear focus, and usually means a more engaged set of policy actors. Effective campaigns also often incorporate actors who are not a part of the network of explicitly anti-corruption organizations, but who nonetheless may be able to contribute valuable technical skills and knowledge in that specific fold. For example, the private sector, as well as private associations such as trade unions, lawyers’ guilds, or development organizations. Although coordination may be complicated by bringing in these new or tangentially-related actors, it has the benefit of providing expertise and a ready-made constituency for change, as well as lending credibility and legitimacy to the reform effort.
Second, it is important to establish effective management structures, with clear rules and regular schedules for civil society participation, but also the autonomy to operate efficiently without regular consultation. These management structures must be accountable, living by the same rules the organization as a whole seeks to impart on the rest of society, and avoiding the traps of excessive personalization or politicization. They should follow an agenda set in advance through consultation with member organizations, but with the autonomy to take day-to-day operational decisions and the accountability to respond for them after the fact. Although this objective sounds obvious and simple, it is frequently the Achilles’ heel of non-governmental organizations.

Third, good coordination requires good communication at two levels: first, to guarantee continued commitment, and then to ensure continued consensus. Given that no single anti-corruption organization can survive on its own, without support from other groups and from individual citizens, this is a vital consideration. Coordination efforts by civil society will be as much about generating incentives for participation and consensus around the goals of the group as they will be about finding ways to implement specific recommendations. An effective communications strategy will help significantly in highlighting successes that motivate participation, while also pointing to major challenges that may inspire participants to participate. Leaders will need to flatter, cajole, listen, aggregate, and give credit to participants, drawing attention to their contributions, highlighting their sacrifices, and putting on display their selflessness. This is not an easy task. Second, partners in the coalition need to know what the “management” body is up to, both in terms of strategy and at the tactical level. Citizens will prefer a coherent message from the coalition, rather than uneven or disparate communications from a diverse set of member organizations. Tone is as important as content here, with the goal of communicating successes, avoiding unnecessarily polarizing content, and pointing toward future goals that offer opportunities for ongoing collaboration. International agencies may help by providing communications and media relations training, as well as support for these vital outreach efforts.

Fourth, under some circumstances, it may be worth working with the government, with specific agencies, or with specific individuals within it. The relationship with government need not be consistently adversarial: in many cases, key officeholders will be as eager as civil society organizations to eliminate corruption and eager to find allies. Civil society should attempt to understand the incentives officeholders may have to welcome (or oppose) their participation in combating corruption, and seek out those officeholders who are likely to be allies. Although we have already mentioned risks to working too closely with officeholders, there are also strong gains to be had. Civil society organizations and government have different comparative advantages when it comes to combating corruption, and may gain from the mutual reinforcement: civil society may be able to contribute public pressure and a different perspective, holding civil servants accountable and building public confidence in anti-corruption efforts and reforms; officeholders will have a privileged view of where problems lie, how they can be effectively tackled, and may have the wherewithal to coordinate efforts effectively across the public and private sectors, as well as civil society.
III.D. Introducing standardization

Standardization is a helpful way of providing best practices to civil society, enabling cross-national comparative analysis, and overcoming the problematic attention deficit disorder that is common to civil society organizations, with their fluid membership and inability to focus on all the themes that might be of interest at any given moment in time. Standardization can be introduced at various levels of complexity, ranging from the overall design of anti-corruption programs, through treaty compliance and national-level country studies and integrity audits.

At the broadest level, there is already some standardization of the key elements of basic anti-corruption reforms. Most anti-corruption programs start from a similar foundation, including a broad conceptual framework document that lays out the reasons to fight corruption; local corruption perception surveys to evaluate the state of affairs; an anti-corruption plan that builds from this diagnosis to suggest a general strategy that might be followed; introduction of basic legislative reforms aimed at regulating core public functions (civil service regulations, financial disclosure, public procurement, political party financing, money-laundering, and freedom of information) and creating the legal basis for punishing wrongdoing. A very ample literature produced by international non-governmental organizations exists on how to lay this basic framework, and regarding the basic fundamentals the key legislation should include.

A second form of standardization arises in the cross-national work of many international organizations, whether it is in the context of treaty compliance or cross-national studies. Treaties such as the UN Convention against Corruption, or analogous treaties at a regional level, help to standardize the objectives of national integrity systems in ways that provide both useful external leverage for local civil society groups seeking to improve local conditions (discussed earlier), as well as benchmarks for international comparison. Cross-national studies, such as Transparency International’s country studies of national integrity systems,27 or Global Integrity’s country assessment reports,28 use questionnaires that investigate the same phenomena across different countries. These generate cross-nationally comparable indices, such as Global Integrity’s “Integrity Indicators Scorecard,” which can be useful both to understanding local developments over time and how they compare with other nations across six core areas: 1) non-governmental organizations, public information and media; 2) elections; 3) checks and balances and government conflict of interest safeguards; 4) public administration and professionalism; 5) government oversight and controls; and 6) anti-corruption legal framework, judicial impartiality and law enforcement professionalism.

At the local level, a number of standardized tools exist, whether they are data assessment tools (such as Global Integrity’s country assessment reports), frameworks for national integrity audits and “shadow” civil society reports on compliance with UNCAC, or more specific tools for analyzing local legislation and conditions in a specific area. Examples of such specific tools include ratings of right to information laws (such as the Center for Law and Democracy’s Right to Information Rating29), budget openness (e.g., the Open Budget Survey30), media freedom (e.g., the World Press Freedom Review31), government management performance (e.g., the Bertelsman Transformation Index and the Worldwide Governance Indicators dataset), and human rights protections (e.g., Cingranelli and Richards Human Rights data set).
Some of these datasets will not offer much more than a basic benchmark for prioritizing action, but others may point to specific shortcomings and best practices from the international experience.

Standardized training programs for key accountability figures, such as the curriculum of the International Anti-Corruption Academy (created in 2011), or international conferences such as the IACC Conference, may help to ensure a common language and set of assumptions about integrity holding. In addition to imparting cutting edge knowledge, such programs help to create networks of officials, scholars and civil society leaders who can provide lessons and support in the future.

Equally important will be locally-produced standardized tools, which may be produced by government or civil society organizations, and establish common practices for public and private sector organizations. At the level of individual bureaucracies, it will be useful to establish clear rules on how to conduct horizontal accountability functions. An example of such a tool is the Canadian Office of the Procurement Ombudsman’s Procurement Review Guidelines, which lays out a justification for the practice of procurement review, as well as objectives and methods for doing so. Where possible, citizen involvement in the development of such guidelines will be helpful. To make sure that citizen involvement is effective, it may be useful to establish rules on how government agencies should handle feedback from civil society observers: the Philippines’ Office of the Ombudsman, for example, established clear guidelines that officeholders must follow to incorporate citizen observations in the procurement process (ADB 2008, Gutierrez chapter).

A potent technique of moral suasion available to anti-corruption organizations is to dialogue with citizens, members of the private sector and officeholders to reach agreement on basic rules that should govern public behavior. Once agreement has been reached, these can be drafted as codes of ethics (or codes of conduct), integrity pledges, and citizen charters, which officeholders and citizens alike can be asked to sign and commit to. These contribute to the standardization of expectations: future officeholders will likewise be asked to commit to these rules, which can be referred to regularly as guidelines for what is expected of officeholders.

The three forms of implementing standardized rules via moral suasion are different in significant ways. Codes of ethics typically are applied to officeholders in specific tasks – governing for example, the performance of duties such as auditing, lawyering, or the administration of not-for-profits. They may seek to address ethical questions specific to the performance of duties in that field: how to report conflicts of interest, what constitute conflicts, what rules of client confidentiality apply, and so forth. Most importantly, they are generally imposed by members of the community on other members, with the most grave punishment being banishment from the community of respectable peers, rather than any formal legal punishment.

Integrity pledges are similar to codes of ethics in that they commit participants to specific rules and behaviors. However, they typically are signed either by civil society and government (e.g., Malawi 1996 and Uganda 1995), or by politicians specifically (e.g., Tanzania 1995). They are a signaling mechanism, forcing participations to signal their recognition that integrity is essential, even if they have no commitment to integrity in their heart of hearts. In the Tanzanian case, they also represented a commitment by politicians to support a national integrity plan if elected.
Citizens’ charters are generally drafted by governments in concert with civil society, aimed at committing officeholders to specific behaviors and performance outcomes, as well as to corrective action if they are not met. They may be drafted at a national level, but are most effective if applied locally or to specific public services. Citizens’ charters may not directly address corruption, but by committing officeholders to specific standards, and ensuring citizen participation in oversight, they facilitate accountability.

With regard to oversight, we have already mentioned a number of different means of encouraging citizen participation in monitoring officeholders. Standardization of these functions is perhaps best achieved through participatory oversight mechanisms, including report cards and shadow audits via expenditure tracking surveys (PETS). Citizen report cards were developed in India, and have been widely used since in the Philippines and Vietnam among other countries, to rate user experiences with public services, attract media attention, open dialogue with policymakers, and if properly standardized, to track performance improvements over time (WDR 2004). The previously mentioned randomized study of citizen report cards in Uganda illustrated that they can significantly improve public service outcomes if combined with adequate training on reporting mechanisms (Björkman and Svensson 2009). In the Indian case, they seem to have functioned when combined with significant press coverage, which leads to competition among public managers, and public meetings to discuss the results with officeholders (WDR 2004, 88-89).

Shadow audits are another form of standardized civil society oversight that can greatly improve service delivery and accountability. With the knowledge that an independent audit may be conducted in parallel with the official audit, and its results made public, both service-providing agencies and audit agencies within government may be more diligent in the performance of their duties. Furthermore, such audits can be applied in a standardized fashion across service delivery districts to generate comparative results. In Sierra Leone, for example, PETS measured education spending at two different points in time, and across 28 randomly selected schools, illustrating gains over the three year period between the two waves (Chêne 2008; TI 2005).

IV. Summary recommendations

This paper has proceeded in two parts. The first provided a justification for the involvement of citizens in the fight against corruption, elaborating a rationale of how effective citizen engagement may contribute to fighting corruption. Briefly reiterating the argument:

- Citizen engagement is not undue interference in the affairs of state, but instead a constructive means of providing political leaders with powerful feedback.

- There are some drawbacks to civil society participation in the accountability process. For example, civil society is not neutral, and is particularly susceptible to political intimidation. Further, civil society cannot engage in all facets of the accountability process, and is highly reliant on its moral ‘soft’
power, which creates vulnerabilities.

- Despite these vulnerabilities, civil society has a unique role to play, which complements other forms of accountability. Civil society plays a unique role by establishing the basic normative baseline by which government actions are judged, by goading government institutions into action, by mobilizing citizens qua voters, by monitoring government performance and serving as watchdogs, and by imposing reputational sanctions.

- Accountability relations are marked by inter-dependence. Social accountability, by citizens, helps to improve both horizontal checks and balances across government agencies, as well as vertical controls by citizens over officeholders.

- Citizen engagement at its best may contribute to making accountability less of an exercise in procedural compliance with detailed rules and regulations. Rather, citizen engagement may permit a more flexible and performance-oriented integrity-based system of accountability.

The second part of this paper aimed to provide practical suggestions that can enhance citizen engagement in the fight against corruption. Addressing four components of citizen engagement, the paper provided a likely sequence of actions, as well as examples of best practices from the international literature on accountability:

- Creating awareness proceeds in two stages. Initially, the goal is to create ‘broad awareness’ of corruption’s impacts on daily life, and to increase citizens’ awareness of their right to hold government accountable. In a second stage, the goal is to provide more specific ‘actionable’ guidance about the local costs of corruption, as well as of locally specific mechanisms that can be used to fight it.
  - The discussion highlighted the tension between creating a supportive environment within which citizens will feel impelled to fight corruption, without so demonizing corruption as to make it seem pervasive and invincible.
  - The international experience suggests that no matter how well-intentioned the effort may be, heroic and wide scale national mobilization against corruption may be less effective in the long-term than more incremental programs that gradually build support across the entire society. It also points to the risk that government leadership of anti-corruption programs may lead to politicization and disillusionment.

- Increasing ownership: The goal of increasing ownership must take into account various stages in the fight against corruption, including:
  - Oversight: Citizens have a key role to play in integrity-holding by patrolling government actions and the conduct of officeholders. To ensure continued citizen engagement, oversight may be improved by
guaranteeing that individual rights are protected, by ensuring NGOs can register legally, by writing laws that criminalize corrupt behavior, by creating mechanisms for anonymous reporting and whistleblowing, by sponsoring public hearings and creating public audits, by engaging international organizations, and by encouraging public participation through the dissemination of successes.

- **Planning and prioritization**: One of the best ways of engaging citizens in any public plan is by allowing them to offer an opinion and shape its objectives and priorities. Citizen participation can occur at a variety of levels, including elite service on national commissions, participatory planning, and the ‘insinuation’ of citizens into previously closed ‘horizontal’ accountability functions such as state auditing and administrative review.

- **Data collection and civic education** help the public in making educated judgments about the prevalence of corruption in the country, the forms of corruption, and the likely success of given accountability strategies. They also contribute to ensuring citizen buy-in to the larger anti-corruption agenda. Citizens have been engaged in data collection via a variety of efforts, including public expenditure tracking and citizen monitoring of public service delivery. Community participation of this sort enables users to give grassroots feedback that may be far more effective than ‘top-down’ approaches. Citizen engagement may also be encouraged by the regular and transparent release of public data.

- **Public advocacy and public campaigns** mobilize the public around specific goals and strategies, such as changing specific laws or institutional structures. In the process they may generate lasting commitments to change, as well as networks of reform-minded individuals. The best anti-corruption campaigns build from small success to small success, in an incremental fashion, while maintaining a broad coalition of shifting interests over the long haul. Reformers must walk a middle road between overly ambitious reforms that set public expectations so high that they are sure to be dashed, and piecemeal, uncoordinated reforms with no “owners” who will see them through implementation and consolidation.

  - **Coordinating civil society** efforts is difficult because the very virtues that make civil society such a vital force in the integrity effort – its pluralism, the diversity of perspectives, and the impermanence of its interests – combine to make it very difficult to mobilize over the long-term, much less to give direction to these efforts. However, it may be possible to overcome some of the hurdles by adopting specialization, effective management structures, good coordination and communication strategies, and under some circumstances, cooperation with the government or individuals within it.

  - **Standardization** is a helpful way of spreading best practices to civil society, enabling cross-national comparative analysis, and overcoming the problematic attention deficit disorder that is common to fluid civil society organizations.
Standardization can be implemented at the level of broad programs, international treaties and treaty compliance, data collection, data assessment, and training; as well as at the narrower level of specific bureaucratic procedures, codes of ethics, integrity pledges, citizen charters, report cards and shadow audits. In all of these cases, the objective is to create common evaluative frameworks that enable comparison of results across time and/or across locales.
## Figures and Tables

### Table 1: civil society participation in the accountability process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of civil society organization</th>
<th>Strategic planning and diagnosis</th>
<th>Monitoring and Investigation</th>
<th>Sanction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual citizens</td>
<td>Whistleblowing</td>
<td>Reputational; Cultural mores and shunning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single CSO or ad hoc movement</td>
<td>Hotlines, anonymous or not</td>
<td>Informal institutions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Established public norms</td>
<td>Auditing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocacy campaigns for legal reform or policy change</td>
<td>Monitoring specific programs or policies</td>
<td>Cooperation with media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monitoring compliance with pledges, agreements</td>
<td>Publicizing sanctions to raise awareness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Legend:**
- **Individual citizens**
- **Single CSO or ad hoc movement**
- **Highly organized or cooperative citizen movements**
Grimes (2008); Transparency International CPI (2011); data provided in Teorell, Samanni, Holmberg and Rothstein (2011).

Figure 2: Trust and Corruption

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Endnotes

1 A description of all of the eight goals and measurement can be found at http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals. The eight goal, global partnership, includes developing an open and non-discriminatory trading and financial system, addressing the needs of less developed countries, dealing with developing country debt, and providing essential drugs and technologies to developing countries.

2 Despite the high correlation, it is of course impossible to know whether the prevalence of corruption is the causal driver for the absence of trust, or vice versa. The likely answer is “both”: higher trust leads to less corruption, just as lower corruption leads to higher trust.

3 The concept of national integrity systems finds strong parallels in Mainwaring’s (2003, 29) depiction of a “web” of accountability institutions. Even though he recognizes the problem of limiting accountability to principal-agent relationships, Mainwaring (2003, 7–8) emphasizes the formal aspects of oversight, with less attention to the broader issue of trust and delegation implicit in the “integrity-based,” as opposed to “compliance-based,” approaches. For this reason, this paper will prefer the term “national integrity systems” over “web” of accountability.

4 A fourth form of accountability is also sometimes mentioned: “diagonal accountability” refers to public agencies that bring together state and social actors (Ackerman 2004, Fox 2006, Goetz and Jenkins 2001), oftentimes as part of participatory governance schemes. Examples include the Mexican Programa de Abasto Rural and the associated community councils (Fox 1996, 2006).

In this paper, we fold diagonal accountability into the broader concept of social accountability, recognizing that citizen involvement is the key element that makes these mixed state-society partnership unique. As a result, citizen participation in the diagonal agencies does not change the overall process of accountability, but rather, simply deepens the incursion of the citizenry into the state apparatus. A second reason for including diagonal accountability within the broader realm of social accountability is practical: it is essential to recognize that the separation between state and society is far fuzzier than the artificial distinction implicit in any of the first three forms of accountability, and thus adding degrees of ‘stateness’ or ‘societyness’ is likely only to blur basic conceptual lines and confuse matters.

5 The institutional allocation of these additional accountability agencies may vary: sometimes they are formally independent of any of the three branches; sometimes they are formally located within one branch, but are largely autonomous of it; and in yet other circumstances they are fully subordinate to a particular branch but independent of the others.

6 Additional elements of vertical accountability have been suggested in the literature: Fox (2006, 36) mentions the bureaucracy’s upward responsibility to political leaders as another form of vertical accountability; O’Donnell’s early formulation focused on the media and civil society as part of vertical accountability, as well. These additions unnecessarily stretch the concept of vertical accountability, however, and it is thus preferable to keep the concept of vertical accountability tightly focused on the
relationship between citizens qua political actors and the politicians and officeholders who control the state apparatus.

7 The media is sometimes depicted by other authors as a quasi-horizontal and sometimes as a quasi-vertical check on government.

8 Available at http://www.unodc.org/yournocounts.

9 This assessment methodology is drawn from USAID 1999, although it is similar to other assessments elsewhere.

10 The International Crime Victimization Survey, which covers 78 countries and includes a battery of questions on corruption, is available at http://rechten.uvt.nl/icvs/.


12 Available at: https://bvc.cgu.gov.br/home.jsp


14 Available at http://www.icgg.org/corruption.research.html.

15 Available at http://corruptionresearchnetwork.org/ and http://www.transparency.org/tools/gateway

16 www.u4.no

17 Where “responsibly” means in an apolitical and impersonal manner that does not unjustly harm the reputation of the accused

18 Additional institutional reforms that strengthen this framework often include reforms to the budget process; creation of financial management systems and audit offices; creation of inspector generals, ombuds offices or an anti-corruption agency; changes in the legislation on corruption; electoral reform; and judicial reform. Within the civil service, efforts to realign incentives might include changes in personnel systems and compensation, surprise audits of civil servants, creation of complaints channels for both civil servants and citizens and the involvement of truly independent outsiders in oversight functions (Pope 2000; USAID 1999).


20 For discussion of citizen participatory mechanisms, see Grau (2006), who discusses several models for deliberation used in Latin America.

21 The report is available at http://www.kemitraan.or.id/newsroom/pressrelease/penyelenggaraan-forum-
masyarakat-sipil-antikorupsi; cited in Chêne and Dell (2008).


23 Albania, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Bulgaria and Macedonia.

24 The Business Principles for Countering Bribery developed by Transparency International, Social Accountability International, and CIPE is a good example of voluntary good practice standards adopted by business.

25 Chêne (2010) raises the important issue of how much government participation is too much: “a key question is to determine the nature of the relationship the coalition should have with the government in power. A confrontational approach may be counterproductive or dangerous, while too little independence may undermine the credibility of the initiative. In some contexts, cooperation may be impossible without compromising the goal of the initiative and the coalition may be forced into an opposition role. However, wherever possible, a collaborative stance is generally recommended (Johnston; Kpundeh, 2004).”

26 Available at: http://eiti.org/eiti

27 Available at: http://transparency.org/policy_research/nis

28 Available at: http://www.globalintegrity.org/report

29 Available at: http://www.rti-rating.org/

30 Available at: http://internationalbudget.org/what-we-do/open-budget-survey/

31 Available at: http://www.freemedia.at/publications/world-press-freedom-review.html